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Disrupting evangelicalism: Charles
Ewing Brown and holiness
fundamentalism in the Church of God
(Anderson), 1930-1951

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dissertation

**DISRUPTING EVANGELICALISM: CHARLES EWING BROWN AND
HOLINESS FUNDAMENTALISM IN THE CHURCH OF GOD (ANDERSON),
1930-1951**

by

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As a thinker and theologian [C.E. Brown] is progressive without being dangerous and conservative without being dogmatic.

—John A. Morrison, *The Broadcaster*, July 1930

Hands that were lifted in holy praise,
Neath the groves of Anderson,
Where are they now?
 Where do they carry the holy ark?
Where do they wave the torch in the dark?
 Will they ever come back again?

—C.E. Brown, “The Mighty Host At Anderson,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 29, 1950

DEDICATION

In memory of my great-grandfather, Marvin L. Forbes (1909-1989), who pastored in the Church of God from 1939 to 1984 and who indirectly raised my interest in the themes of this work upon my discovery of a 1956 *Saturday Evening Post* issue that described his Minneapolis congregation as “fundamentalist.”

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the life and work of Charles Ewing Brown (1883-1971), an influential twentieth-century leader of the Church of God (Anderson, IN). During his editorship of the *Gospel Trumpet* from 1930 to 1951, Brown reinterpreted Christian doctrine in ways that often challenged predominant evangelical and fundamentalist theologies of the mid-twentieth century. Although often associated with theological developments in the nineteenth century, the holiness movement impacted the twentieth century in significant ways, concurrent with the contributions of pentecostalism and neo-evangelicalism. In the late 1950s, a prominent mainline leader heralded the rise of the “Third Force in Christendom,” which prioritized an experiential and primitivist faith that was not encapsulated in Roman Catholicism or historical Protestantism. Despite the presence of holiness groups like the Church of God in the Third Force, prevailing historical narratives of the mid-twentieth century have prioritized the importance of the Reformed fundamentalist tradition associated with Baptists and Presbyterians. In contrast, Brown’s holiness fundamentalism rejected the premillennialism and cultural separatism that prevail in most historians’ depiction of the tradition. Overall, Brown

complicates how historians have understood terms such as fundamentalist and evangelical.

This work offers a nuanced historical account by showing how a significant holiness leader inherited and modified the beliefs and practices of formative traditions. Through a survey of monographs, editorials, and addresses, this dissertation foregrounds the foundations and implications of Brown's claim of being an evangelical and a fundamentalist. It begins with a biographical chapter and successive chapters explore how Brown's outlook informed his view of revivalism and doctrine, his ecclesiology, his critique of premillennialism, his articulation of the social dimensions of Christianity, and his socio-political commentary. The conclusion contextualizes Brown and analyzes his historiographical significance.

For Brown, the evangelical and fundamentalist disposition was primarily communal, and the prevailing trend toward hyper-individualism and separation deeply concerned him. By challenging the assumptions about the conservative nature of evangelicalism and the epistemological foundation of fundamentalism, this study offers an initial foray into how holiness groups shaped the contours of twentieth-century American Christianity. It reveals Brown's continuity with nineteenth-century evangelical social reform efforts and with late twentieth-century progressive evangelicals.

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INTRODUCTION

In early 1933, an editorial in the *Gospel Trumpet*, the flagship periodical of the Church of God (Anderson), assessed the situation in Europe.¹ The editorial did not mention Adolf Hitler, who would become chancellor of Germany in a matter of days.² On this occasion, the editor believed that the immediate dangers were communism and atheism. The *Trumpet* editor, Charles Ewing Brown (1883-1971), praised the efforts of German Christians in combating “communistic and atheistic propaganda.”³ Rather than lambasting the perceived errors of these threats to Christianity, Brown took a broader view. Christians in the United States were facing the menace of modernism and would soon likely oppose other foes. Though they faced different threats, Christians across geographic locations could rely on the same process of preparation. German Christians were undergoing intense doctrinal training to expose and refute the threats in their context, and Brown sensed that *Gospel Trumpet* readers in the United States were

¹ There are a variety of religious groups that utilize “Church of God” in their name. Unless otherwise indicated, “Church of God” is referencing the group within the holiness movement known as the Church of God (Anderson, IN). Many in the Church of God refer to their religious body as the “reformation movement” as an indication of their aversion to the denominational system. Therefore, unless otherwise indicated, the “reformation” is referencing the Church of God (Anderson, IN), in distinction from the schism in 16th-century western Christianity known as the “(Protestant) Reformation.” Similarly, the “reformation movement” and the “movement” without adjectival qualification also refers to the Church of God.

² Chapter five covers the range of Brown’s political commentary. Later in 1933 Brown marshalled the dictators of Italy, Russia, and Germany, only referring to Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler by name, along with the President of the United States as evidence in the present age of “the dominance of personality” to the demise of the “mechanical theory of the origin of the universe and the development of human society.” His only comment about the structure and policies of these countries on that occasion was, “I do not believe in dictatorship. I believe in democracy.” C.E. Brown, “Men Are Still Above Machines,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 15, 1933, 2.

³ C.E. Brown, “A New Way to Fight the Devil,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 21, 1933, 2.

inadequately prepared to defend Christianity on their soil. The remedy lay in equipping readers with the ability to protect against not only communism and atheism but any threat, especially against “such heresies as would devitalize the Christian religion and rob it of its soul-saving content.”⁴ To begin the process of equipping *Trumpet* readers, Brown inquired rhetorically about the dire need for holding doctrinal conferences.⁵ These gatherings afforded the Church of God faithful an excellent opportunity for “getting a grasp on the primary principles” of “fundamental doctrines.”⁶ Doctrine was, for Brown,

⁴ Brown, “New Way to Fight,” 2.

⁵ As a recurring, planned meeting of believers, the doctrinal conferences that Brown proposed mirrored the long-standing practice of camp meetings within the Church of God. The predominance of camp meetings within the movement reflects the Church of God’s participation in the holiness movement and the broader current of revivalism that emerged during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with the Second Great Awakening. Similarly, in the late nineteenth century, the Bible Conference Movement popularized the practice of gatherings oriented not around denominational identity but a specific doctrinal theme, with premillennialism and dispensationalism featured prominently. The most famous conference was the Niagara Bible Conference initiated in 1876, though the Winona Lake Conference was held less than a hundred miles north of Anderson in Winona Lake, Indiana. For more on Church of God camp meetings, see Richard L. Willowby, *Family Reunion: A Century of Camp Meetings* (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 1986). For more on revivalism, the Second Great Awakening, and the origins of the camp meeting, see Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); Kenneth O. Brown, *Holy Ground: A Study of the American Camp Meeting* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992); Kenneth O. Brown, *Holy Ground, Too: The Camp Meeting Family Tree* (Hazleton, PA: Holiness Archives, 1997), especially 25-68; Lester Ruth, “Reconsidering the Emergence of the Second Great Awakening and Camp Meetings Among Early Methodists,” *Worship* 75, no. 4 (July 2001): 334-355. For more on the Bible Conference Movement, see Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), especially 132-161; Michael S. Hamilton and Margaret Lamberts Bendroth, “Keeping the ‘Fun’ in Fundamentalism: The Winona Lake Bible Conferences, 1895-1968,” in *Re-Forming the Center: American Protestantism, 1900 to the Present*, ed. Douglas Jacobsen and William Vance Trollinger, Jr. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 300-317; George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁶ Brown, “New Way to Fight,” 3.

the primary means of sustaining the reformation movement's revival of fundamental truth regarding holiness and unity.⁷

Brown shaped and influenced the movement from his editorial desk for over two decades, and the concern for doctrine permeated his writing throughout his career. He assessed the status and teaching of the Church of God a few months after stepping down as editor in 1951. How well had the movement heeded his admonition to diligent doctrinal instruction? He concluded that the movement remained minimally concerned with doctrine even though over the previous three decades “evangelical Christianity has been aroused to the need of clear-cut and persuasive doctrinal teaching.”⁸ Approaching sixty-eight years old and likely sensing, if not already experiencing, a decline in his presence and influence within the movement, Brown exhorted *Trumpet* readers again about the importance of doctrine. He contended, “We live in an age of decision, and we must positively make our choice, and to choose for Christ we must know why we do so.”⁹ Despite his assessment, Brown was surveying a religious group that was in a substantially different position than when he started as editor.

The second quarter of the twentieth century was a period of significant change in the landscape of Christianity in the United States. Twenty-five years after the *Trumpet*

⁷ Chapter three surveys in fuller detail Brown's delineation of the Church of God's fundamentals. Many of the instances in which Brown outlined these truths came in response to inquiries or challenges to his editorial policy, which chapter one addresses. There is slight variation in what Brown upheld as the fundamental truths across the various lists. However, holiness and unity appeared on these lists as often as any other item.

⁸ C.E. Brown, “Let's Take a Look at Our Message,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 8, 1951, 1.

⁹ *Ibid.*

featured Brown's article on doctrinal conferences, the noted Presbyterian ecumenist and president of Union Theological Seminary, Henry P. Van Dusen, sought to make sense of the developments within Christianity. What Van Dusen saw were several "fringe sects" that he described as the "Third Force in Christendom."¹⁰ Because of the Third Force's perceived impact, Van Dusen appended it to Roman Catholicism and historical Protestantism as a pivotal tradition in Christianity. The Third Force's contribution to Christendom was primarily disruptive as the groups comprising it originated from a critique of Catholicism or older Protestant denominations. The Third Force's strong emphasis on Christian primitivism, or the desire to restore the perceived purity of the beliefs and practices of early Christianity, placed it on the fringe of the religious landscape but at the heart of Christendom.¹¹ Of the seventeen groups that comprised the Third Force, thirteen were holiness or pentecostal denominations.¹² According to Van Dusen, "Peter and Barnabas and Paul might find themselves more at home in a Holiness service or a Pentecostal revival than in the formalized and sophisticated worship of other churches, Catholic or Protestant."¹³ The fringe was returning Christianity to its origin.

What drew Van Dusen's attention to the Third Force was the "remarkable rapidity" with which its various components were spreading in the United States and

¹⁰ Henry P. Van Dusen, "Force's Lessons for Others," *Life*, June 9, 1958, 122-124.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 122.

¹² For the groups that Van Dusen saw as comprising the Third Force, see Appendix A.

¹³ Van Dusen, "Force's Lessons for Others," 122.

throughout the world.¹⁴ Indeed, the article reported that the United States contributed slightly over four million adherents to the Third Force's world membership of twenty million. Van Dusen claimed that, during the first half of the twentieth century, Third Force membership had jumped over 600 percent in the United States and about 400 percent in the rest of the world.¹⁵ The Church of God ranked around the middle of the Third Force with a membership in the United States of 127,395, which was a fourfold increase from the membership at the beginning of C.E. Brown's editorship.¹⁶ Less than a decade after Brown's exit as editor, a prominent mainline figure included the Church of God reformation movement among a formidable force that demanded attention. Perhaps the Church of God faithful remained lax in their regard for doctrine, but they had contributed to the transformation of Christianity in the United States.

The Significance of the Study

The primary significance of this study is to indicate the contributions of C.E. Brown, a major institutional leader in a holiness group, to the landscape of Christianity in the United States in the early to mid-twentieth century. This dissertation shows how an early twentieth-century holiness leader's approach to and prioritization of doctrine led him to theological and socio-political commitments that avoid neat categorization as

¹⁴ Van Dusen, "Force's Lessons for Others," 122.

¹⁵ "Third Force in Christendom," *Life*, June 9, 1958, 119.

¹⁶ The Church of God published its first yearbook in 1917, but membership data was not included until 1923. Van Dusen used the number of active members in the United States in the 1957 *Yearbook*. For the statistics, including church membership, Sunday school attendance, and number of congregations, of the *Church of God Yearbook* from 1923 until 1957, see Appendix B.

“fundamentalist,” “modernist,” or “neo-evangelical.” Through the examination of C.E. Brown’s writings, this study portrays a figure whose articulation of the content and implications of the Christian faith differed meaningfully from evangelical and fundamentalist contemporaries who figure prominently in the historiography of American Christianity. In this way, this dissertation explicates one aspect of the theological diversity often unnoticed or muted within the standard frameworks and categories employed in the historical studies of evangelicalism, fundamentalism, and the holiness movement.

Evangelicalism

The timing of Brown’s editorship coincided with significant developments within evangelicalism, particularly concerning the practices and disposition of an evangelical.¹⁷

¹⁷ Historians of American evangelicalism typically locate the tradition’s origin in Puritanism and the influence of Jonathan Edwards and the First Great Awakening in the colonial period. They often trace its development in the early republic period through the ministry of Charles Grandison Finney and the Second Great Awakening in the early nineteenth century and the broad dispersion of evangelicalism and its strengthening emphasis on global missions by the early twentieth century. Throughout its history, evangelicalism was a tradition that was transatlantic and that moved within and beyond the Euro-American experience. The following sections of this chapter demonstrate the tension of defining evangelicalism within the twentieth century as a reaction to modernism in the form of fundamentalism or as an impulse for revival and innovation. For the history of evangelicalism during the colonial period, see Richard F. Lovelace, *The American Pietism of Cotton Mather: Origins of American Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian University Press, 1979); Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield, and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003); Catherine A. Brekus, *Sarah Osborn’s World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013); D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Spirit of Early Evangelicalism: True Religion in a Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). For evangelicalism in the nineteenth century, see Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965); Donald W. Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976); David Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005). For the transatlantic nature of evangelicalism, see Richard Carwardine, *Transatlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America, 1790-1865* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978); W.R. Ward, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). For the increasingly global composition of evangelicalism, see Mark

David Bebbington's classic study, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, offered four identifying features of evangelicalism: conversionism, activism, biblicism, and crucicentrism.¹⁸ Bebbington noted that, while each impulse persisted across various evangelical traditions, any given group presented and prioritized each feature differently.¹⁹ Although the "Bebbington quadrilateral" is likely the most familiar definition of evangelicalism for many, scholarly ruminations and debates over the definition of this tradition show the issue is far from settled. Scholarship has arguably made little advance in resolving the nettlesome issue of definition, which Timothy P. Weber described in the early 1990s as "one of the biggest problems in American religious historiography."²⁰

The consensus of scholarly discourse over roughly the last half century is that evangelicalism's fluidity and diversity largely preclude any static resolution to the issue of definition.²¹ Even the use and meaning of "evangelical" exhibited change over time. In

Hutchinson and John Wolffe, *A Short History of Global Evangelicalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

¹⁸ David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to 1980s* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992), 2-17.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

²⁰ Timothy P. Weber, "Premillennialism and the Branches of Evangelicalism," in *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*, ed. Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnston (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 12.

²¹ The theologian and ethicist, Donald W. Dayton, designated "evangelical" as an "essentially contested concept" in part because there were three distinct meanings operative within the singular English word "evangelical," namely i) an affinity to the doctrines of the Protestant Reformation in contrast to Catholicism, ii) a concern for piety and revival rooted in Puritanism and German Pietism, iii) a reaction to theological liberalism rooted in claims of "conservative" or "orthodox" teaching. The latter two are the most relevant to the history of American evangelicalism. For a discussion of the various meanings of "evangelical," see Donald W. Dayton, "The Limits of Evangelicalism: The Pentecostal Tradition," in *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*, ed. Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnston (Downers Grove, IL:

a survey of the use of “evangelical” from the Protestant Reformation to the post-World War II era, Linford Fisher argued that scholars have used the term “with reference to theologically conservative Protestants between the eighteenth century and the present, often in ways that assume an identifiable core or center that was unchanged across centuries.”²² In response to this, Fisher traced the malleability of the designation of “evangelical” to show how the term was “at once a critique and a practice; it was a pursuit of experiential purity, but that purity was incessantly relative to the other modes of Christianity that were out there.”²³ “Evangelical” was an appeal of true affinity with apostolic Christianity and a claim of demarcation made against others within the Christian tradition.

Despite the term’s roots in the Protestant Reformation, Fisher contended that it was only around the Second Great Awakening in the early nineteenth century that “evangelical” shifted from a modifier to a noun.²⁴ Although “evangelical” was used broadly as a descriptor for the vast majority of Protestant groups by the end of the nineteenth century, the term took on a much more limited meaning during the 1940s with the actions of neo-evangelicals, those within fundamentalism whose move toward an

InterVarsity Press, 1991), 47-48. For a somewhat dated but extensive examination of the historiography of evangelicalism in the late twentieth century, see Leonard I. Sweet, ed., *The Evangelical Tradition in America* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 1-86.

²² Linford D. Fisher, “Evangelicals and Unevangelicals: The Contested History of a Word, 1500-1950,” *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 26, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 185.

²³ *Ibid.*, 186.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 187.

irenic posture and advocacy of cultural engagement softened the tradition's militancy.²⁵

However, the "activism" component in Bebbington's definition undermines any notion of neo-evangelicals as the sole proprietors of the tradition in the United States or elsewhere.

Euro-American evangelicals directed their zeal and commitment into efforts focused beyond their home countries. Consequently, the beliefs and practices of evangelicals entered into, changed, and were changed by vastly different cultures and contexts.²⁶

Given the term's malleability and the tradition's global diffusion, studies of evangelicalism, particularly those covering the twentieth century, must avoid presenting any Euro-American experience as representative of the whole or as the standard from which others deviate.²⁷ Evangelicalism's elasticity is far-reaching and pervasive.

Categorizations of fundamentalism and pentecostalism in the early twentieth century poignantly demonstrate the malleability of evangelicalism. One critique levied against studies of this period is that they have misidentified specific concerns within fundamentalism as representative of twentieth-century evangelicalism. A striking example of this is Donald Dayton's response to George Marsden's 1987 study on the

²⁵ Fisher, "Evangelicals and Unevangelicals," 188.

²⁶ This process was by no means an innovation of evangelicalism but rather a feature of Christianity. As Lamin Sanneh contended, Christianity is a translated and translating religion, that is Christianity interacts with culture and, in that interchange, new iterations of the faith emerge. See Lamin Sanneh, *Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 25-29.

²⁷ Mark Hutchinson and John Wolffe demonstrated this approach in their opening historical framework, which moves from the activity in England of Thomas Haweis in the eighteenth century and the Evangelical Alliance in the nineteenth century to the United States in 1925 with the Scopes Trial. Rather than shifting to Billy Graham or Jerry Falwell, their last figure in evangelicalism's trajectory is Sunday Adelaja, a Nigerian who pastors a megachurch in Ukraine. See Hutchinson and Wolffe, *Global Evangelicalism*, 1-5.

founding of Fuller Seminary titled *Reforming Fundamentalism*. Considering their differences on sources and time periods, Dayton proposed understanding evangelicalism through his “pentecostal paradigm” in contrast to the “Presbyterian paradigm” that he attributed to Marsden. The fundamental departure, according to Dayton, was whether one viewed classical evangelicalism, or evangelicalism before the early twentieth century, as standing in continuity with the Reformation, especially Reformed traditions (Marsden), or as a corrective to an overemphasis on Reformation themes (Dayton).²⁸ This difference led Marsden to offer evangelicalism as the “traditional,” “orthodox,” or “conservative” response primarily from within mainline denominations to the rise of liberalism and secularization, whereas Dayton emphasized the disruption and radical nature of evangelicals’ move “in the direction of revivalism and ‘low church’ piety.”²⁹ In other words, one way to classify this debate is that it asks when one comes into contact with evangelicals, are they defending truth from within a religious body or are they engaged in innovation within and beyond institutions to promote the necessity of an experience with God?

After addressing Dayton’s critique regarding figures and ideas in *Reforming Fundamentalism*, Marsden proposed that, rather than presenting their approaches as opposed, they admit that “there are multidimensional and mutually porous evangelical movements.”³⁰ This contention was, for Dayton, misreading his intention in offering a

²⁸ Donald W. Dayton, “‘The Search for the Historical Evangelicalism’: George Marsden’s History of Fuller Seminary as a Case Study,” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 23 (Sept. 1993): 14-15.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁰ George Marsden, “Response to Don Dayton,” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 23 (Sept. 1993): 40.

new paradigm. In his concluding statements, Dayton stated that the issue was not the diversity of evangelicalism but instead about determining which of the mutually exclusive models most faithfully encapsulated the ethos of evangelicalism.³¹ Only a couple years before this exchange Dayton called for a moratorium on the use of the term because he thought that “evangelicalism” was employed too broadly to garner satisfactory coherence on the link between all its associated groups.³² Appeals to a general, poorly-defined category glossed over vital distinctions that made coherence challenging, if not impossible.

Current scholarship has favored Marsden’s approach given that fundamentalism and pentecostalism are regarded more as “variants of evangelicalism than as wholly discrete movements.”³³ Dayton’s call for a moratorium is now a mostly inaudible plea among a wide array of work on evangelicalism over the last quarter of a century.³⁴ The coherence and malleability of the tradition introduce a tension that is difficult to ignore or escape. In her recent work on reason and authority in evangelicalism, Molly Worthen reflected on the prevalence and ambiguity of the term “evangelicalism” writing, “Yet we are stuck with [evangelical]. Believers and atheist scholars, politicians and pundits, all

³¹ Donald W. Dayton, “Rejoinder to Historiography Discussion,” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 23 (Sept. 1993): 69.

³² Donald W. Dayton, “Some Doubts about the Usefulness of the Category ‘Evangelical,’” in *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*, ed. Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnston (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 251.

³³ Hutchinson and Wolfe, *Global Evangelicalism*, 22.

³⁴ One notable exception is D.G. Hart’s work, which described “evangelicalism” as an empty identity that was constructed by neo-evangelicals. See D.G. Hart, *Deconstructing Evangelicalism: Conservative Protestantism in the Age of Billy Graham* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 16-28.

continue to use the word *evangelical*. To observers and insiders alike there still seems to be a ‘there’ there: a nebulous community that shares something, even if it is not always clear what that something is.”³⁵

Historical studies of the early to mid-twentieth century in the United States have primarily populated this “nebulous community” with fundamentalists and neo-evangelicals, both of which exhibit the deep influence of Reformed theology. This tradition is significant but overemphasizing its predominance mutes the multiplicity of evangelicalism. Because “evangelicalism” has been employed historically as a critique and practice, Marsden was correct in contending for the diversity of evangelicalism. A vast number of individuals and groups have claimed that their formulation is, from all the available options, the most faithful to historic Christianity. However, Dayton’s critical contribution was demonstrating the misstep by Marsden in identifying evangelicals as the conservative or traditional element within a mainline denomination. The contested nature of “evangelical” shows that the various iterations of evangelicalism are oriented around disputation and disruption rather than preserving the status quo. Each claim to “evangelical” is concerned with outlining the contours of a pure representation of Christianity in a specific geographical and chronological context. To nuance the standard approach of historical studies of evangelicalism in the early to mid-twentieth century, this study presents C.E. Brown as a case study for understanding how evangelical Christianity

³⁵ Molly Worthen, *Apostles of Reason: The Crisis of Authority in American Evangelicalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 3-4.

was recognized and described within a holiness group during the 1930s to 1950s. Central to this conception is Brown's claim of being a fundamentalist.

Fundamentalism

Given the status of fundamentalism in the early 1930s, Brown's use of a conference dedicated to "fundamental doctrines" is significant.³⁶ The editor unabashedly claimed the label of "fundamentalist" throughout his editorship, which lasted from 1930 to 1951. One might expect, given the adjective employed, for Brown to urge the conferences to focus on biblical inerrancy or substitutionary atonement to quell any advances against Christianity. Instead, on this occasion, Brown concluded that the inaugural conference should select a topic from among eschatology, ecclesiology, and sanctification.³⁷ Eschatology would seem like the frontrunner for a fundamentalist given

³⁶ George Marsden, the foremost scholar of fundamentalism, described fundamentalists as early twentieth-century evangelicals who militantly opposed modernism. Others, such as Ernest Sandeen, have highlighted millenarianism as the animating impulse of the fundamentalist tradition. Regardless of the framework, the publishing of a collection of essays titled *The Fundamentals* between 1910 and 1915 was a crucial development in fundamentalism. Lyman Stewart, the oil magnate and co-founder of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (now Biola University), supported the project financially. The essays featured an array of theologically conservative scholars and ministers who attested to the fundamental truths of the Christian faith regarding biblical authority, the atonement, the return of Christ, and more. Despite these contentions for the faith in the 1910s, the phrase "fundamentalist" was not coined until 1920 by the Baptist minister, Curtis Lee Laws. Scholars have referred to the series of denominational battles, primarily among Presbyterians and Northern Baptists, throughout the 1920s and 1930s as the "Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy." The traditional historiographical approach declared the modernists victorious over the fundamentalists, especially after the Scopes Trial in 1925. Due to their defeat, fundamentalists retreated to the isolation of their institutions and networks only to reemerge shortly after World War II. Recent scholarship, like that of Matthew Avery Sutton, challenges the "rise-fall-rebirth" framework in contending that fundamentalist engagement with culture persisted into the 1930s and 1940s. In this way, the timing and posture of Brown's editorship contribute directly to the historiographical discussions on fundamentalism and evangelicalism. For more on fundamentalism, see Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism*; Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*; Matthew Avery Sutton, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2014).

³⁷ Brown, "New Way to Fight," 3.

that, as Ernest Sandeen outlined in *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, elaborating on the signs and proximity of Christ's return gave "life and shape" to fundamentalism.³⁸ However, despite his self-identification as a fundamentalist, Brown had no interest in raising the apocalyptic alarm about the correlation between Christ's return and the advance of communism, or any other sign for that matter. He regarded these cries as false and misleading, and premillennialism and dispensationalism ranked among the subjects that received his sharpest critique.³⁹ He repeatedly blasted premillennialism's use of fear as a manipulative and harmful theological approach. Brown believed fervently in the return of Christ and consistently upheld the amillennial position of the Church of God.⁴⁰ For Brown, Christ's return was coming, but not necessarily imminent; the impending action of God was the restoration of the Church to its apostolic standard.

Although he fiercely opposed modernism, as an ecclesiastical authority in a holiness group, Brown represented a form of fundamentalism that differs from the

³⁸ Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, xiv-xix.

³⁹ Views within Christianity about the end times (eschatology) are divided into three categories: premillennialism, postmillennialism, and amillennialism. The primary distinguishing element is whether one holds that the return of Christ will occur before (premillennial) or after (postmillennial) the millennium, which is a literal thousand-year period of peace and prosperity. Amillennialism regards the millennium as referring to the reign of Christ figuratively. Some premillennialists adhere to dispensationalism, which understands the division of history into various ages or periods (dispensations), with an acute distinction between Israel and the Church. The number and duration of dispensations are contested, but dispensationalists uphold that specific events in history demarcate the span of the various dispensations. For dispensationalists, the restoration of Jews to Palestine is an extremely crucial event precipitating the return of Christ. See Sutton, *American Apocalypse*, 14-22.

⁴⁰ Often referring to the movement as the "Evening Light Saints," first generation Church of God thinkers interpreted the apocalyptic texts of the Bible in a framework oriented around the restoration of God's Church. The church had moved from the Early Morning Age to the Papal Age to the Protestant Age and, with the inception of the Church of God, entered the Evening Light Age. C.E. Brown and others challenged this framework and its ecclesiological implications while still maintaining an amillennial reading of apocalyptic texts. See Merle D. Strege, *I Saw The Church: The Life of the Church of God Told Theologically* (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 2002), 95-112, 203-220.

definition of most American religious historians. The eschatological foundation of his fundamentalism was not focused on Christ's return but the restoration of the Church.⁴¹ The Church of God's ecclesiological teaching signaled the completion of the final objective in the reformation of the Church.⁴² In Brown's view, the first phase occurred with Pietism and the recognition of the centrality of the forgiveness of sinners; the awakening of Christians to the importance of sanctification through the actions of John and Charles Wesley marked the second phase.⁴³ Salvation and sanctification were by no means minimized for Brown, but ecclesiology remained as the last unfilled phase in the reformation. Referring to the prayer of Christ in John 17, Brown argued that the goal of the movement was visible, organic unity among Christians by eschewing denominational affiliations, especially the attempts within so-called mainline churches that he described as moving toward a federation of denominations.⁴⁴ Because Christians lacked the unity that Christ prescribed, Brown thought that they were unable to offer the world a full

⁴¹ Although not all fundamentalists were premillennialists, premillennialism emphasized the decline of the Church and of society until Christ returned to inaugurate a literal thousand years of peace and prosperity. The "ruin of the Church" was operative in the theological works of the dispensationalist John Nelson Darby and others. This dissertation will show that Brown partially followed the logic of the "ruin of the Church," especially the role of the Catholic Church in that process, but also viewed God effecting restoration within the Church, rather than through Christ's return. For more on Darby, dispensationalism, and the ruin of the Church, see Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 68-71; Paul Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1992), 86-90.

⁴² Early Church of God leaders believed they discovered God's vision for the church. The primary barrier to this vision was denominationalism, which incited division where God intended unity. Denominations were believed to be human innovations that usurped God's authority in pronouncing who was a member or minister in God's Church. An experience of entire sanctification made one holy and thus a part of God's Church. See John W.V. Smith and Merle D. Stregge, *The Quest for Holiness and Unity*, 2nd ed. (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 2009), 86-92.

⁴³ C.E. Brown, "Prayers Which Mold History," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 24, 1944, 1-2.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

rendering of the Church that God intended. Christians were not left to surmise on their own about the specific aspects of God's vision for the church, however. The model of the apostolic church had shown that Christians should "worship in congregations where membership in the spiritual church of Christ is all that is necessary to constitute membership in the local church."⁴⁵ Brown's ecclesiological framework affirmed the core teaching of early Church of God leaders while also adapting some aspects in response to developments in the movement's structure and hierarchy.

Although typically viewed as antithetical to the experiential emphasis in revivalism, Brown regarded doctrine as the foundation of the Christian life after one's conversion experience. He further saw doctrine as the source of a group's strength and growth because it offered truth instead of "sentimentalism and sensationalism."⁴⁶ At its core, however, doctrine provided the Christian with a means to examine, while never substituting for, Christ's salvific work.⁴⁷ Brown contended, "But when we see Christian doctrine as a devout contemplation of what Christ does for us and in us, then its development becomes a means of spiritual growth and a discipline for the cultivation of heart, mind, and soul in the nurture of the life of Christ."⁴⁸ For Brown, ideas and doctrine

⁴⁵ C.E. Brown, "Visible Church Unity and How Accomplished," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 12, 1938, 15.

⁴⁶ C.E. Brown, "The Currency of the Kingdom," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 20, 1943, 1.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ C.E. Brown, "Let's Take a Look," 1.

were consistent with and complemented faith, but faith's essence was experiential.⁴⁹ The Christian life based only on experience was flimsy and shallow and possessed vitality only when one worked toward a deeper understanding of its foundation. Toward this end, Brown consistently urged *Gospel Trumpet* readers to engage and promote the theological fundamentals as outlined in a holiness group.

The Holiness Movement

Many studies have identified the nineteenth century as the era of the holiness movement's primary influence and often presented its origins as linked inextricably to Methodism.⁵⁰ Additionally, the holiness movement's most significant contribution is typically identified as serving as the crucible for the origin and development of pentecostalism in the United States in the early twentieth century.⁵¹ This approach

⁴⁹ Brown regarded doctrinal preaching as a particularly useful means for eliciting a conversion experience if the preaching did not feature "more conviction than understanding." C.E. Brown, "Let's Take a Look," 1.

⁵⁰ The Wesleyan branch of the holiness movement arose in response to the growth and success of Methodism during the nineteenth century. Concerned believers sought to revive the theology that had declined among those who enjoyed increased wealth and respectability in American society. The timeframe for many holiness studies may extend beyond the nineteenth century, but the end date is typically within the first couple decades of the twentieth century. In this way, the approach contends that the substantive contribution of the tradition occurred in the nineteenth century and the ramifications of that contribution spilled into the twentieth century. See, John Leland Peters, *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1956); Charles Edwin Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1974); Melvin E. Dieter, *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996).

⁵¹ Matthew Avery Sutton characterized the late nineteenth century Wesleyan and Higher Life traditions as "radical evangelicals" out of which pentecostals and fundamentalists emerged. For Sutton, the merger of pentecostals and fundamentalists in the 1940s formed the "modern evangelical movement." See Sutton, *American Apocalypse*, x.

overlooks the expansion and growth of the holiness movement in the twentieth century.⁵² In addition to denominational histories, recent monographs have drawn attention to prominent themes within holiness groups that emerged and matured during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era in the United States.⁵³ Because the Church of God's origin and growth occurred during this time, there is a need to locate the group in the broader movement.

Studies of the holiness movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries depict two related developments: the emergence of the radical holiness movement and the dispersion of premillennialism within, at least a subsection of, the radical holiness movement. In contrast to the holiness movement's "denominational loyalists," the radical wing contained individuals who were not closely dependent upon a denomination and were free to pursue "a radical reordering of economic, social, and political institutions."⁵⁴ Spanning from traditionalists to radicals, a vast network of individuals coalesced through meetings and periodicals in the promotion of holiness theology.

⁵² By the middle of the century, prominent mainline figures were aware of the growth of holiness and pentecostal denominations, which the mainline leaders referred to, often dismissively, as "cults" or "sects." See Charles S. Braden, "Churches of the Dispossessed," *Christian Century*, January 26, 1944, 108-110; Henry P. Van Dusen, "Caribbean Holiday," *Christian Century*, August 17, 1955, 946-948; Van Dusen, "Force's Lessons," 122-124.

⁵³ Recent examples include William Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers: Evangelicals and Radicals in Progressive Era America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Wallace Thornton Jr., *When the Fire Fall: Martin Wells Knapp's Vision of Pentecost and the Beginnings of God's Bible School* (Lexington, KY: Emeth Press, 2014).

⁵⁴ Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers*, 8-9.

One significant institutional development in the holiness movement occurred because of the camp meeting held at Vineland, New Jersey in 1867: the formation of the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness, also known as the National Holiness Association.⁵⁵ Throughout the late nineteenth century, various holiness associations formed with the same guiding impulse of reviving holiness across the country. Unlike the National Holiness Association, however, the local and regional associations that emerged throughout the Midwest and the South increasingly developed independently of Methodism and, by extension, served as a fertile source for the emergence of new holiness denominations.⁵⁶ “Come-outers” departed from institutions they regarded as compromised to form new movements.⁵⁷ Changing contexts and concerns led to adjustments in the form and goals of the holiness message.

As the importance of loyalty to a denomination waned, the possibility of integrating new theological convictions, such as premillennialism or faith healing, increased. The destruction of the Civil War squelched the postmillennial optimism of many within the broader contours of American society, including many within the holiness movement. In the teachings of A.B. Simpson and Martin Wells Knapp, premillennialism arose as an attractive option for the layperson in the holiness

⁵⁵ See Kenneth O. Brown, *Inskip, McDonald, Fowler: “Wholly and Forever Thine”—Early Leadership in the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness* (Hazleton, PA: Holiness Archives, 1999).

⁵⁶ Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers*, 19.

⁵⁷ On “come-outism”, see Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion*, 55-61; Dieter, *Holiness Revival*, 207-208, 230-233.

movement.⁵⁸ Despite receiving criticism from the leadership of the National Holiness Association (NHA), the proponents of premillennialism and faith healing found a receptive audience. The formation of the International Holiness Union and Prayer League (IHUPL) in 1897 marked a formal separation between so-called “traditionalists” and “radicals” within the holiness movement.⁵⁹

As the holiness movement progressed into the twentieth century and the split between traditionalists and radicals persisted, holiness adherents formed new denominations and built a network of institutions. Women played an unmistakable role in the formation of these institutions including schools, rescue homes, and mission organizations. Particularly during the Progressive Era, the generation of female evangelists who engaged in various evangelistic, educational, and humanitarian efforts were pivotal in creating the shift from “itinerancy to institution building.”⁶⁰ Many of the women in this cadre of evangelists were connected in some form to the holiness movement and exhibited “holy boldness” because of their experience of entire sanctification.⁶¹ The preaching and camp meetings were converted into structures for the promotion of the holiness message. Some of these women worked at building institutions within their denomination while others, such as Mary Lee Cagle and Alma White,

⁵⁸ On the historical lineage of premillennialism, see Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000), 143-171.

⁵⁹ Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers*, 29-30.

⁶⁰ Priscilla Pope-Levison, *Building The Old Time Religion: Women Evangelists in the Progressive Era* (New York: NYU Press, 2014), 4-5.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 9-14.

separated to form new denominations—the New Testament Church of Christ and the Pillar of Fire Church, respectively. Throughout the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, there are numerous examples of disaffected members leaving denominations to form and lead new holiness groups.⁶² With its formation in 1881, the Church of God was one of many holiness groups engaged in formulating a system and means by which to spread their message.⁶³

Roughly halfway between the formation of the NHA and the IHUPL, an evangelist named D.S. Warner left a holiness association in northern Indiana. Upon leaving, Warner avowed to promote the holiness message and to denounce any human organization, whether it be an association or denomination, which Warner perceived as supporting division within Christianity.⁶⁴ Warner's overriding interest was the promotion of the beliefs and structure of the true Church. In seeking a radical reordering of the Church through an amillennial reading of scripture, Warner's involvement with the Church of God contributed to the formation of a subsection within the radical holiness movement that had no affinity for premillennialism. Inheriting and modifying the ecclesiology of Warner and other first-generation leaders, Brown indicates one of the tracks along which the radical holiness movement developed.

⁶² These groups include the Church of God (Anderson) in 1881, the Church of God (Holiness) in 1883, the Pilgrim Holiness Church in 1897, the Pillar of Fire Church in 1901, and the Church of the Nazarene in 1908.

⁶³ For early works outlining the institutionalization process in the Church of God, see Aubrey Leland Forrest, "A Study of the Development of the Basic Doctrines and Institutional Patterns in the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana)" (PhD diss., The University of Southern California, 1948); Valorous Clear, "The Church of God: A Study in Social Adaptation" (PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 1953).

⁶⁴ Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 37-48.

The Church of God

The Church of God is a movement whose leading reformer, D.S. Warner, had “no loyalty to either [John] Wesley or the Methodist church.”⁶⁵ Warner separated from the Churches of God of North America, also referred to as the Church of God (Winebrenner), which ultimately had its theological roots in the German Reformed Church.⁶⁶ In stark contrast with holiness denominations emerging from Methodism, such as the Church of the Nazarene, Warner opposed any ecclesiastical structures, which he regarded as originating solely in human schemes, in favor of Holy Spirit leadership.⁶⁷ Designated as “man rule,” positions such as general superintendents or structures like credentialing committees were foreign additions to God’s Church, according to Warner, because God had only promised the Church the power of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁸ This approach established a context in which the *Gospel Trumpet* editor, rather than a general superintendent or a president, was the prominent theological voice in the movement.⁶⁹ The critical historical works of the Church of God address many of the chief contributions of the editors. Surprisingly, however, there are a limited number of studies on the individual editors

⁶⁵ Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 9.

⁶⁶ Richard Kern, *John Winebrenner: 19th Century Reformer* (Harrisburg, PA: Central Publishing House, 1974); Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 29-30, 42-48.

⁶⁷ Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 86-92.

⁶⁸ Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 76.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 10-11. The notion of a so-called “editor bishop” was not novel to the Church of God and was quite common, especially within denominations with restorationist impulses like the Churches of Christ and the Disciples of Christ. For more on the notion of an editor bishop in those groups, see Richard T. Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith: The Story of Churches of Christ in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996), 242-244; Elesha J. Coffman, *The Christian Century and the Rise of the Protestant Mainline* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 33-58.

themselves. Most of these studies focus on the first, D.S. Warner.⁷⁰ The most sustained treatment of Brown is a comparative study of the ecclesiology of the first four *Gospel Trumpet* editors that concludes with a biographical sketch of Brown.⁷¹

An in-depth look is needed at Brown's editorship because it spanned a crucial period of unprecedented growth in the Church of God. Brown succeeded F.G. Smith (1880-1947) as the fourth editor of the *Gospel Trumpet* in 1930. The extant statistics for the 1920s show Church of God membership oscillating around 30,000 members. That number saw an increase of 234 percent over the duration of Brown's editorship.⁷² In 1930 there were 29,123 members in congregations in the United States and Canada, and by Brown's retirement in 1951 there were 97,358.⁷³ The purpose of this study is not, however, to assess the factors contributing to this tremendous growth. To be sure, a periodical editor's work may contribute to growth or decline in a religious group without

⁷⁰ See Barry L. Callen, *It's God's Church: The Life and Legacy of Daniel Sidney Warner* (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 1995); Thomas A. Fudge, *Daniel Warner and the Paradox of Religious Democracy in Nineteenth-Century America* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1998).

⁷¹ Lee Dean Preston, "Charles E. Brown: His Life and Influence as Editor in Chief of the Gospel Trumpet Company, On the Organization of the Life and Work of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana)," (STM thesis, Iliff School of Theology, 1969).

⁷² The movement's aversion to membership means that one should evaluate the data's import with some caution. In the late 1930s, Elver F. Adcock, the Clergy Bureau's registrar, told *Trumpet* readers that, even though there was a "fairly well-known and publicly-recognized membership" in Church of God congregations, the Church of God possessed no "really accurate" statistics. He urged those who reported the statistics for the *Yearbook* to distinguish between the general number of adherents in a congregation and saved individuals over the age of thirteen. E.F. Adcock, "Fifteen Year's Membership Growth of the Church of God," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 12, 1938, 3, 10.

⁷³ The revival of religion after World War II did contribute, in part, to this growth. However, the most significant growth occurred during the 1930s. The most sizable growth in the total number of members over a five-year period occurred between 1930 and 1935 when membership increased from 29,123 to 59,799. The peak growth in the total number of members over a ten-year period occurred between 1932 and 1942 when the total grew from 38,227 to 83,508. See Appendix B.

necessarily being the sole, or even the most significant, cause of the change. Moreover, although Brown and other editors almost certainly would have hoped otherwise, there was not necessarily a correlation between membership in the Church of God and a *Gospel Trumpet* subscription.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the growth does raise the question of what leaders were communicating in the periodical. Few figures exhibited a more pervasive presence in the Church of God during the period from the Great Depression to the Korean War than C.E. Brown, who served, for many years concurrently, as *Trumpet* editor, president of the Church of God Missionary Board, and faculty member at the Anderson College and Theological Seminary.

The aim of this dissertation is not merely to augment the historical studies of a denomination but also to indicate the movement's position and significance in the broader theological milieu of the early to mid-twentieth century. As previously demonstrated, the Church of God experienced unprecedented numerical increase during this period, so it comes as no surprise that this group was counted among the rapidly spreading fringe sects of the Third Force. Because the Church of God portrayed vibrancy and growth at the close of the 1950s, this study will explore the methods and answers that were offered during the preceding decades to understand recurring themes and approaches employed in an expanding denomination. This dissertation addresses a lacuna

⁷⁴ For example, the 1932 *Church of God Yearbook* listed 38,227 members. At the beginning of 1932, Brown stated that the average weekly circulation of the *Gospel Trumpet* was around 20,000. At the beginning of 1933, Brown noted that the "Ten Weeks for Ten Cents" campaign from the previous winter had resulted in around 100,000 ten-week subscriptions. As it had from the beginning, the *Gospel Trumpet* moved within and beyond Church of God circles to declare the reformation's message. See C.E. Brown, "The Plight of Religious Journals," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 23, 1932, 4; C.E. Brown, "Another Ten-Cent Offer," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 28, 1933, 3.

within Church of God historiography and provides a more nuanced account of twentieth-century evangelicalism through a comprehensive assessment of the intellectual contours of Brown's thought.

Method and Sources

Through biography and intellectual history, this dissertation will examine Brown's presence as a public figure in the Church of God. Because Brown spans the second and third generations of leadership, this study points to notable developments in the Church of God's structure and theology. This study also positions the Church of God within its context through connections with broader traditions like the holiness movement and evangelicalism. The approach taken in this dissertation is to assess the major themes and concerns that emerge in Brown's periodical articles and monographs.

This study outlines Brown's thought according to three broad, yet significantly interdependent, categories: theological, ecclesiological, and social. The section on Brown's theology explores how he presented and prioritized Christian doctrine with respect to the foundation of the Christian life. While Brown certainly drew on fundamental convictions of the Christian faith, the element of innovation and change challenged believers to adapt and rethink the relationship of Christianity to the problems of the world. Additionally, this area examines, through his assessment of the practices and postures of the Christian life, what insights Brown saw doctrinal study providing for how a Christian should live in the world. The ecclesiological category evaluates Brown's understanding of the proper approach to Christian unity and of other Christian groups'

relationship to the parameters of the faith. Of primary importance is the rationale employed in his assessment of the similarities and differences between the doctrine of the Church of God and that of what can be loosely classified as conservative Christianity, specifically other holiness groups, pentecostals, fundamentalists, and neo-evangelicals. Finally, the social category investigates the socio-political implications of various doctrinal positions, especially eschatology. Some items are national in scope, such as the policies and programs enacted under the New Deal, while others are international, as found in an assessment of communism or the formation of Israel. These three areas certainly do not exhaust the depth of Brown's work entirely. However, they suggest continuity and discontinuity with the contours and frameworks in the historiography of American Christianity and, by extension, indicate the multivalent nature of evangelicalism in the early to mid-twentieth century.

The nature of this work is primarily archival. The Church of God Archives in Anderson, Indiana holds the C.E. Brown Papers, which include various addresses, lectures, and a limited set of correspondence.⁷⁵ The archival holdings also include minutes from the executive committee and annual meetings of the Church of God Missionary Board, the Church of God yearbooks, and the *Gospel Trumpet*. Brown became a contributing editor for the *Gospel Trumpet* in 1917 and continued writing articles well after the conclusion of his editorship. His corpus also includes fifteen monographs with twelve published during his editorship, two children's novels, and

⁷⁵ The number of sources that reveal the private dimensions of Brown's life and thought are limited. There are no known personal diaries, and the extant correspondence covers only a few years during the early years of Brown's editorship. This dissertation largely explores the public dimensions of Brown's thinking.

numerous tracts. In addition to his written works, several addresses, reports, and lectures are utilized to provide a richer understanding of Brown's communication with the Church of God faithful. Given that his authority was most significant during his editorship, this study gives foremost attention to his editorials in the *Gospel Trumpet*.

Outline

The first chapter provides an overview of Brown's life in the Church of God, with attention given to his editorial career. Over the duration of his editorship, Brown regarded himself as upholding the editorial policy of his predecessors in limiting the scope and aim of the *Gospel Trumpet* to core theological instruction. Brown understood this restriction as allowing for at least the possibility of diversity in politics and theology. On a limited number of occasions later in his editorial career, Brown took the liberty of bending the policy to comment directly upon the political scene because of its dire implications. In total, the survey of Brown's life provides contextualization of the significant events of the Church of God in connection with Brown's dual desires for evangelism and education.

As the editor of a periodical with an overtly theological approach, Brown offered insight on a variety of theological topics. The second chapter begins with an exploration of Brown's understanding of holiness and faith and the role of doctrine in the theological task. Although doctrine necessarily involved the intellect, Brown's approach, with its heavy Christological orientation, spurred the Christian not to reduce faith to rational argumentation but instead to challenge and grow the individual and corporate response of Christians in the present. Doctrine's importance for the Christian life ultimately extended

beyond the Christian to the outpouring of God's Spirit throughout the world in revival. Because Brown saw doctrine as essential to the Christian life, he also offered commentary on the implications of doctrine for revival, evangelism, and missions.

Ecclesiology and eschatology are the two areas that received the most attention in Brown's editorials and monographs and are the primary domains of the third and fourth chapters. While the Church of God contrasted sharply with prevalent impulses for Christian unity, Brown's intellectual musings also departed from the exclusivist approach of early Church of God leaders to the Church of God and its role in history. The ecclesiology of those early leaders relied heavily upon apocalyptic thought, particularly that the biblical text pointed not to the return of Christ but to the restoration of God's Church. For this reason, Brown regarded as nonsensical claims that the biblical text charted the signs, particularly in political figures or trends, of Christ's return. From his interest in the history and teaching of the Church, Brown's theological considerations frequently commented on the movement's teaching about the broader framework of Christianity.

To convey the history of Christianity entirely to *Gospel Trumpet* readers, Brown offered an evaluation of contemporary individuals and denominations from close theological relatives, like pentecostals, to groups with quite disparate theological foundations, like fundamentalists and theological liberals. Of all the varieties of Christianity, notwithstanding the Church of God, Brown consistently elevated, as closest to the ideal form, a fundamentalist approach, which was not necessarily coterminous with the contemporaneous fundamentalist tradition. The crux of the issue was identifying the

appropriate doctrines and approach that were genuinely fundamental. In addition to fundamentalists, Brown excoriated the teachings of modernists and ecumenical Christianity over the duration of his editorship. Whether about fundamentalists or ecumenists, Brown's evaluation of other groups ultimately led him to reflect upon the state of Christianity. What he found was that the movement needed to soften its stance toward other Christians while maintaining that the movement's doctrine enacted a crucial development in the trajectory of Christianity. In the face of similarities, Brown routinely conveyed his sharpest area of departure with other fundamentalists through the role of prophecy in the return of Christ. He was a firm believer in the resurrection and return of Christ but also took no issue with social reform efforts. Those Christians who deprecated social reform articulated a false faith. Brown always stipulated, however, that lasting social change would come only from the reform of the individual.

Although the editorial policy of the *Gospel Trumpet* prohibited promoting a specific political agenda, Brown frequently offered theological reflection on current events and, at times, commented directly upon social or political ideas and situations. On some topics, Brown's position reflected prevailing attitudes among the holiness movement and broad cross-sections of Protestantism. The fifth chapter also notes the dissonance in the array of social initiatives that Brown supported along with the various maladies against which he spoke. The chapter takes as its primary lens Brown's evaluation of the United States. Early in his editorial career, during the Great Depression and New Deal, Brown was sharply critical of the prevailing practices and ideologies in the United States. However, the social critique faded as World War II approached, and

Brown brought renewed zeal to his convictions about the role of democracy and the United States in the world. Although he never wavered in his proclivity for democracy, the shortcomings of the United States in the post-World War II era reiterated Brown's belief that the United States could never encapsulate the kingdom of God.

The conclusion incorporates the insights of the preceding chapters in a discussion of Brown's position and significance within American Christianity. It outlines how Brown's theological, ecclesiastical, and social claims indicate continuity and divergence with other Protestant groups. This chapter utilizes the framework of Van Dusen's Third Force to outline the importance of the Church of God, and by extension other holiness and pentecostal denominations, in the first half of the twentieth century. It illustrates how the study of groups that historians have identified as peripheral provide a more nuanced understanding of Christianity. The conclusion reiterates the salient themes that arise in the survey of the various categories of Brown's thought and notes further areas for research. It provides an assessment of the type of evangelicalism that Brown represented. Overall, Brown's conception of evangelicalism and fundamentalism established the centrality of doctrine for experientialist vitality, rather than epistemological certainty.

CHAPTER ONE
FROM BOY-PREACHER TO EDITOR: THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF
CHARLES EWING BROWN

In the same year (1933) that he urged *Trumpet* readers to consider the worth of doctrinal conferences, C.E. Brown turned fifty years old and began his fourth decade of ordained ministry in the Church of God. Although unknowable at the time, Brown's ministerial career would ultimately span another three and a half decades. He preached his first sermon at the age of eleven in 1895 and, while still a teenager, received ordination in the Church of God in 1903. He continued in active ministry in the Church of God as an evangelist, pastor, editor, or educator until 1968. This chapter broadly outlines Brown's life and his career in the Church of God. His conversion, education, and early ministerial positions demonstrate how concerns about evangelism and education informed his tenure as *Trumpet* editor. This chapter also considers the administrative and teaching positions that Brown held, examines the policies and power dynamics of his editorship, and explores his post-editorship experience. Overall, this chapter reveals Brown's influence and posture within a growing holiness group.

Brown's time as editor represents not only the span of his most significant influence in the Church of God but also a period of tremendous change in the movement. Disagreements about the right person for the editorship led to Brown's promotion to the position as a compromise candidate. Because of these circumstances, Brown operated carefully from a posture of mediation. This caution is demonstrated most notably in his

repeated claims of fidelity to the editorial policy of his predecessors. While espousing continuity, Brown also departed significantly from his forerunners in diffusing the concentration of power from the *Trumpet* editor to *Trumpet* writers and readers. However, as chapter three will explore, Brown retained enough power to rework the framework of one of the Church of God's most fundamental doctrines, its ecclesiology. At its core, Brown's editorship did not exhibit the concerns of an academic but those of an evangelist. Brown was a mostly self-taught evangelist who read voraciously, took academic work seriously, and urged *Trumpet* readers to do the same. He was an evangelist for much of the first two decades of his ministry, and his later career reveals an evangelist who was not content with eliciting an experience and then leaving the newly converted to find their way in faith alone. The concerns for evangelism and education took root during Brown's early years inform and illuminate the actions and beliefs of his years as pastor, administrator, and editor. Brown's dual desire for evangelism and for sustaining the converted depict him as quintessentially evangelical. The disruption affected by the conversion experience was necessary but ineffectual if not accompanied by continuing growth and development.

The Boy Preacher's Beginnings

Charles Ewing Brown was born in Elizabethtown, Illinois, on December 30, 1883, to Willis M. Brown and Georgiana (Martin) Brown. Willis Brown played an unmistakable role in Charles' early life, as some of Charles' most formative events imitated Willis' story. Situated along the Ohio River in southern Illinois, Hardin County

was the area in which Brown's ancestors had owned land and farmed for several decades. However, the heartache endured in Willis' childhood and teenage years shifted the family's trajectory. Willis' mother passed away when he was two, and his father died when he was eighteen. Instead of continuing in the family trade, he squandered his inheritance on alcohol and depended on working as a hired hand for neighbors in the mid-1870s.¹ One of the most prominent landowners in Hardin County employed Willis in his early twenties. During this time the farmer's niece attracted Willis' attention, and the two married in the early 1880s. The marriage was not a panacea for the underlying causes of Willis' personal woes. Charles later relayed the cyclical pattern of the strained home life of his childhood. His father often managed to secure a living for the family through work in a variety of areas, including farming, trading horses, and railroad contract work, throughout southern Illinois and western Kentucky.² However, alcohol was the ubiquitous foil that consistently derailed any of Willis' advancements. At the beginning of 1895, Willis had not attended church in over fifteen years, and Charles described his father as "a drunkard, an infidel, and a gambler."³

A traveling evangelist named Willis M. Bunch, an uneducated preacher from southern Indiana whose religious fervor frequently spilled into fanaticism, altered the Brown family's course. Bunch purchased a train ticket in the early winter of 1894 in response to his conviction that God was directing him to travel as far as his money

¹ C.E. Brown, "The Story of My Life," [1964?], Charles Ewing Brown Papers. Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN, 4.

² *Ibid.*, 5-7.

³ C.E. Brown, "The Most Remarkable Man I Ever Knew," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 3, 1945, 1.

allowed.⁴ He made it to southern Illinois. He preached throughout Hardin County and, before returning home in January 1895, held a final series of meetings at Mount Zion Baptist Church in Cave-In-Rock, Illinois. It was because of these meetings that Willis was converted and later experienced entire sanctification. Upon returning to his childhood home in his mid-forties, Charles reflected on his father's actions after those meetings. He wrote, "I lay on my bed late at night and saw my father come in when he was under conviction. He smoked and mused a long time; and finally he knocked the fire out of his pipe and knelt right in that corner and prayed—the first time I ever saw my father pray. That night he was saved."⁵

Conversion

After renouncing the habits of his pre-conversion life, Willis welcomed Bunch into their home as the evangelist conducted revival meetings in their area. Brown's account to *Gospel Trumpet* readers of his first exchange with Bunch in the family home is rife with suspense. The eleven-year-old Brown dawdled through his chores to delay the encounter but finally was forced to meet, with trembling hands, the man who played a pivotal role in turning his father away from liquor and tobacco.⁶ At over six feet tall and featuring a waist-length beard, Bunch was an imposing figure. The evangelist approached Charles quickly and spoke to him as if he were "somebody very important whose soul's

⁴ C.E. Brown, "Most Remarkable Man," 1.

⁵ C.E. Brown, "A New Holy Land," *Gospel Trumpet*, August 9, 1928, 8.

⁶ C.E. Brown, "Most Remarkable Man," 2.

salvation was a matter of the deepest urgency.”⁷ In a somewhat anticlimactic turn, Charles’ acceptance of Christ did not occur that evening, although the encounter profoundly impacted him. Brown declared, “on that day *I met the Word of God*. I met my fate for all time and for all eternity.”⁸ The intensity of the situation softened for Charles as an illness left Bunch bedridden. Bunch’s convalescence provided the opportunity for the evangelist and young child to spend several evenings discussing salvation in Christ, and, like his father, Brown’s conversion experience occurred near the family’s fireplace in response to Bunch’s efforts. Reminiscing on the second evening of the exchange with Bunch, Brown recounted, “he won me to the Lord. He lighted a lamp in my soul that has burned for now these fifty years.”⁹ Brown, however, did not convey to *Trumpet* readers that the seemingly routine manner of his conversion left him disappointed and filled with doubt. He gave no indication of the interworking or resolution of these feelings beyond claiming, “I held my faith in Christ.”¹⁰ He attested to that faith publicly six months later at his baptism in the Saline River on July 4, 1895.

Included in the profound change in Willis’ life was his sense that he was called, like Bunch, to itinerant evangelism. Willis approached his wife with the idea of selling the family’s property to pursue full-time evangelistic work. His wife reprimanded him sharply saying that “if [Willis] had farmed and drunk whisky [he] could farm and

⁷ C.E. Brown, “Most Remarkable Man,” 2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1; *italics in original*.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁰ C.E. Brown, “Story of My Life,” 10.

preach.”¹¹ Consigned to local evangelistic efforts, Willis preached in meetings throughout Hardin County. A few months after his baptism Charles joined his father and preached his first sermon at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Cave-In-Rock. Not yet twelve years old and wearing berry-stained pants, Brown had to peer around the pulpit to see the crowd.¹² Instead of a random occurrence, this sermon was the first of many preaching engagements over the duration of Brown’s lifetime. The Brown family featured two evangelists.

Evangelism

The father and son duo preached throughout southern Illinois and garnered a sizable reputation. The “boy preacher” was in high demand.¹³ In the account of Willis Brown, large crowds appeared for a meeting in the spring of 1896, less than a year after Charles’ baptism, and the minister of the hosting congregation specifically requested that

¹¹ Willis M. Brown, *Life and Conversion of a Kentucky Infidel: In His Own Words* (Anderson, IN: Gospel Trumpet Company, 1904), 137.

¹² C.E. Brown, “Story of My Life,” 11.

¹³ As a child preacher, Brown was unusual but not unique. While definitive statistical data is lacking, there are indications that Brown’s time as a child evangelist predated the surge of the phenomenon, particularly of girl evangelists, in the so-called “Golden Age” of the 1920s and 1930s. Perhaps the most famous child evangelist of that period, Uldine Utley, was converted at a service held by Aimee Semple McPherson and promoted by the fundamentalist preacher, John R. Rice. While operating in a theological tradition related to Utley’s, Brown distinguished himself from Utley and ostensibly other child evangelists in that his ministerial career persisted beyond childhood. For more on child evangelists and Uldine Utley, see Thomas A. Robinson and Lanette D. Ruff, *Out of the Mouths of Babes: Girl Evangelists in the Flapper Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), especially 10-12; Thomas A. Robinson, *Preacher Girl: Uldine Utley and the Industry of Revival* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016).

Charles make an appearance.¹⁴ Willis stated that he prayed with Charles, who wanted to rest and claimed that he had no message from God. After the time of prayer, Charles reportedly preached for nearly half an hour on the text from the Gospel of John, “Jesus Wept,” and closed with an altar call that brought two dozen people forward.¹⁵ Conflicting slightly with the duration and number converted, Brown recalled converting thirty people in as many minutes but never corroborated his father’s claim about the selected text.¹⁶ When reflecting on a series of evangelistic tours in his home county, Brown attributed his success to the fact that he had “no capacity to tell people what they did not know, but [he] could stir them up on what they did know.”¹⁷ Brown continued to accompany his father on evangelistic tours beyond Hardin County into western Kentucky and southeastern Missouri. The boy preacher possessed an inclination and a measure of adeptness for evangelism.

Brown engaged almost exclusively in full-time evangelistic work for the duration of his teens and twenties. For a person who later claimed to possess “an unreasonable passion for dates,” Brown’s writing noticeably lacks substantial commentary on the chronology, location, or outcome of his earliest evangelistic efforts.¹⁸ His first endeavors in and around Hardin County are the exception. Brown’s most thorough reflection on

¹⁴ Willis Brown, *Kentucky Infidel*, 184.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 185-86.

¹⁶ C.E. Brown, interviewed by R. Clarence Powell, Jr., May 13, 1957, transcript, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ C.E. Brown, *When The Trumpet Sounded: A History of the Church of God Reformation Movement* (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 1951), vii.

full-time evangelism is his description of the beginning of the joint efforts with his father from the spring of 1896 to the spring of 1897. The duo, along with Willis Bunch, traveled throughout western Kentucky and southern Illinois. Brown's description concluded with the events held in the United Brethren and Methodist churches in Paducah, Kentucky. Despite attestations to miraculous healings, Brown was reluctant to share details. He wrote, "we never tried to play on this success, but went on our way preaching in country school houses [sic] and churches."¹⁹

Despite Brown's nonchalant attitude about the evangelistic tours, local newspapers connected the Browns to numerous healings and attested to the excitement they generated. One report even referred to the thirteen-year-old as "Dr. Charles Brown" before recounting his miraculous healing of two Kentuckians, who were bedridden by rheumatism for several years.²⁰ Rather than the exception, these healings were a regular feature of the Browns' ministry. Within a month of the healings in Paducah, the paper in Hickman, Kentucky, claimed that Willis and Charles held meetings in rural western Kentucky that attracted 50,000 people, of which 800 attested to being "cured or benefitted" from "sundry and diverse diseases."²¹ Brown's silence on the details of his earliest days as an evangelist was not for lack of noteworthy material.

¹⁹ C.E. Brown, "Story of My Life," 12-13.

²⁰ "Brown At Paducah," *Crittenden Press* (Marion, KY), June 24, 1897, 1.

²¹ *Hickman Courier* (Hickman, KY), August 13, 1897, 3.

After joining the Church of God in 1902, Brown kept *Trumpet* readers apprised of minimal details of his activities as he was traveling.²² Beyond vague descriptors, there is minimal, if any, evidence of the content or style of his evangelism. His subsequent reflections on that period of his life nearly always gravitated toward the importance of other preachers, sometimes unnamed, who exhibited a zeal for conversion. Unsurprisingly, one of the central figures was the evangelist who was instrumental in Brown's conversion.

Brown designated Willis Bunch "The Most Remarkable Man I Ever Knew."²³ Bunch deserved the designation, not because of his eloquence or education, in fact he was deficient in those areas, but because he was "literally incandescent and aflame with the eternal fire of the Spirit."²⁴ Bunch's spiritual fervor, which was often so exuberant that others regarded him as an intense fanatic, was a complicated issue for Brown. On the one hand, he noted that Bunch would have never arrived in his rural community in southeastern Illinois and, by extension, never elicited a response in him if Bunch lacked the underlying passion for the conversion of sinners.²⁵ However, Bunch and ostensibly every preacher guided solely by zeal lacked the "training, experience, or discipline which

²² For an example of a typical update on evangelistic work, see C.E. Brown, "Field Reports," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 6, 1908, 11-12; C.E. Brown, "Field Reports," *Gospel Trumpet*, September 16, 1909, 15.

²³ Brown's original article about Willis Bunch appeared in the February 3, 1945 issue of the *Gospel Trumpet*. In 1947 the Gospel Trumpet Company reprinted this article in a collection of the accounts of the conversion experience of twenty-five church leaders. Included along with Brown's testimonial were, among others, the accounts of Torrey M. Johnson, Robert P. Shuler, and Harry A. Ironside. See Bernie Smith, *Contemporary Conversions* (Anderson, IN: Gospel Trumpet Company, 1947).

²⁴ C.E. Brown, "Most Remarkable Man," 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

would moderate him into the wise ways of successful Christian living.”²⁶ In Brown’s view, those preachers stirred up crowds but did nothing to guide and mold the newly converted. Brown held one holiness preacher, B.A. Cundiff, in high regard for providing enduring substance to his listeners and for demonstrating the influence of training and discipline on the craft of preaching. Brown reflected that Cundiff’s “deep and logical preaching first opened up for me the mystery and the charm of theological thought.”²⁷ For Brown, preaching needed affective and cognitive appeals, and any evangelistic posture that did not strike the appropriate balance was harmful.

Brown treated the endeavors of Bunch, Cundiff, and many others as silent and mostly irretrievable testimonies of faithful Christian service. These evangelists were not relics of a bygone era but rather models of dedication and insight to emulate in the present. It is precarious to surmise, with such limited evidence, why Brown’s reflection on his early career always shifted to other preachers. At the very least, the description and evaluation of these evangelists outline the contours of Brown’s understanding of evangelism. Maybe he was uncomfortable with sharing, or even ashamed by, certain aspects of his career as a full-time evangelist. Maybe he wanted to avoid self-aggrandizement and to honor and respect the people who influenced him greatly. Another possibility is that he was thoroughly an evangelist. Rather than presenting the comparatively bland facts and figures of his ministry, perhaps Brown sought to elicit a passion for evangelism in *Trumpet* readers. Akin to an altar call, the conclusion of

²⁶ C.E. Brown, “Most Remarkable Man,” 1.

²⁷ C.E. Brown, “The Unrecorded History of America,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 19, 1936, 4.

Brown's editorial on Willis Bunch exhorted *Trumpet* readers to grasp the centrality of evangelism for the Christian faith. Brown wrote, "Oh, that God may help us to see that we can never give people anything better than the gospel! We can never do anything more for them than to get them saved. We shall never be remembered for anything than for the sacred work of bringing a soul to Christ."²⁸ Years had passed since his full-time evangelistic work, but Brown remained active in stirring up a response in his audience.

Education

C.E. Brown received limited formal education during his childhood, and the evangelistic tours during his early adolescence only further complicated the matter. The education before his conversion occurred at the local Hardin County schoolhouse, and Brown attested to part-time schooling in Marion, Kentucky, during an extended evangelistic stay in the fall of 1896.²⁹ In the late 1890s at a revival meeting in Portageville, Missouri, Brown became sharply aware of his lack of education and surmised about the trajectory of his life. He later relayed that listening to "old time country preachers" at the revival led him to the conclusion: "I could listen to them until I was grown and when I got grown, I would be as ignorant as they were."³⁰ In Brown's view, the remedy was located a few hundred miles to the east in Wilmore, Kentucky, at the newly-formed holiness school, Asbury College.

²⁸ C.E. Brown, "Most Remarkable Man," 2.

²⁹ C.E. Brown, "Story of My Life," 12.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

Charles saw an opportunity for bettering himself through education, but his father regarded his son's decision as nothing more than a move toward apostasy. At first glance, this response appears to be an odd stance for one whose preaching was rooted in calls to holiness. Willis' discontentment with the idea of Charles pursuing an education at Asbury was primarily the result of his belief that he and his son were to follow the commands of God, rather than a sectarian institution.³¹ Because of this view, Willis flatly asserted that the basis of his faith was that "God will do what [God] says" and, as such, that he participated only in the "church of God."³² Willis wrote that he and Charles had "held aloof from sects" and, because they lacked the support structure of a denomination, told those converted in their meetings that "the Lord would take care of them."³³ Willis was not interested in aligning with any denomination or its institutions. Although Asbury was an appropriate option for a holiness evangelist in pursuit of education, Willis interpreted Charles' choice as nothing less than a pledge of loyalty to a sect rather than to God.

How did Charles come to this conclusion if the two had previously spent the last several years together traveling and evangelizing? According to Willis, Charles started to "weaken in the faith" in the late 1890s when he started conversing with Methodists, reading the newspaper, and making claims about "the sects being as apt to be right as [the

³¹ Early Church of God leaders regarded the entirety of the denominational system to be "sectarian." That is, denominations incited division where God intended unity, and one could only experience unity in God's Church. Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 18-20.

³² Willis Brown, *Kentucky Infidel*, 267.

³³ *Ibid.*, 236.

Browns] were.”³⁴ Aside from challenging Willis’ theological convictions, the most glaring issue was that the inquisitive teenager did not have the necessary financial resources to attend Asbury. After prayer, conversation, and the seemingly ever-present pleading of Charles, Willis decided that his stance against sectarian institutions could soften if God blessed the decision by providing the money for tuition.³⁵ A Methodist minister offered to cover the expenses, but Charles only spent a few months in Wilmore because the promised funds never arrived at Asbury.³⁶ This was a sign that reassured Willis but only strengthened the resolve of Charles.

Around 1900, Brown returned to his family, who had moved to Hickman, Kentucky, as a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Having his son attend a sectarian institution was discomfoting for Willis, but active participation in a sect was devastating. He claimed that “the devil kept rolling [Charles joining Methodism] over me and it was a burden that Jesus only could bear,” but, after much prayer, God “delivered my boy and gave him back to me to again stand with me in the pulpit and herald the truth and go with me to rescue perishing souls.”³⁷ The process of delivering Charles out of Methodism took nearly two years.³⁸ Brown noted that his self-assuredness in the face of concerned family and friends extended the process.³⁹

³⁴ Willis Brown, *Kentucky Infidel*, 273.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Preston, “Brown: Life and Influence,” 218.

³⁷ Willis Brown, *Kentucky Infidel*, 275-276.

³⁸ This process evidently enervated Willis’ strict opposition to higher education and denominationalism, as Charles’ younger brother, Anderson, received a bachelor’s degree from Ohio Wesleyan University and a Bachelor of Divinity from Boston University School of Theology and was a

What finally dislodged Charles from his decision were the actions of preachers at a camp meeting in Dorena, Missouri. Brown commented that these preachers were “afraid of nothing but God [and] ashamed of nothing but sin” and that he knew this outlook was “not often the case with the sectarian ministry, and rarely, if ever so, with salaried preachers.”⁴⁰ His intuition about the preachers’ disposition moved him to question deeply, over several months, his understanding of the relationship between God’s Church and denominations. At the same time, Willis Brown was also reevaluating his stance on the movement known as the Church of God. The Browns were familiar with the *Gospel Trumpet*, but Willis did not formally minister in the Church of God until he met one of the movement’s prominent leaders, W.G. Schell, in 1902.⁴¹ Like his father, Charles ultimately decided that he was unable to preach the full gospel in a denomination and that he must come out of Methodism into the Church of God.⁴²

On August 21, 1903, Brown was ordained as a minister of the Church of God. Not yet twenty years old, he was ministering in a Christian body that placed minimal value on Christian education.⁴³ He had faced detractors before, though, and remained firm in his

minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church for several decades. C.E. Brown, Powell interview, May 13, 1957.

³⁹ C.E. Brown, “Testimonies,” *Gospel Trumpet*, December 25, 1902, 6.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Willis Brown, *Kentucky Infidel*, 286-287.

⁴² C.E. Brown, “Testimonies,” 6.

⁴³ By the time of Brown’s ordination in the Church of God, the first two *Trumpet* editors had expressed opposition to educational institutions in the Church of God. There was even disapproval of Sunday schools among many in the early years of the movement. The desire for the Holy Spirit to inspire and form believers facilitated a negative perception of institutions as human attempts to limit or usurp the

determination to attain education by any means. The efforts at education that occurred between his ordination and his *Trumpet* editorship laid the foundation of what became a lifelong pursuit for Brown. He possessed a penchant for the study of languages and learned, through both self-study and tutoring, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and German.⁴⁴ His insatiable appetite for reading often led him to spend upwards of ten hours daily in study, and, while pastoring in Detroit during the late 1910s and 1920s, correspondence courses through the University of Chicago offered him limited exposure to formal academic training.⁴⁵ The effect of this coursework permeated Brown's socio-political commentary in the *Trumpet*, particularly during the 1920s. One is left to wonder, as Brown left no indication, whether the Social Gospel message of Reinhold Niebuhr, who was located only a few miles away from Brown in Detroit for roughly a decade, reified the arguments and approaches that Brown found in his coursework.⁴⁶

These educational opportunities affected Brown so profoundly that he considered leaving pastoral work for a career as a politician. When "immersed in sociological studies," Brown nearly dismissed Christian ministry as "a weak and futile way to heal the

Holy Spirit's work. These views shifted in the 1910s with, among other developments, the formation of the Anderson Bible and Training School, currently Anderson University, in 1917. See Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 219-220; Merle D. Strege, *The Desk As Altar: The Centennial History of Anderson University* (Anderson, IN: Anderson University Press, 2016), 5-13.

⁴⁴ C.E. Brown, Powell interview, May 13, 1957.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Reinhold Niebuhr entered pastoral ministry in Detroit in the same year that Brown arrived. Niebuhr, who later became one of the leading theologians and ethicists of the twentieth century, frequently commented on the racial and socioeconomic realities in the city. Jeremy L. Sabella, *An American Conscience: The Reinhold Niebuhr Story* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2017), 11-17.

hurt of humanity.”⁴⁷ Brown credited God with showing him that “the gospel way is not only the best way but the only way to serve mankind and heal the social ills of the world.”⁴⁸ Despite this revelation, Brown remained convinced that following “the gospel way” and educational pursuits were not mutually exclusive. These educational endeavors, along with his ministerial and administrative contributions, led the Anderson College and Theological Seminary to confer an honorary Doctor of Divinity upon Brown in 1930.⁴⁹ The habits that Brown formed in his early ministry continued throughout his ministerial career and into retirement, with Brown continuing daily to read the New Testament in Greek into his mid-eighties. In general, the persistence of a great extent of his mental acuity apparently left him frustrated in the later years of retirement.⁵⁰ Brown’s passion for knowledge endured throughout his lifetime, while his understanding of the purpose and goal of education developed.

Brown’s situation and status in life framed his initial understanding of education. He obtained formal instruction when it was possible but otherwise taught himself in order to transcend the traps of the seemingly typical revival preacher. However, his later thinking characterized education as an integral component of the Christian life. He asserted that education, in general, endowed human beings with “the capacity to make a

⁴⁷ C.E. Brown, “The Indispensable Ingredient,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 25, 1950, 1.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Preston, “Brown: Life and Influence,” 253.

⁵⁰ Harold L. Phillips, “First, First, First...,” *Vital Christianity*, October 17, 1971, 8.

multiple, selective, and creative response to various stimuli.”⁵¹ In contrast to the “instinctive impulses of animalism,” Brown stressed that an educated response, as one ultimately founded in the “creative love of Christ,” involved restraint and deferred judgment.⁵² Anticipating his critics in a group that was historically skeptical of education, he acknowledged that the endeavor was not without faults. There was the possibility of education cultivating pride, skepticism, or an obsession with novelty, but Brown concluded that the dangers of ignorance were far more significant.⁵³ Rather than pointedly objecting to education, Brown thought that *Trumpet* readers should readily embrace it. Christian education instilled ideals and cultivated character in pursuit of those ideals. The goal of Christian education was “the highest type of human personality and the richest possible fellowship with saints and with God.”⁵⁴ For Brown, the Christian life began with a conversion experience but a deliberate process of informed study and reflected brought it to fruition.

Transitioning to a Settled Ministry

The desire for evangelism and education persisted throughout Brown’s life, but his ministerial career reveals a boy preacher who matured into a notable institutional leader. In the 1910s, Brown transitioned from itinerancy to congregational ministry and,

⁵¹ C.E. Brown, “A Biblical Doctrine of Education,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 11, 1938, 2.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ C.E. Brown, “Education for Spiritual Defense,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 26, 1941, 1.

⁵⁴ C.E. Brown, “Biblical Doctrine of Education,” 2.

by the 1930s, enjoyed positions of increased authority within the Church of God. The outworking of this process within Brown's life roughly parallels a similar process of institutionalization in the Church of God. Significant developments in the structure of the Church of God occurred in the interim between Brown's ordination in 1903 and the beginning of his editorship in 1930.⁵⁵ During that time, Brown pastored four congregations and undertook several administrative and educational responsibilities in the Church of God.

Pastoral Positions

Brown continued as a traveling evangelist for nearly a decade after his ordination. Joining the Church of God meant that his network of associates expanded well beyond his father, with whom he only held occasional meetings after his ordination. It also meant that the range of his itinerancy also increased considerably. Before 1903, the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers served as the epicenter for the ministry of Charles and Willis as they traveled mostly within southeastern Missouri, southern Illinois, and western Kentucky. As a Church of God evangelist, Brown held meetings from Pittsburgh to Seattle and a myriad of points in between in the middle years of the 1900s.⁵⁶ The range of Brown's ministry reduced, however, when he met Carrie Becker. Becker's aunt

⁵⁵ The various agencies formed during this time include the Gospel Trumpet Company (incorporated in 1903); the Missionary Board (formed in 1909, incorporated in 1914); the General Ministerial Assembly (1917); the Anderson Bible Training School (1917); the Board of Church Extension and Home Missions (1920); the Board of Sunday Schools and Religious Education (1923). See Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 152-154, 203-224.

⁵⁶ C.E. Brown, *When The Trumpet Sounded*, 240, 324.

worked for the Gospel Trumpet Company and introduced the Becker family to the Church of God, which made it possible for Charles and Carrie to meet at a camp meeting in Anderson.⁵⁷ Married on October 1, 1907, the couple had five children between 1909 and 1921. In the late 1900s, Brown's evangelistic work persisted but with a much narrower range.

Brown is said to have accepted pastorates in Chauncey, Ohio, in 1908 and in Kansas, Ohio, in 1909, during which time his oldest child, Marvin, was born.⁵⁸ However, his updates in the *Trumpet* reveal a slightly different story. He made his primary residence in these cities but traveled throughout Ohio and Michigan as an evangelist.⁵⁹ These were effectively year-long, regional evangelistic endeavors as the Brown family moved to Alexandria, Indiana in 1910.⁶⁰ There he carried out evangelistic work in Indiana and Michigan ostensibly for two years, and his second child, Muriel, was born near Alexandria in late 1911. As familial responsibilities increased over the first half decade of his marriage, Brown transitioned from crisscrossing the country to a settled ministry.

Brown stated that he pastored five congregations, the first of which was in New York City.⁶¹ However, none of the extant documents corroborate this claim about his first

⁵⁷ C.E. Brown, Powell interview, May 13, 1957.

⁵⁸ Preston, "Brown: Life and Influence," 226.

⁵⁹ C.E. Brown, "Field Reports," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 5, 1908, 13; C.E. Brown, "Field Reports," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 14, 1909, 14.

⁶⁰ C.E. Brown, "Field Reports," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 27, 1910, 13.

⁶¹ C.E. Brown, "Story of My Life," 13.

pastoral position. Brown stated that he “spent some time in New York City in the work” in 1905 around the time that D.O. Teasley began a missionary home in Brooklyn.⁶² Given the frequency and range of his travels during this time, it is highly unlikely that he would have engaged in full-time pastoral work. The longest sustained period of Brown’s proximity to New York City was when he accepted a pastorate in Philadelphia in 1912.⁶³

The Philadelphia pastorate coincided with the pinnacle of a significant dispute within the Church of God known as the “necktie controversy,” which dealt with the perceived drift in the movement toward worldliness. The controversy singled out the necktie, from among other clothing items and behaviors, as an indication that a person was not fully consecrated to God’s work.⁶⁴ The quarrel was personally significant for Brown, though, as it strained his relationship with his father. Although they had previously worked in tandem, Willis and Charles Brown stood in opposition on the issue.⁶⁵ Willis was a prominent leader of the dissenting faction that left the Church of God and issued a competing periodical, the *Herald of Truth*, in late 1913.⁶⁶

⁶² C.E. Brown, *When The Trumpet Sounded*, 246.

⁶³ C.E. Brown, “Field Reports,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 12, 1912, 13.

⁶⁴ Adherents in holiness groups like the Church of God exhibited holy living and evaluated the holiness of others through, among other criteria, dress code. Adorning oneself with jewelry or wearing a necktie were explicit messages about one’s position and status in the world. The issue was present in the Church of God from the time of D.S. Warner, who disapproved of, but never required abstinence from, wearing a necktie. The Church of God initially operated primarily in the rural Midwest, but as Church of God followers moved into bigger cities wearing a necktie was viewed as a necessity in business settings but remained unnecessary in the church. See Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 189-201.

⁶⁵ C.E. Brown, interviewed by John W.V. Smith, May 1, 1967, recording, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

⁶⁶ Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 195-196.

In the midst of the controversy, Charles updated *Trumpet* readers on the frenetic pace of work in Philadelphia and indirectly weighed in on the topic by asserting that he felt “strongly determined to stand by The [sic] Gospel Trumpet.”⁶⁷ By the time of the annual camp meeting in the summer of 1914, many of the leaders in the schismatic group had renounced their position and rejoined the Church of God.⁶⁸ Willis never returned to the Church of God, but the familial relationship was eventually mended as Charles recalled his father’s death in his home as a “blessed experience of the grace of God.”⁶⁹ Nearly two decades after the issue first erupted, Brown claimed that he “did not engage in any contention with anybody about the question” and that he “walked in the light of the gospel” and “maintained relations of love with all men.”⁷⁰

It seems unlikely that, with the personal and professional weight of the controversy, Brown would have possessed the time or energy to serve an additional congregation in New York City. Especially given that, for at least the first six months of his time in Philadelphia, he was also preaching on alternate Sundays in West Point, Pennsylvania.⁷¹ Brown’s time in Philadelphia lasted a little over two years as he moved his family, which had grown with the birth of his daughter, Dorothy, in 1913, to

⁶⁷ C.E. Brown, “Field News,” *Gospel Trumpet*, May 21, 1914, 14.

⁶⁸ “The Anderson Camp Meeting,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 25, 1914, 10.

⁶⁹ C.E. Brown to J.D. Fowler, April 11, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ C.E. Brown, “Field Reports,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 12, 1912, 13.

Anderson to begin evangelistic work in late 1914.⁷² Brown's stint as an evangelist in the Anderson area was short-lived, however, as he accepted a pastorate in Detroit in June 1915.⁷³ While in Detroit, Brown endured tremendous heartache with the death of his second child, Muriel, in late 1915 and deep joy with the births of his fourth child, Evelyn, in 1917 and his fifth child, Norma, in 1921. Returning to an established congregation eventually provided Brown with some degree of financial stability when, in 1920, the Detroit congregation initiated the practice of providing a salary to their pastor.⁷⁴ In that same year, Brown's focus extended beyond his congregation as he contributed to the organization of the Church of God's work throughout Michigan by forming the state's ministerial assembly.⁷⁵ With Brown approaching forty years old, the form and status of his career stood in stark contrast to his earliest days in Hardin County.

During his Detroit pastorate, Brown's thinking about practical matters of church life developed. One issue he considered was the appropriate duration for a pastor at a given congregation. Revealing the impact of the pursuit of education during this time, Brown was well read in the specifics of Methodist practices and polity and informed more generally about the shift from itinerancy to settled ministry in American Christianity.⁷⁶ At the writing of one article in mid-1925, he was approaching his ten-year

⁷² "General News Notes," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 1, 1914, 11.

⁷³ "General News Notes," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 11, 1915, 14.

⁷⁴ C.E. Brown, *When The Trumpet Sounded*, 191.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 193.

⁷⁶ C.E. Brown, "How Long Should a Pastor Remain?," *Gospel Trumpet*, May 21, 1925, 3.

anniversary in Detroit, so it is unsurprising that he advocated for longer durations in the pastorate, while leaving room for vital exceptions.⁷⁷ Indicative of Brown's desire to diffuse power, he ultimately contended that the congregation should evaluate whether the pastor had surpassed the appropriate length of service by a secret ballot.⁷⁸ The person who traveled frequently in the first years of his ministry saw value in longstanding investment in a church community. Somewhat ironically, less than a year later in the spring of 1926, Brown gave notice of his resignation from the Detroit congregation because of his acceptance of the pastorate of the Church of God congregation in Huntington, Indiana.⁷⁹ Brown ministered in Huntington for approximately a year but resigned when he was elected secretary of the Missionary Board of the Church of God in the summer of 1927. He returned to pastoral ministry on July 1, 1928, in Chicago as the pastor of the Belden Avenue Church of God, where he remained until the summer of 1930 when he was elected editor of the *Gospel Trumpet*.⁸⁰ The editorship, however, was by no means Brown's first administrative position in the Church of God.

Administrative and Teaching Duties

Shortly after assuming the pastorate in Detroit, C.E. Brown became heavily involved in the institutional affairs of the Church of God. In 1917, he replaced J.W. Byers

⁷⁷ C.E. Brown, "How Long Should Pastor," 3.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷⁹ "With The Brethren," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 22, 1926, 13.

⁸⁰ "Missionary Secretary Accepts Pastorate in Chicago," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 21, 1928, 24.

as a *Gospel Trumpet* staff contributor and continued in this position until his election to the editorship in 1930. He also served in 1917 as the secretary of the first General Ministerial Assembly (GMA) of the Church of God.⁸¹ Brown's secretarial duties placed the pastor-evangelist, who was approaching forty years old, amid the Church of God's most significant figures and discussions. Brown completed nearly a decade of service as the GMA secretary and was selected as chairman of the GMA a handful of times in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

By 1920, Brown had proved to the GMA that he was a strong candidate for contributing to the oversight and organization of critical agencies of the Church of God. In that year he was elected as a member of the newly-created Board of Home Missions and Church Extension and as a member of the Gospel Trumpet Company.⁸² Brown served only a year on the former, while his membership in the latter extended for nearly half a century, being elected to an eight-year appointment a total of six times. In 1921, Brown was elected to the Gospel Trumpet Company's Board of Directors and the Missionary Board as a member.⁸³ Except for a three-year hiatus from the Board of Directors at the beginning of his *Trumpet* editorship, he held both positions into the

⁸¹ Informal gatherings of ministers had occurred in conjunction with the annual camp meeting since the Church of God moved to Anderson in the fall of 1906. The creation of the GMA united the various agencies and efforts under the legal control of the Church of God. Every ordained Church of God minister was a member and allowed to vote on the various business matters under consideration. Most importantly, from its formation, the GMA was tasked with appointing the twenty-four members of the Gospel Trumpet Company and ratifying the Gospel Trumpet Company's selection for *Gospel Trumpet* editor. For a history of the GMA, see Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 209-214; Marvin J. Hartman, "The Origin and Development of the General Ministerial Assembly of the Church of God, 1917-1950," (B.D. thesis, Butler University, 1958).

⁸² "Camp-Meeting News Items," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 8, 1920, 10.

⁸³ J.W. Phelps, "At the Anderson Camp-Meeting," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 30, 1921, 8-9.

1950s. In addition to assuming the *Trumpet* editorship in 1930, he was an incorporating member of the Executive Council of the Church of God in 1932 and became the president of the Missionary Board in 1933.⁸⁴ As with the other elected positions, these were neither short nor perfunctory but instead granted Brown a position through which he exerted influence for nearly two decades. By the mid-1930s, Brown was in the highest positions of leadership in multiple Church of God agencies.

In the fall of 1935, along with his ongoing institutional responsibilities, Brown agreed to serve as a lecturer in theology at Anderson College and Theological Seminary.⁸⁵ His initial appointment was teaching, without remuneration, Church of God doctrine to college freshman once a week.⁸⁶ Every incoming student at Anderson learned about the history of the movement from one of its foremost leaders. Brown's teaching load expanded beyond Church of God doctrine over the eighteen years that he spent as a faculty member. He participated in a new venture, referred to as the "Ministers' Institute," that provided active ministers with an opportunity for continuing education. In the Ministers' Institute, he offered a two-week course titled Christian Doctrine in 1939

⁸⁴ The Executive Council was formed in 1932 as the "Church's one central agency to act in matters of business for the whole Church." The Executive Council handled matters such as the transfer of property to the Church of God, provisions for a pension system for Church of God ministers, and the protection of church property. R.L. Berry, "The Executive Council of the Church of God, Incorporated," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 7, 1933, 10-11.

⁸⁵ Formed in 1917 as the Anderson Bible Training School, the Anderson Bible School and Seminary separated from the Gospel Trumpet Company in 1925 and moved from a ministerial-focused curriculum to a liberal arts program in 1928. For the history of the educational institution, now known as Anderson University, see Strege, *Desk As Altar*. For the school's separation from the Gospel Trumpet Company, see Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 247.

⁸⁶ John A. Morrison, "College and Seminary Corner—Friends of Anderson College," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 8, 1938, 13.

and another course titled Modern Cults in 1941.⁸⁷ In the fall of 1942, the growing theology department tasked Brown with two additional classes for upper-division students majoring in theology or religious education.⁸⁸ Until the 1952-53 academic year, Brown was an integral part of theological education on Anderson's campus.

The syllabus for one of Brown's courses on Christian doctrine reveals the extent of his academic rigor.⁸⁹ The students examined the typical areas of Christian theology from human nature and religious authority to the Church and the end times. They explored each topic through multiple readings across eight domains of thought. Students read, among others, Charles Hodge in "Conservative Protestant Theology," Walter Rauschenbusch in "Liberal Protestant Theology," and a multitude of neo-orthodox theologians in the category of "Barthianism." While the other seven areas featured a variety of authors, the section titled "The Lecturer's Views" was fully saturated with the books and essays of the noted Oberlin College professor, Walter Marshall Horton. Before the opening of Anderson's School of Theology in 1950, those in the Church of God who pursued graduate work overwhelmingly attended Oberlin.⁹⁰ Brown's syllabus shows that those students were already well versed in the beliefs and writings of Oberlin's most prominent professor. Overall, Brown's presence ensured that all students, especially

⁸⁷ Earl L. Martin, "The Church at Work," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 7, 1939, 11; "Anderson College Ministers' Institute," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 29, 1941, 7.

⁸⁸ Earl L. Martin, "Anderson College and Seminary Expands Theological Department," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 26, 1941, 8.

⁸⁹ "Christian Theology: The Making of a Personal Creed," Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

⁹⁰ Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 235-237.

those who aspired to ministerial positions in the Church of God, who enrolled in his course at Anderson would not suffer from the same lack of access to resources and education that he experienced. Brown carried this same interest in educational access, although with a different medium and audience, in the *Gospel Trumpet*. Although *Trumpet* readers were not receiving course credits, they nevertheless encountered the writings of an editor committed to evangelism and education.

Shaping the *Trumpet*

When C.E. Brown called attention to the need for informed study of Christian theology, he was at the height of his influence in a group experiencing rapid growth. The *Trumpet* editorship was a young man's game before Brown's appointment. All of Brown's predecessors in the *Trumpet* editorship began their editorial duties when they were in their mid to late thirties and concluded their tenure by their early to mid-fifties.⁹¹ Brown was forty-six when he began in 1930 and was sixty-seven when he stepped away in 1951. He had contributed to the Church of God in pastoral and administrative work, but it was not until his editorship that he emerged as an intellectual figure of the movement. In 1930, Brown touted a corpus that was modest, yet respectable, in comparison to other Church of God leaders. He penned numerous articles in the *Gospel Trumpet*, especially after becoming a staff contributor in 1917, and authored one monograph, *The Hope of His Coming* (1927). By the time that he stepped down as editor

⁹¹ D.S. Warner (1842-1895) was the *Trumpet* editor from 1881 until his death in 1895. E.E. Byrum (1861-1942) was the *Trumpet* editor from 1895 until 1916. F.G. Smith (1880-1947) was *Trumpet* editor from 1916 until Brown succeeded him in 1930.

in 1951, Brown was in his late sixties, had penned over 1,000 editorials, and authored twelve more monographs. Every year, except for two, from 1939 to 1951, the Gospel Trumpet Company offered a new book by Brown. Age had no adverse impact on Brown's productivity or influence on the Church of God, and Brown's editorial policy informed the discourse of the *Trumpet* for over two decades.

Becoming Editor

Brown's ascendancy to the editorship occurred in an increasingly tenuous environment. Chief among the contributors was tension surrounding Church of God educational institutions. Not only was the school drifting, in the view of some ministers, from its original purpose, but its professors were undermining the movement's foundational teachings. The issue intensified when one of the professors, R.R. Byrum, gave a sermon in 1929 at the Indiana Ministerial Assembly that highlighted the waning influence of the movement's traditional teaching on Christian unity. In opposition to the view that abandoning the trappings of denominationalism achieved unity, Byrum contended that the Church of God should pursue unity through fellowship with Christians in other groups.⁹² Russell Byrum, the nephew of former *Trumpet* editor, E.E. Byrum, upheld his position in the face of detractors at a formal inquiry at the 1929 camp meeting and ultimately decided to resign from his position later that year.⁹³ Chief among the

⁹² Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 154-162.

⁹³ Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 250.

stalwart opposers of R.R. Byrum was the *Trumpet* editor, F.G. Smith, whose term was expiring in the coming year.

Even though he resigned, Byrum had a sizable number of ministers in his corner. Perhaps most important were those among the twenty-four members of the Gospel Trumpet Company who elected the *Trumpet* editor. Byrum's supporters derailed Smith's bid for reelection at the 1930 General Ministerial Assembly. This was not the first time that tension and conflict surrounded the *Trumpet* editorship.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, increasing opposition to Smith's apocalyptic ecclesiology influenced the Gospel Trumpet Company members, by a slim majority, to decline Smith another term and to select H.M. Riggle as his replacement.⁹⁵ When the Gospel Trumpet Company presented Riggle to the GMA, the power struggle continued as the gathering of ministers refused to ratify Smith's replacement. As a member of the Gospel Trumpet Company and chairman of the GMA, Brown was in a precarious situation. With Riggle as a non-option and the subsequent choice declining, the opportunity fell to Brown.⁹⁶ He was reluctant at first, ostensibly because of his support for Smith. The optics of Brown's selection, with close votes and his holding a position of authority in the Gospel Trumpet Company and the GMA, may have influenced his decision. However, Brown ultimately accepted on the condition that

⁹⁴ When D.S. Warner died in 1895, the Church of God had no clearly identified successor in leadership. The editorial responsibilities fell to E.E. Byrum who resigned in 1916 due to increasing pressure from prominent leaders concerned about the seemingly excessive power wielded by the *Trumpet* editor. See Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 211-212; Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 49.

⁹⁵ John A. Morrison, *As The River Flows* (Anderson, IN: Anderson College Press, 1962), 170.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 171.

Smith support the nomination publicly.⁹⁷ In the July 3, 1930 issue of the *Gospel Trumpet*, Brown's first as editor, comments from Brown and Smith appeared in parallel columns. Smith stated that Brown "has long been one of my best personal friends" and that he was "eminently fitted for the work to which the church has now called him."⁹⁸ Brown received the endorsement that he sought and had to address the movement in the aftermath of the controversy.

Editorial Policy

The critical task facing Brown at the start of the editorship was to mediate between the various viewpoints and factions in the Church of God. Brown declared at the outset how the *Trumpet* would accomplish that task. In Brown's first issue as editor, he decreed that, on his watch, the *Gospel Trumpet* was not to be "a battlefield of debate—either one-sided or two-sided—but an instrument in the hands of God for the promotion of deep spirituality and of the Great Revival of Holy Ghost religion."⁹⁹ He was not interested in furthering division within the movement but instead in uniting the Church of God under a program of evangelism. To accomplish this task, Brown made the appeal that he was not to introducing anything new but rather re-emphasizing the focus of the *Trumpet* in its earliest days. Brown considered crafting a new editorial policy on the fiftieth anniversary of the *Trumpet* in 1931 but decided against it after he perused some of

⁹⁷ C.E. Brown, Smith interview, May 1, 1967.

⁹⁸ F.G. Smith, "From The Retiring Editor," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 3, 1930, 24.

⁹⁹ C.E. Brown, "A Word from the New Editor," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 3, 1930, 25.

the paper's earliest issues. In those pages, Brown found D.S. Warner's editorial policy in the early 1880s and decided to reprint it verbatim because it ostensibly encapsulated his views completely.¹⁰⁰ Warner presented the *Trumpet* as promoting revivalism rooted in the inward change of a person's disposition and habits, completed in entire sanctification, and manifested in unity beyond denominations.¹⁰¹ For those scouring the *Trumpet* for any hint of departure from the movement's so-called standard teaching, an appeal to continuity with the leading reformer of the first generation must have provided relief.

Warner's editorial policy, however, did not address everything that Brown and the wider *Trumpet* readership would face. Most noticeably, the policy focused solely on the publication's theological foundation but was silent on mediating difference, whether theological or political. The Church of God faithful demonstrated over the first half-century of the movement's existence that fidelity to a shared theological foundation did not necessitate uniformity on a myriad of issues from the practices of the Christian life to education. For Brown, a critical issue to address was maintaining unity amid theological and political variance. The solution that Brown offered for both areas was to identify the movement's non-negotiable theological convictions and to allow for difference on all other points, insofar as they affirmed the core theological elements.

Outlining the fundamentals of the faith was an easy task, because, as Brown claimed by appealing to Warner's policy, the *Trumpet* had consistently promoted them since its inception. For Brown, what compromised "full-orbed, old-time, New Testament

¹⁰⁰ C.E. Brown, "The Future Editorial Policy of the Gospel Trumpet," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 1, 1931, 4.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

Christianity” was the unity of Christians in God’s Church, salvation from sin, entire sanctification, the provision of divine healing in Christ’s atonement, and living a sinless life.¹⁰² Even though divine healing was absent from Warner’s editorial policy, Church of God preachers and *Trumpet* writers were nevertheless expected to affirm and promote these principles, rather than their concerns or agendas.¹⁰³

The *Trumpet* editor’s sole task, in Brown’s view, was ensuring fidelity to the essential teachings, not mandating or policing the various writer’s stances on non-fundamental positions.¹⁰⁴ Some variability within the Church of God was acceptable, even desirable. While stressing the importance of the Church of God’s theological heritage, Brown also wanted to avoid an insular *Trumpet* readership. The editor would not penalize writers who engaged with non-Church of God sources. He repeatedly claimed that any *Trumpet* references to literature beyond the Church of God were not resounding endorsements of all the work’s theological ideas. For example, the premillennialism that saturated fundamentalist books was problematic, and, in Brown’s estimation, some degree of theological liberalism stained all non-fundamentalist books.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, Brown wanted readers to engage with those works to find areas of congruence and to stimulate their thinking. He asked, “Shall we attempt to exclude all of this valuable material from our readers because there are some things contained therein

¹⁰² C.E. Brown, “Freedom of Speech,” *Gospel Trumpet*, December 26, 1942, 2.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁰⁴ C.E. Brown, “The Freedom of Writers,” *Gospel Trumpet*, December 5, 1936, 4.

¹⁰⁵ C.E. Brown, “The Problem of Censorship,” *Gospel Trumpet*, May 5, 1934, 4.

that we cannot accept?”¹⁰⁶ By setting the general parameters, the *Trumpet* editor released the writers and readership to explore and develop their theological convictions through the pages of the *Trumpet*.

In addition to navigating theological difference, Brown was pressured to address the concerns that emerged from the broader socio-political context. Because Brown’s editorship started as the United States plunged from the Roaring Twenties into the Great Depression, questions about the political stance of the *Trumpet* increased, and readers did not shy away from pressing the editor on the issue. Brown began an editorial in the mid-1930s with a *New York Tribune* cartoon, which he claimed summarized his situation perfectly. In a series of four images, a different individual approaches a tireless and increasingly bewildered editor with a complaint about the paper’s editorial.¹⁰⁷ These four individuals offer different sentiments as one says the editorial is too conservative, while another lambastes it for being too radical, and two others assert that the editor’s position is too open and too narrow, respectively.¹⁰⁸ Brown’s response to the cacophony of voices was clear. Fidelity to the fundamental teachings of the Church of God corresponded to a wide range of convictions on secondary matters. The *Trumpet* editor empowered the readership to reach conclusions on their own.

According to Brown, chief among the non-foundational matters was politics, on which members of the *Trumpet* family held a variety of views. About the Church of God,

¹⁰⁶ C.E. Brown, “Problem of Censorship,” 4.

¹⁰⁷ C.E. Brown, “Picture of an Editor Trying to Express an Honest and Unbiased Opinion,” *Gospel Trumpet*, May 11, 1935, 4.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Brown asserted, “Some are Republicans, some Democrats, a few perhaps are Socialists. Some follow Father Coughlin [sic] and some Senator Huey Long or Dr. Townsend.”¹⁰⁹ The volume of incoming mail for the editor almost certainly increased after suggesting that a fairly rural holiness group had even a modicum of affinity with Catholicism or socialism. Nevertheless, Brown’s underlying point was not that socio-political issues were unimportant for Christians. On the contrary, Brown praised the Archbishop of York in the Church of England for pressing the government to use surplus money for the assistance of the poor.¹¹⁰ After this commendation and again reaffirming that the *Trumpet* was not a political paper, Brown contended that “in these days of starvation among the poor and extravagance among the rich the church of Jesus Christ cannot afford to be silent upon these great questions of social justice.”¹¹¹ Brown’s desire was not for the *Trumpet* readers to rally behind an approach or outlook on politics as the bona fide Christian position, but rather for people of all political persuasions to unite behind an “unfailing interest in the promotion of the eternal message of the gospel of Christ.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ C.E. Brown, “Picture of an Editor,” 4. Despite his attempt to demonstrate variety, Brown offered three individuals who severely critiqued President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal. Father Charles Coughlin was a Catholic priest who, although initially supporting the New Deal, became increasingly critical of capitalism and formed the National Union for Social Justice in 1934. His anti-Semitic views led to the cancellation of his popular radio program in the late 1930s. Huey Long served as the governor and senator of Louisiana in the 1920s and 1930s. Despite initial support, Long decided that the New Deal’s scope was too limited and offered a plan in 1934 for the redistribution of wealth known as Share Our Wealth. Dr. Francis Townsend presented the program, known as the Townsend Plan, that offered individuals over sixty years old with a monthly pension. The federal welfare system, which was a main component of the Social Security Act of 1935, was a response to the Townsend Plan. See Robert F. Himmelberg, *The Great Depression and the New Deal* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001).

¹¹⁰ C.E. Brown, “The Christian Way of Dealing with Social Problems,” *Gospel Trumpet*, May 19, 1934, 4.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² C.E. Brown, “Keep The Church Out Of Politics,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 10, 1938, 2.

Christianity, for Brown, was comprised of those who had experienced Christ and sought to communicate that experience to others, while also earnestly seeking answers and remaining faithful to their conscience in all areas of their life.

Bypassing the Policy

Toward the end of his editorial career, Brown demonstrated the malleability of his editorial policy, particularly with respect to politics. The political subject that shifted Brown's approach most forcefully was communism. He addressed communism early in his editorship as revealed in his concern about German propaganda in 1933. His primary interest at that time was preparing readers to defend against *any* theological threat, not in exposing or containing communism. This attitude persisted throughout the 1930s. Brown surmised that much of the rhetoric, originating primarily in premillennialism, about the spread and influence of communism was misguided.¹¹³ The discourse was nothing more than a manipulation of the political for religious gain. Brown's restrained attitude toward communism persisted as he wrote, only days after the surrender of Japan in World War II, "I honestly believe that the vast majority of communistically inclined persons in the United States have no serious intentions of interfering with the work of evangelical churches."¹¹⁴ Brown did not elaborate on the rationale behind this belief ostensibly because doing so would shift the *Trumpet* from a theological publication to a political one.

¹¹³ C.E. Brown, "False Alarms," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 16, 1934, 4; C.E. Brown, "The Religion of Alarm," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 27, 1937, 4.

¹¹⁴ C.E. Brown, "No Tree Ever Reaches The Moon," *Gospel Trumpet*, September 8, 1945, 2.

On the heels of the Truman Doctrine (1947) and the Marshall Plan (1948), however, Brown threw the weight of the *Trumpet* against the threat of communism.¹¹⁵ He claimed that, despite the historical position of the *Trumpet* not addressing political questions, “all well-informed persons know that communism is also a philosophical and religious question and as such comes within the province of our paper.”¹¹⁶ Communism was not merely a new area of discourse for *Trumpet* contributors to explore but rather an active risk to oppose. From Brown’s position, communism “set standards of compulsion and violence which violate the conscience of Christians and which lift politics from the neutral position of matters of religious indifference to the perilous position of tragic threats to Christianity itself.”¹¹⁷ By contradicting the core theological identity of the Church of God, communism showed that the line between theology and politics was not as distinct as Brown had previously claimed.

The change in Brown’s policy in the early 1950s was a difference of degree, rather than kind. Brown’s execution of the editorial policy exhibited ambiguity from the beginning. Though claiming not to be a political paper, the *Trumpet* mentioned political issues frequently. Brown’s approach to politics was to describe the theological insights for an issue while attesting that he was not commenting directly on the political topic. His editorial policy shifted, particularly concerning communism, because he approached it as a threat to the political structures of the United States. However, because Brown was in

¹¹⁵ For more on how these policies sought to contain or deter communism, see James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 128-133.

¹¹⁶ C.E. Brown, “A Peril of the Last Times,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 29, 1950, 1.

¹¹⁷ C.E. Brown, “Where Religion Interferes With Politics,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 1, 1950, 2.

his last days as editor, continuing the fight was the responsibility of the generation of leaders that received education and began their ministerial careers while Brown was the editor.

Retiring as Editor and Brown's Final Days

During the latter half of his second decade as *Trumpet* editor, Brown's health showed initial signs of failure. In the winter of 1947-1948, "heart disease" left Brown bedridden for six weeks.¹¹⁸ A physical malady, however, did not deter Brown from returning to the pulpit during the camp meeting in the summer of 1948. The toll on his health showed, however, as he estimated his recovery level was about eighty percent and found the usual fare of perusing the campgrounds and conversing with friends too strenuous.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, at that same camp meeting, the GMA ratified Brown for another three-year term as editor.¹²⁰ The following year the GMA added to Brown's credentials when it created the position of Church of God Historian, of which Brown was the inaugural holder as he gathered materials for his historical survey of the movement, *When The Trumpet Sounded* (1951).¹²¹ The health scare was apparently only a temporary setback. In early 1951, Brown claimed that he was in a better state of health than he had

¹¹⁸ C.E. Brown, "I Was At The Camp Meeting," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 24, 1948, 1.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Lawrence E. Brooks, "High Lights of the 1948 General Ministerial Assembly," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 24, 1948, 20.

¹²¹ Harold L. Phillips, "Of News and Views," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 16, 1949, 13.

been in the preceding years.¹²² Yet, the demands of his various positions proved to be exceedingly difficult, and Brown was ready, or perhaps forced by popular sentiment, to relinquish some of his authority.¹²³ At the December 1950 meeting of the Missionary Board, Brown stepped down as president because specific “special problems which seemed to forbid any changes in the executive committee” were finally resolved.¹²⁴ Although he decided to resign, in part, to devote more time to his editorial work, the GMA decided at its meeting in 1951 to elect Harold L. Phillips to the *Trumpet* editorship. In response to this change, Brown invoked the notion of “spiritual democracy” to contend that the wider Church of God, not one person or position, possessed “the right to choose its servants and workers for places of responsibility from time to time.”¹²⁵ In his late sixties, Brown stepped away from the editorial desk and decided to travel the world.

His respite from ministerial work was relatively brief. Upon his return from Europe in early 1952, Brown urged pastors in various regions of the United States to coordinate their requests for his visits to defray the expenses of travel.¹²⁶ He held several interim pastorates, including a six-month stint at the National Memorial Church of God in

¹²² C.E. Brown, “The Growth of the Lord’s Work,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 13, 1951, 1.

¹²³ Growing discontentment at the popular level about the centralization of power in Anderson escalated to controversy in the mid-1940s when Church of God minister, L. Earl Slacum, critiqued the movement’s perceived doctrinal laxity, particularly concerning standards of holiness and church organization. Brown represented what John W.V. Smith described as the predominance within Anderson leadership of “interlocking directorates,” or a limited number of individuals who held membership or leadership positions across multiple church agencies. Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 319-329.

¹²⁴ C.E. Brown, “Growth of the Lord’s Work,” 1.

¹²⁵ C.E. Brown, “A Word To The Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 21, 1951, 2.

¹²⁶ C.E. Brown, “With The Brethren,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 8, 1952, 15.

Washington, D.C.¹²⁷ Despite receiving numerous calls to pastorates, Brown was adamant that he desired to focus his efforts on evangelistic work.¹²⁸ Removed from the highest positions of authority in the Church of God, Brown remained dedicated to stirring people up with the gospel of Christ.

As with his evangelistic work, Brown's prolific writing career persisted in his post-editor days. The Gospel Trumpet Company published two additional books, *When Souls Awaken* (1954) and *We Preach Christ* (1957), and he contributed a fair number of articles to the *Gospel Trumpet*. His yearning for reading facilitated his primary contribution to the *Trumpet* in the mid-1950s by way of reviews of books by prominent figures such as Emil Brunner and John Mackay.¹²⁹ As he had advocated throughout his

¹²⁷ "News Notes," *Gospel Trumpet*, August 28, 1954, 15.

¹²⁸ C.E. Brown, "With The Brethren," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 18, 1953, 15.

¹²⁹ Throughout his editorial career Brown occasionally reviewed new books that displayed the broad scope of his reading and his convergence with broader theological trends like neo-orthodoxy. Brown described Karl Barth as standing like a "mighty peak of the Alps" within European theology and regarded him as a kindred spirit with the Church of God on ecclesiology. In his review of Barth's *The Church and the Churches* (1936), Brown declared that Barth "corroborates our findings and teachings on practically every point" except for the view of the system of denominations as sinful, which was one of the movement's distinguishing teachings. See C.E. Brown, "Karl Barth Studies the Church," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 5, 1937, 4. On another occasion, Brown praised the first volume of Reinhold Niebuhr's *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (1941) as "one of the best antidotes for the poison of materialism and liberalism" while he also rejected Niebuhr's strong emphasis on sin, which as Brown described held that "everything short of infinity is sinful in its nature." See C.E. Brown, "Book Review," *Gospel Trumpet*, August 7, 1943, 2. Brown's interest in reviewing the works on ecclesiology by leading Protestant theologians persisted after his editorial career. He declared that the work of the ecumenist and president of Princeton Theological Seminary, John Mackay, and of the ecumenist and Swiss Reformed theologian, Emil Brunner, indicated convergence between the movement's ecclesiological convictions and mainstream theology. See C.E. Brown, "New Books Reviewed," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 17, 1953, 2; C.E. Brown, "New Books Reviewed," *Gospel Trumpet*, December 26, 1953, 2. For more on Barth and Niebuhr, especially their grounding in neo-orthodoxy and opposition to theological liberalism, see Gary Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology: Idealism, Realism, & Modernity, 1900-1950* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003). For more on Brunner, see Alister E. McGrath, *Emil Brunner: A Reappraisal* (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2014). For more on John Mackay, see James H. Moorhead, *Princeton Seminary in American Religion and Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2012), especially 370-421.

career, Brown was bringing the Church of God into contact with voices from outside the movement.

Brown also remained active in the Church of God's educational pursuits. In 1953 he delivered a series of lectures on the relationship of the Church of God with ecumenical Christianity, fundamentalism, and liberalism at Anderson College's School of Theology that reportedly garnered an attendance of roughly 130 students and ministers.¹³⁰ He returned to the classroom for the last time in the spring semester of 1956 at the newly-formed Arlington College located near Los Angeles, California.¹³¹ At the conclusion of that semester, Brown returned to Anderson and gave the School of Theology's baccalaureate address entitled "Life's Challenge to Youth." Brown closed his address with the encounter of the prophet Elisha with King Jehoash of Israel from II Kings 13. In the text, Jehoash responded to Elisha's command to strike the ground with arrows by striking three times, and Elisha revealed that Jehoash did not completely fulfill the command and, as a result, would defeat but not destroy the kingdom of Aram.¹³² In reflecting on the text, Brown offered what is a fitting microcosm of his life and career when he said, "There we have the secret of success. Smite once, smite twice, smite until the sun goes down and the stars gaze with timid eyes on the mighty drama of a life which wrestles with the stark tragedy of eternity."¹³³ The persistent desire for evangelism and

¹³⁰ "Graduate School Enrollment Climbs to the Sixty Mark," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 28, 1953, 14.

¹³¹ W.L. Allison, "Southern California News," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 28, 1956, 15.

¹³² II Kings 13.18-19.

¹³³ C.E. Brown, "Life's Challenge to Youth," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 21, 1956, 12.

education marked Brown's lifelong quest for a deeper understanding of his experience with Christ.

The joint endeavors of evangelism and education invigorated Brown until his life's end, which occurred in the fall of 1971 when he succumbed to injuries sustained during a fall at his home in Anderson.¹³⁴ In a significant way, however, the close of Brown's influence on the broader Church of God effectively occurred when he resigned from his various administrative posts. He continued ministering and writing articles, but his 1956 baccalaureate address marked his final public act in the movement's institutional life. The work and responsibility that he undertook for several decades belonged to the next generation. In a tribute to Brown's life, *Trumpet* editor, Harold Phillips, claimed that Brown was "almost tormented by a sense of guilt that he was no longer able to be out doing for the 'cause' what he had once done."¹³⁵ Instead of an inability on Brown's part, the broader Church of God mostly relegated post-*Trumpet* Brown to the status of past relic rather than a vital voice for the present.

In preparation for the first critical history of the Church of God, the long-time School of Theology professor and Church of God historian, John W.V. Smith, wrote that Brown "regarded himself as a capable spokesman" and that he was "a very frustrated man in his post-editor years because he had fewer opportunities to speak."¹³⁶ Smith worked against the ethos of the broader movement by inviting Brown into the classroom

¹³⁴ Harold L. Phillips, "First, First, First..." 8-9.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹³⁶ Notes of John W.V. Smith, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

for interviews on a handful of occasions in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In those classrooms, students met the Church of God leader who played an irreplaceable role in guiding the nascent movement through deep division and unprecedented growth.

Conclusion

A survey of the life and ministry of C.E. Brown reveals the developments and decisions that affected the transformation of a boy preacher from rural Illinois to a Church of God statesman. The vagueness of the details of his life, particularly from his teens to his early thirties, results in a narrative that is at once intriguing yet enigmatic. The berry-stained pants and the miraculous healings are gripping but do not reveal much about the content of Brown's preaching or even the difficult and mundane aspects of life. Because his ministerial career in the Church of God stretched over six decades, his life and ministry also provide insight into the development of the Church of God. Becoming editor at a time of controversy and division, Brown aspired to remain faithful to the movement's theological heritage while also pressing and reworking certain elements of the identity. He helped a holiness group navigate the growing pains of the maturation process and oversaw the movement's tremendous growth. In this way, C.E. Brown serves as a compelling and critical figure in American Christianity. In Brown's writings, the persistent concern for education and evangelism manifested in a distinct emphasis on the importance of doctrine.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PARAMETERS, SUPPORT, AND OUTCOME OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

As editor of the *Gospel Trumpet*, C.E. Brown guided the Church of God through two decades of change and growth. The chief task of the *Trumpet* was to outline the theological convictions of the Church of God. In Brown's inaugural issue as editor on July 3, 1930, the nameplate described the *Trumpet* as "A Definite, Heart-Searching, Non-Sectarian Religious Weekly Published in the Interests of / the Church of God / For the salvation of sinners, entire sanctification of believers, divine healing of the body, and the unity of all true Christians in 'the faith once delivered to the saints.'" The periodical displayed this text, with minor variations, during the years before and after his editorship. As with his appeal to earlier editorial policies, Brown wanted his editorship to contribute to and continue the periodical's cause. Brown addressed the theological topics outlined in the nameplate and many more in numerous editorials and monographs. Through the structure and implications of his emphasis on the role of doctrine in the Christian life, Brown demonstrated that a holiness fundamentalist was not concerned with defending past conceptions of the faith but eliciting an experience in the nonbeliever, supporting the implications of that experience through informed study, and seeking to replicate that process in the lives of others.

This chapter examines, in a selective manner, the editor's beliefs and ideas about the Christian life to demonstrate Brown's contribution to the theological task of the *Gospel Trumpet* and the Church of God. This chapter outlines Brown's articulation of the

vital components of the Christian life in holiness and faith, the basis for his emphasis on learning doctrine, and his evaluation of the aim of the Christian life in revivalism and mission. Through all these aspects, a conversion experience was foundational and marked the inception of the Christian life. These elements situated Brown firmly within evangelicalism's emphasis on revivalism and the importance of religious experience. However, Brown asserted that the assignment of the Christian life was to participate with God through the Church to facilitate the restoration of humanity and the world to right relationship with God. He called *Trumpet* readers not only to an awareness of their deep, individual need of a transformative experience but also pressed those readers toward a lifestyle of religious devotion that challenged the misguided, even harmful, tendencies within Christianity. Holiness theology was not reducible to emotionally charged calls for conversion but involved careful reflection and sustained devotion to both the intellectual and emotive dimensions of faith.

This chapter also demonstrates that innovation connected to, but not restricted by, theological heritage was the hallmark of Brown's understanding of the faithful response of Christians in a specific context. Brown was eminently concerned with the fundamental truths of Christian orthodoxy. However, under his watch, the fundamentalist project involved challenging, or at least rethinking, previously held notions and highlighted the corresponding task of pursuing new insights. Faith was not a matter of memorization and comprehension but required ongoing examination and, when necessary, contestation. A conversion experience or holy living was, by itself, unable to sustain the Christian life. In the framework of a holiness fundamentalist, the Christian life merged the concern for

revivalism with an affirmative evaluation of the systematic exploration of the Christian faith.

Importantly, Brown's convictions about faith, holiness, doctrine, and revivalism, particularly when taken on their own, are representative of many within the holiness and evangelical ranks. The novelty in Brown is not necessarily the content but the timing and combination of the various content. In addition to noticeable growth, Brown's editorship also coincided with shifts in the understanding of the Christian life and the Church among Church of God clergy.¹ In a highly revivalistic movement, Brown pushed the importance of exploring and critically reflecting upon Christian convictions. Doctrine was not an impediment or substitute for Christian experience but brought the impact and significance of the conversion experience into its fullest and richest meaning. During the 1920s and 1930s, much of Protestantism was engulfed in theological infighting between fundamentalists and modernists. The Church of God was not exempt from the questions raised in those denominational squabbles, but it also was not defined by those issues. During that same time, Brown attempted to wed experience and doctrine and called the movement to focus on the movement of God's Spirit in the present.

¹ In 1943, Robert H. Reardon completed his master's thesis at the Oberlin Graduate School of Theology under the supervision of Walter Marshall Horton. Reardon's project merged a historical assessment of the Church of God's teachings with a survey of one hundred Church of God ministers, ninety of whom responded. The only known rationale employed in Reardon's selection of ministers is that he incorporated diversity based on geography and elected to send the questionnaire to larger congregations. Among his findings, Reardon claimed that Church of God ministers were increasingly softening in their thinking, specifically on their conception of revivalism as exclusively concerned with evangelism, of worldliness as a disposition rather than specific actions, and of perfection as the goal of the Christian life. See Robert H. Reardon, "The Doctrine of the Church and the Christian Life in the Church of God Reformation Movement," (S.T.M. thesis, Oberlin Graduate School of Theology, 1943), especially 97-120.

Theology and the Christian Life

C.E. Brown significantly modified essential theological impulses of the Church of God. His most notable influence occurred in the areas of ecclesiology and eschatology with one-third of his published monographs taking one of those domains as its primary focus. His contributions in these fields are explored consecutively in the following two chapters. In addition to these two subjects, six of the twelve books that Brown wrote during his *Trumpet* editorship dealt with specific areas of theology as related to the Christian life. As letters with questions on topics, theological or otherwise, crossed his editorial desk, Brown occupied a position that allowed him to outline the central elements of the Christian faith for a broad audience.

A vital component for spreading the gospel message in the *Trumpet* was ensuring that the readers had a proper grasp of the human condition, the actions of Christ, and the subsequent life of holiness. Brown showed his approach to that task when he proposed that “the teaching of ethical Christianity is thoroughly ineffectual unless it is accompanied by deep evangelical stress upon the power of the blood to regenerate and to sanctify human nature and to make people able to live up to the light which they have.”² A theme that ran throughout much of Brown’s writing is that every generation is responsible for providing fresh interpretations of not only holiness but any aspect of the faith. He regarded as deeply mistaken those Christians who held the “ironclad, dogmatic idea” that Christian teaching was solely a matter of communicating the clear lessons of

² C.E. Brown, “One Gospel and One Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 16, 1943, 1.

the past.³ As a historian, Brown was concerned that Christians were faithful to, but not limited by, their theological heritage. This section explores two of the critical components of the theological framework offered to *Trumpet* readers: holiness and faith.

Holiness

Holiness, also referred to as entire sanctification or Christian perfection, partially anchored the theological identity of the Church of God.⁴ Brown described entire sanctification as an experience after one's conversion experience but pushed the Church of God faithful not to rest upon past conceptualizations of holiness. While an emphasis on entire sanctification is wholly predictable for a leader of a holiness offshoot, Brown's proclivity for innovation ensured that the articulation of holiness theology was never singular and was always evolving. In a group that had mainly outlined the nature and implications of holiness theology in prohibitive language, Brown offered a reading of

³ C.E. Brown, *The Meaning of Salvation* (Anderson, IN: Gospel Trumpet Company, 1944), xi.

⁴ There are two main extant traditions that comprise the holiness movement: Wesleyan and Keswick. Whereas Wesleyan traditions emphasized the instantaneous experience of the second cleansing, Keswick thought treated holiness as a gradual process in which "the old nature of sin was countered by the presence of the indwelling Spirit." The terminology often used for these views is that of "eradicationist" (Wesleyan) and "suppressionist" (Keswick). A third stream, known as Oberlin perfectionism, was promoted by figures like Charles Finney and Asa Mahan in the mid-nineteenth century. This section will locate Brown within the Wesleyan-holiness movement. For the distinction between eradicationist and suppressionist understandings of holiness, see Dieter, *Holiness Revival*, 249-250. For more on the Keswick movement, see Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 72-80; David Bundy, *Keswick: A Bibliographic Introduction to the Higher Life Movement* (Wilmore, KY: First Fruits Press, 2012), 9-27. For more on Oberlin perfectionism, see Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, 103-113; Keith J. Hardman, *Charles Grandison Finney, 1792-1875: Revivalist and Reformer* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 324-49. For an examination of the understanding of holiness in all three traditions, see Myung Soo Park, "Concepts of Holiness in American Evangelicalism: 1835-1915," (PhD diss., Boston University Graduate School, 1992).

entire sanctification that affirmed the believer's devotion to God and the corresponding empowerment for action.

Brown's emphasis on holiness theology was due, in part, to developments within the Church of God. In translating the Church of God's message, some ministers tried to replace theological terms that seemed outmoded and irrelevant with new, updated phrases.⁵ While sympathetic to the task of making the message more understandable, Brown was resolute in his conviction that it was undesirable and in fact impossible to depart from theological terms like "entire sanctification."⁶ He wanted not to replace or reinvent ideas but to address the meaning and implications for the present situation. In addition to the language employed within the movement, another impetus for Brown was his awareness of wider antagonism towards holiness theology. "[T]he mistakes, the folly, and the downright hypocrisy of the holiness people" was the primary reason why holiness theology faced opposition "from the gutters on up to the pulpit, the editorial office, and the professor's chair."⁷ Unconcerned with public opinion, Brown adamantly advocated for entire sanctification. He professed that he was willing to "boldly defend all the doings of all the holiness people—all of their fanaticism, all of their weakness, and all of their human failings."⁸ The unacceptable alternative, in Brown's stark dichotomy, was to

⁵ C.E. Brown, "Sanctification and Growth in Grace," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 19, 1938, 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ C.E. Brown, "Why Holiness Is Hated," *Gospel Trumpet*, August 26, 1944, 1.

⁸ *Ibid.*

oppose the teaching of the Bible. Holiness was a non-negotiable aspect of the Christian life.

During the final years of World War II, in addition to other responsibilities, Brown worked on a pair of books that outlined his understanding of the primary components of the Christian life: *The Meaning of Salvation* (1944) and *The Meaning of Sanctification* (1945). In the first of these works, Brown described salvation as entailing “deliverance from the guilt of sin and the necessity of daily sinning.”⁹ In Brown’s estimation, both salvation and sanctification were the clear teachings of the biblical text, but, as demonstrated above, attestations to the latter drew skepticism and criticism. The conviction of the possibility of living above sin was present throughout Brown’s editorial career as he wrote, “the New Testament does not and cannot make any excuse for sin in the life of a Christian person.”¹⁰ Nearly a decade later he emphasized the biblical mandate for this belief, writing that the Bible taught a life above sin “flatly, plainly, continuously, and without any reasonable or logical contradiction.”¹¹ Although usually generously populated with references to biblical texts, some of Brown’s *Trumpet* articles assumed, rather than systematically proved, the scriptural support of this position. When Brown ventured into a defense of his viewpoint, he often explained the meaning and nuance of words or phrases in the original language or explored the insights garnered

⁹ C.E. Brown, *The Meaning of Salvation*, xv.

¹⁰ C.E. Brown, “A Witness for Holy Living,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 29, 1935, 4.

¹¹ C.E. Brown, “The Bible Teaches Living Above Sin,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 4, 1944, 1.

from the Christian tradition.¹² For the particularly inquisitive reader, Brown devoted sections and chapters in both monographs to the elucidation of challenging texts and included, in an appendix to *The Meaning of Sanctification*, a lengthy essay by holiness leader Daniel Steele on the various tenses employed in the Greek New Testament.¹³ In general, however, the editor was more concerned that the *Trumpet* described the experience and its implications.

Understood as a necessity for every Christian, entire sanctification was a crisis experience that followed one's justification. This experience, Brown wrote, "destroys the carnal nature and fills the soul with perfect love."¹⁴ What began in justification was brought to completion with the restoration of the original posture of devotion to God. Brown rejected the idea, often referred to as gradual sanctification, that the individual worked toward perfection, but the eradication of the sinful nature was only achieved at death. In his view, this approach suggested that holiness was the consequence of human action and not a gift from God received by faith.¹⁵ Although entire sanctification was not based on the works of an individual, Brown was steadfast in his conviction that it was also a requirement for Christians. He claimed that only the entirely sanctified were

¹² See, as examples, C.E. Brown, "The Origin of Sinning Religion," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 4, 1939, 2; C.E. Brown, "What Is Holiness?," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 3, 1939, 4, 9.

¹³ Daniel Steele (1824-1914) was a Methodist minister who taught New Testament Greek and theology at Boston University. Steele was converted in 1842, but it was attestation to an experience of entire sanctification in 1870 that spurred his activity within the holiness movement. A prolific writer, Steele was a prominent figure who espoused postmillennialism and rejected Calvinism. William Kostlevy, ed., *The A to Z of the Holiness Movement* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 284-285.

¹⁴ C.E. Brown, "Sanctification and Growth in Grace," 2.

¹⁵ C.E. Brown, *The Meaning of Sanctification*, 23-36; C.E. Brown, "Questions and Answers," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 7, 1945, 8.

present in heaven as it was impossible for sin to exist in heaven.¹⁶ For those who could not attest to the experience for themselves or loved ones, this idea was, at a minimum, troubling. However, Brown contended that the only requirement for justification and sanctification was faith.¹⁷ Because of this prerequisite, he believed that a Christian could experience entire sanctification without being able to explain it and that those who only claimed justification in their life would receive entire sanctification at some point before their death.¹⁸ Because entire sanctification was a matter of faith, Brown was primarily focused not on determining the presence or validity of an individual's experience but rather on explaining what the experience enabled within the life of the Christian.

Brown thought that the best way to describe holiness in his context was to frame it as a discussion of participation and belonging rather than purity. He encouraged *Trumpet* readers, "Let us not insist too much upon how good we are (not denying it), but let us emphasize this truth that we have only the minimum standard for any Christian: We belong to God."¹⁹ As a result of this approach, Brown described the Christian life as fundamentally relational. The purpose of humanity's existence was "the creation of holy character...established in immovable devotion to God."²⁰ According to Brown, all humanity inherited a tendency toward sin, which he defined as the "abuse of the freedom

¹⁶ C.E. Brown, "Questions and Answers," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 27, 1940, 19.

¹⁷ C.E. Brown, *The Meaning of Sanctification*, 188.

¹⁸ C.E. Brown, "Questions and Answers," April 27, 1940, 19.

¹⁹ C.E. Brown, "A New Approach to Sanctification," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 6, 1954, 2.

²⁰ C.E. Brown, *The Meaning of Salvation*, 71.

of the will” and “a digression from God’s will,” through the transgression against the “law of love” by the first human, Adam.²¹ Drawing on the notion of ceremonial holiness in the Old Testament, Brown held that, because God created humanity, all humans belonged to God, but the defilement of sin meant that humans faced either redemption or destruction.²² The successive experiences of justification and entire sanctification returned the human to their original, intended state of attunement to the love of God. Brown asserted that the justified Christian is “formally and potentially holy,” assumes a posture of dedication to God, and awaits “the sanctifying, purifying, sin-destroying baptism of the Holy Spirit.”²³ With the experiences of justification and sanctification, the status and actions of the human changed.

Brown balanced the predominant negative conceptions of entire sanctification with an affirmative understanding of the outcome of holiness. He reiterated what holiness theology forbade to *Trumpet* readers, but the forbidden habits or activities were not the singular focus. He described proscriptions against lying, stealing, or other actions as the “alphabet of practical holiness.”²⁴ They were the fundamental elements that coalesced into more profound and powerful insights. Primary among these insights was resistance against the neat bifurcation of the mundane and the spiritual aspects of life. Rather than sharply condemning all worldly pursuits as temporary hindrances to spiritual work,

²¹ C.E. Brown, “Faith as Repentance,” *Gospel Trumpet*, December 11, 1943, 15.

²² C.E. Brown, “What Is Holiness?,” 4.

²³ C.E. Brown, “Moral Aspect of Holiness,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 17, 1939, 4.

²⁴ C.E. Brown, “Practical Holiness,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 8, 1935, 4.

Brown contended that the workaday elements of life were where humans met and worked to the glory of God. Brown espoused the view of a “positive conception of all our life and work as being wrought out in obedience to a holy motive.”²⁵ He concluded, “The keynote of practical holiness is: ‘We are workers together with God.’”²⁶ Even though entire sanctification ultimately promoted engagement with the world, Brown held no illusions about human limitations. He professed that the entirely sanctified Christian was still “living in a world of confusion and false appearances” and, because of personal limitations, “may make many intellectual errors and misapprehend and misjudge many of life’s problems.”²⁷ As such, Brown averred that holiness was “not perfect wisdom nor perfect judgment” but to be “pure in heart but not free from mistakes.”²⁸ Although the experience of entire sanctification was the perfection of the individual, in the sense of the fullness or completion, the individual remained in a responsive posture toward God.

Brown contended that “growth in grace” spanned the duration of the post-sanctification life. The Christian life was spent understanding and pursuing the implications of the completed process of the restoration of full devotion to God. Highlighting the corporeality of the Christian life, Brown noted that the destruction of inherited depravity had no impact on “the instincts or urges with which God originally

²⁵ C.E. Brown, “Practical Holiness,” 4.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ C.E. Brown, “The Quality of Typical Exhibits,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 15, 1941, 2.

²⁸ Ibid., 1-2.

endowed mankind.”²⁹ Holiness was not about living a supra-human life but about obedience and devotion to God. Because the “body of the Christian is holy,” each human must “train that body, that eye, that hand, that brain, that nervous system into skillful, rapid, and successful execution of the spirituality artistic vision of the purified, sanctified heart.”³⁰ Growth in grace was the task before all sanctified Christians, who were not left to rely on their power in this pursuit. Instead, the baptism of the Holy Spirit ended believers with “the power to live a holy life, the power to manifest contagious Christianity that wins other souls to Christ, and the power to witness for the Lord.”³¹ Brown resisted the notion that the Christian way of life was one of forsaking power. He cautioned readers that, even though God was the source of all power, they should oppose any “power that perverts, persecutes, or injures humanity.”³² Instead, participation with God meant that one was “tied up with all the conserving, healing, and vitalizing forces that constantly renew the life of the world and of mankind.”³³ Rather than merely abstaining from so-called worldly pleasures, entire sanctification was a relevant and necessary aspect of the Christian life in which perfect love and immovable devotion to God guided Christians. The primary requirement for this experience was faith.

²⁹ C.E. Brown, “Sanctification and Growth in Grace,” 2.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ C.E. Brown, “What Kind of Power?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 1, 1936, 4.

³² C.E. Brown, “The Enduement of Power,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 24, 1939, 2.

³³ Ibid., 12.

Faith

Along with outlining the experiences and developments in the Christian life, Brown explored the nature of faith. The Gospel Trumpet Company published his monograph, *The Way of Faith*, in 1943. Many of Brown's editorials on this subject were mostly distillations of subjects broached in his monograph. Brown regarded faith not merely as an element of religion but of the human experience and depicted it hierarchically from the lowest arena of faith in the order of nature up to the higher level of faith in God.³⁴ He claimed, "Faith is the bridge that leads from fact to truth in every phase of man's thinking, whether he seeks the relation between an apple's fall and the majestic march of the suns, or whether he reasons from man's appalling need to God's abounding grace."³⁵ Faith was a component of religion and rational thought.

In Brown's view, there was not an antagonistic relationship between faith and reason. He argued that the physical world was the domain of the body's physical senses and that the soul's spiritual senses perceived spiritual phenomena.³⁶ Rationality was not solely corporeal but instead was "an activity of the mind or soul, as observing, comparing, judging."³⁷ In this way, rational thought was not contradictory to faith but rather an integral part of how, for Brown, a Christian understood and evaluated matters of faith. Using the illustration of a martyr who decided not to escape harm because of the

³⁴ C.E. Brown, *The Way of Faith* (Anderson, IN: Gospel Trumpet Company, 1943), 23.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

³⁶ C.E. Brown, *We Preach Christ: A Handbook of Christian Doctrine* (Anderson, IN: Gospel Trumpet Company, 1957), 24.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

spiritual implications, Brown concluded that the potential for opposition only existed between “faith and the body of knowledge based only on the physical senses.”³⁸ Science, however, was not the immediate adversary of faith. Specifically resisting a sharp contrast between science and religion, Brown claimed that science operated on the “highest plane of this human faith in the order of nature.”³⁹ Science was limited to the physical and could not remark upon the spiritual.

Within the natural world, Brown argued that a person reached a deeper level of truth as they progressed from facts to the correct understanding and interpretation of facts and finally to faith in persons.⁴⁰ He believed that faith in another person advanced the individual from “the facts that have been and are” to “the facts that will be as he sees the honor, integrity, and truthfulness in the heart of the person whom he trusts.”⁴¹ The sharpest perception of reality occurred in vulnerable dependence upon another. The natural world, however, was not the sum of existence. Brown posited that every human had some intuition of the presence of God. He contended that “[God] appeals to us by the wistful beauty of a fragile flower, the holy, steady light of a shining star, and then at times by a delicate sense of an all-pervading presence too gentle to alarm us, too heavy to

³⁸ C.E. Brown, *We Preach Christ*, 24-25.

³⁹ C.E. Brown, *The Way of Faith*, 28.

⁴⁰ C.E. Brown, “The Higher Levels of Truth,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 14, 1942, 1.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

disregard.”⁴² Across all his writings on the topic was a conceptualization of faith that resisted a solely intellectual foundation.

While faith was primarily experiential, Brown often organized his explanation of it around truth and took the biblical text as the primary area of investigation of the facts of the Christian faith.⁴³ Although an intuition of God was seemingly common to all, Brown believed that the starting point of the spiritual life after the conversion experience was not individual perception but the biblical text. Mirroring his understanding of the natural world, Brown alleged that the Bible was “a fact, or a large number of facts” and that doctrine was the “correct interpretation of these numerous facts.”⁴⁴ Individuals could study the Bible from any number of vantage points from linguistics to history. However, Brown advocated that on the “level of faith and religious truth” the Bible was the Word of God, and, as such, was essentially concerned with God’s relation to humanity.⁴⁵ The facts provided in the Bible were rooted in the spiritual realm. Because of this, Brown

⁴² C.E. Brown, *Way of Faith*, 85.

⁴³ The Baconian method and Scottish Common Sense Realism are two traditions that were influential in nineteenth and early twentieth century Christianity. Rather than beginning with a theory, these approaches affirmed the ability of humans to observe and apprehend reality directly and to arrange and systematize those observations into general laws. When these principles were applied in Christianity, the biblical text became the source that contained the truths of faith, and the role of the believer was to observe, organize, and ultimately defend the facts. This approach is seen most forcefully in the stress that fundamentalists placed upon biblical inerrancy, since the validity of the deeper truths were called into question if the basic facts were proved incorrect. Brown’s view on inerrancy is discussed later, but this section demonstrates how Brown holds the importance of the biblical text but departs with a noticeable emphasis on the relational basis for truth. For more on the relationship of science and the biblical text within Christianity, see Mark A. Noll, *The Princeton Theology, 1812-1921: Scripture, Science, and Theological Method from Archibald Alexander to Benjamin Warfield* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001); Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, especially 55-62, 110-116.

⁴⁴ C.E. Brown, “Higher Levels of Truth,” 1.

⁴⁵ C.E. Brown, “Various Levels of Truth,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 23, 1946, 1-2.

stated, “in the Bible we do not have history, psychology, and philosophy, nor any form of science except merely incidentally.”⁴⁶ The Bible was not a textbook on science or history but rather a testimony to the actions of God through Jesus Christ. Truth, in the most profound sense, was experienced through belief in Jesus Christ on the “level of personality.”⁴⁷ As such, faith was not “belief in a set of facts” but “trust in a personal God.”⁴⁸ In Brown’s parlance, Christ shows humanity the facts that will be. Brown advocated for a conceptualization of faith as abiding trust in God that was rooted in the biblical text and experience. The relationship of humanity to God was lifeless, however, if Christians neglected to attend to the proper interpretation of the facts as found in doctrine.

The Nature and Purpose of Doctrine

In 1957, when Brown was in his mid-seventies, the Gospel Trumpet Company published his final monograph, *We Preach Christ: A Handbook of Christian Doctrine*, in which Brown explored doctrine through the threefold office of Jesus Christ as prophet, priest, and king. He presented readers with a framework that extended beyond the individual components of the Christian life and outlined the actions of God. The conversion experience initiated the Christian life, which was pursued in a posture of exploring and responding to the implications of that experience. In this monograph and

⁴⁶ C.E. Brown, “Various Levels of Truth,” 2.

⁴⁷ C.E. Brown, “Higher Levels of Truth,” 1.

⁴⁸ C.E. Brown, “The Life of Faith,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 22, 1949, 1.

other editorials, Brown argued that the purpose of doctrine was not to validate an individual's experience or to defend or convince another of the veracity of the Christian faith. Instead, doctrine fostered the spiritual development of the soul. For Brown, Christian teaching played a crucial role in the vitality of the Christian life.

Selecting a Framework

A critical component of Brown convincing his readership of doctrine's importance was defining the proper framework for the exploration of doctrine. In a rather unsurprising move for a leader of a holiness group, Brown denounced what he regarded as a strictly philosophical approach to doctrine. In his view, the rational investigation of the Christian faith provided little benefit for the believer because it produced "highly technical theories" that resulted in "an encyclopedia, vast and baffling and filled with a thousand headaches."⁴⁹ The alternative, for Brown, was seeing doctrine as "an organic body of truth rooted in the person of Jesus Christ...who he is, what he does, and why and how he does it."⁵⁰ To highlight doctrine's significance, Brown identified it as the "currency of the kingdom" and wrote that doctrine "points us to Christ and therefore is of inestimable value."⁵¹ For the *Trumpet* editor, the decision between the philosophical and Christocentric approach was clear.

⁴⁹ C.E. Brown, "Let's Take a Look," 1.

⁵⁰ C.E. Brown, *We Preach Christ*, 14.

⁵¹ C.E. Brown, "Currency of the Kingdom," 1.

Brown never offered an in-depth elaboration on the intricacies of these two positions and their differences, or lack thereof. Presumably, philosophically oriented theology was also concerned with Christ, perhaps not as an all-encompassing framework, but it nevertheless offered insight. Moreover, the decision to focus on the person of Christ did not intrinsically escape philosophical arguments. The purpose of Brown's approach, however, was not to make a recommendation based on an exhaustive outline of two potential methods. Instead, he was demonstrating to a mostly skeptical audience that doctrine was not only worthwhile but necessary. The Christ that the believer had encountered in their conversion was the source and model for doctrine. By presenting doctrine as an extended discussion of the nature and work of Christ, Brown was also demarcating the authoritative sources for Christian teaching. Despite his opposition to philosophically-grounded theories, Brown declared that Greek philosophy and theology were not wholly adversarial, stating that Greek philosophy's influence "should not be considered as a curse upon all theology."⁵² The accusation leveled against this philosophy was that it introduced "certain shades of meaning" that blurred Christ's teaching.⁵³ The appropriate framework restored full clarity to Christian doctrine.

For Brown, the "organic body of truth" found in Christ was the complete manifestation of God's revelation and was encountered forcefully in the Bible. Brown espoused a high view of Scripture, claiming that the Bible "as the revelation of God" is

⁵² C.E. Brown, *We Preach Christ*, 13.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

“infallible, real, objective, eternal, unchanging, immovable truth.”⁵⁴ In *We Preach Christ*, Brown marshaled an array of biblical texts in rapid succession to demonstrate that the Bible provided for the two types of revelation, natural and supernatural.⁵⁵ As Brown’s Christocentric approach suggests, the critical source for the provision of both forms of revelation was Christ. Brown’s ultimate concern was not exploring the insufficiency of general revelation or the capacity of humans to receive special revelation. Revelation in its entirety was experiential, and, as such, its purpose was “not to satisfy all our curiosity, or answer all our questions, but to change us into [Christ’s] image.”⁵⁶ Despite the strong descriptions of the authority of the biblical text, Brown’s language softened when he considered humanity’s relationship to revelation.

Humans were unable to apprehend revelation in its entirety by direct appeals to the biblical text or elsewhere. Instead, Christian doctrine was nothing more than an interpretation of the revelation. Brown turned to geology, specifically the distinction between the earth and the system of analysis offered by geologists, to illustrate his position.⁵⁷ He concluded that “Geology approaches perfection as it correctly interprets

⁵⁴ C.E. Brown, “Revelation and Doctrine,” 2.

⁵⁵ C.E. Brown, *We Preach Christ*, 28-34.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁵⁷ Brown’s selection of geology is almost certainly intentional as that topic was a flashpoint between science and Christianity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Traditional interpretations of the Bible on the age of the Earth and the flood accounts of Genesis were at odds with geological discoveries during this time-period. With the publication of Charles Darwin’s *On The Origin of Species* (1859), so-called “flood geology” was used as a means of defense against the claims of evolution on the age and formation of the Earth. Rodney L. Stiling, “Scriptural Geology in America,” in *Evangelicals and Science in Historical Perspective*, ed. David N. Livingstone, D.G. Hart, and Mark A. Noll (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 177-192.

the earth.”⁵⁸ In the same way, doctrine approached, rather than possessed, the infallible revelation of God, and the history of Christianity demonstrated that Christians in past ages were fully capable of misinterpreting doctrine.⁵⁹ The lesson for *Trumpet* readers was the impossibility of those interpretations of revelation, as the various components of Christian doctrine, to “ever be infallible in detail.”⁶⁰ The interpretation could approach but never become the revelation. Nevertheless, there were still fundamental principles in doctrine. According to Brown, the clear testimony of the biblical text and human experience demonstrated that salvation, sanctification, divine healing, and Christian unity were the “clear facts” that could not be “questioned or doubted.”⁶¹ The task of Christians was to explore and test the non-fundamental doctrinal positions in pursuit of a fuller grasp of God’s revelation. The foundation of revelation was firmly rooted in Christ, but Brown had to address the prevailing attitudes against doctrine to fully convince *Trumpet* readers.

Addressing Preconceived Notions

Raising the interest of the *Trumpet* readership about doctrine was a daunting task for Brown as he responded to the dispositions, whether real or perceived, of people within and beyond the Church of God toward doctrine. On one front, Brown was forced

⁵⁸ C.E. Brown, “Revelation and Doctrine,” 2.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

to contend against the disposition that it was “a mark of broad-mindedness not to have any clear-cut, definite doctrine.”⁶² Whether the person who held this view possessed an abundance of knowledge, but little conviction, or was unable to decide between various positions, this position led to teaching that, in Brown’s estimation, was “pale and colorless.”⁶³ Too much color, however, was another real danger. What Brown adamantly wanted to avoid was doctrinal preaching that featured “more conviction than understanding.”⁶⁴ Brown looked for vibrancy and passion but not overpowering fanaticism. Striking a balanced tone in the exploration and comprehension of doctrine was a difficult but necessary task. The illustration that Brown relied upon most frequently to convey his approach was the prevalence of the principles, frameworks, and theories, the so-called “doctrine” of other disciplines, typically science.⁶⁵ Although mostly unintelligible to the novitiate, these elements were the primary subject matter that those aspiring in the discipline had to engage. In a group that placed a high value on the experiential dimension of faith, Brown implored the Church of God faithful to familiarize themselves with and respond to the essentials of the movement’s teachings.

Another objection that more conceivably originated within the revivalist impulse of the Church of God presented doctrine and spirituality as mutually exclusive. Brown stated that this dichotomy was false and even branded it a “lie of the devil” because, in

⁶² C.E. Brown, “Has Doctrine Gone Out of Style?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 19, 1931, 3.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ C.E. Brown, “Let’s Take a Look,” 1.

⁶⁵ C.E. Brown, “What Is the Use of Doctrine?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 25, 1932, 4.

his view, spirituality was born out of and aided by theological instruction.⁶⁶ Overall, the Christian's work in learning the contours of Christian teaching was rooted in exploration and growth and, by extension, diversity. Brown thought, in general, that only heavy-handed authoritarianism would espouse the notion of "uniformity of doctrine" in every aspect.⁶⁷ Drawing on his distinction between revelation and interpretation, the call for uniformity of doctrine suggested the full possession of revelation. Brown was much more interested in pursuing doctrinal unity, which acknowledged that "variety is the keynote of Christian life and teaching."⁶⁸ That is not to say that Brown espoused an approach to the Christian life that catered to the whims of the individual. There remained an identifiable core upon which the variety rested. Drawing again on the field of science and the presence of "elementary principles" like atoms and electrons, Brown contended for "practical and relative uniformity of doctrine upon the fundamentals of the Christian faith."⁶⁹ Concerning spirituality, prior understandings of doctrine were less important than the translation of doctrine for the current context.

Brown proclaimed that the task of the Christian was "to translate the vital and living messages of the New Testament gospel into the thought life of our own times by every conceivable method at command."⁷⁰ The process was not solely the responsibility

⁶⁶ C.E. Brown, "Sound Doctrine Essential," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 19, 1931, 4.

⁶⁷ C.E. Brown, "Can We Have Uniformity of Doctrine?," *Gospel Trumpet*, May 27, 1939, 2.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ C.E. Brown, "Can We Have Uniformity?," 13.

⁷⁰ C.E. Brown, "Translation," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 3, 1937, 4.

of humans, however, as Brown asserted that the “creative energy of the omniscient Spirit of God” was active in “constantly restating” the fundamentals “in the living language of our day, and of adapting them to present-day needs.”⁷¹ The response of Christians in the present was predicated upon a combination of cognitive and experiential familiarity with the ideas outlined in the doctrines of Christianity. Brown was aware of the limitations of doctrine. On its own, doctrine could not effect change in a believer, but, Brown noted, “no revival was ever held and no soul was ever converted and no sick person was ever healed by faith, contrary to the doctrines of the gospel and without obedience to the doctrines of the gospel.”⁷² Doctrine was not the panacea for the Christian life but rather contained the essential elements for an individual’s activity and vitality in Christianity. Remaining sensitive to the needs of the current context did not necessarily divorce the teachings and practices of the Christian faith from its heritage. On one occasion Brown commented, “All our home and foreign missionary work, all our efforts to teach, to relieve hunger, to comfort and bless the world, are a part of Christian doctrine. They represent Christ’s work in his new incarnation among believers in carrying on the ministry which he began in old Palestine.”⁷³ For Brown, doctrine was not the compilation of dry, lifeless intellectual treatises but a series of powerful, transformative teachings that informed the response of Christians throughout history.

⁷¹ C.E. Brown, “Can We Have Uniformity?,” 13.

⁷² C.E. Brown, “Give Attendance to Doctrine,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 10, 1936, 4.

⁷³ C.E. Brown, “The Doctrine of Christ,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 9, 1949, 2.

The Effects of Doctrine

The outcome of the Christian's engagement with doctrine was a process of learning and growth that spanned the duration of life. For as much emphasis that Brown placed upon certainty about fundamental principles, he also pressed for the Christian to search for deeper insight. One of the "undebatable maxims of the Christian life," for Brown, was that there were "undiscovered continents in the divine life lying before ourselves."⁷⁴ Christians were not tasked with defending past articulations of doctrine but were to remain sensitive to how the gospel was to address the present context. Brown was resolute in his conviction that the discoveries of each generation would deepen, rather than transform, prior truths.⁷⁵ Significantly, however, the venture into doctrine was not done in isolation. Speaking to aspiring ministerial students in his classroom and others through the pages of the *Trumpet*, Brown identified the weighty responsibilities facing the pastor. The minister, with the help of God, was called to "instruct his people in the sound doctrines of the New Testament" so that Christians could teach others about the proper role of doctrine.⁷⁶ The outcome of providing instruction to a congregation ultimately extended beyond the congregation. In response to a wealthy philanthropist's donation for the construction of a new church, Brown exclaimed that the church's impact on society was enacted not with a saturation of buildings but through its teaching.⁷⁷ In

⁷⁴ C.E. Brown, "Certainty and the Divine Quest," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 16, 1932, 10.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁷⁶ C.E. Brown, "Sound Doctrine Essential," 4.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

this way, doctrine was not merely intellectual material for internal contemplation but was a meaningful and essential component of the vitality and growth of the Christian and the Church.

The Task of the Christian Life

For all the emphasis that Brown's conceptualization of holiness or doctrine placed on the individual—what they experienced or believed—his understanding of the Christian life's parameters was fundamentally communal. The experiences of salvation and sanctification brought the individual into the broader community of the Church and irrevocably broadened the scope and responsibility of the person's daily life. In Brown's language, the redeemed community of Christians functioned as the redemptive community, or that was at least supposed to be the Church's primary function. Those who had experienced redemption in Christ were compelled to share that experience with others, to stress that everyone needed that experience, and, as a result, contribute to the kingdom of God. This view was a departure from Brown's approach during his early ministerial career. He noted, "Personally, I spent years of my Christian life laboring under the presumption that as a Christian I was practically independent of my fellow believers."⁷⁸ The suggestion of Brown and his father in their early work that God would take care of the newly-converted is certainly representative of this approach. Brown did not indicate how long he held this view or what specific experiences affected its change.

⁷⁸ C.E. Brown, "The New Incarnation," Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN, 3.

However, toward the end of his life, Brown claimed to hold the “deep conviction that by the very experience of belonging to Christ I therefore belong to and accept [the] heavy obligation of allegiance to his people.”⁷⁹ In stressing the corporate nature of the Church, Brown highlighted Christianity’s missional impulse and, especially during times of economic depression and war, called for revivalism as the only effective cure for the individual and the world.

Growing the Kingdom of God

The Christian life was ultimately concerned with participation within the Church for the advancement of the kingdom of God.⁸⁰ Brown believed that “the kingdom of God is above and beyond history and never to be realized entirely within the temporal order.”⁸¹ However, Brown was not supportive of resignation about the inevitable deterioration of the world until the return of Christ. He thought that Christians were called to work at bringing about the kingdom of God, not through social structures, but through compassion for humanity.⁸² This task was not merely echoing the call of

⁷⁹ C.E. Brown, “The New Incarnation,” 3.

⁸⁰ The “kingdom of God” was a central component within postmillennialist circles, especially the Social Gospel. Within that tradition, the task of the Church to build the kingdom of God possessed deep implications for the social and economic relations within the social order. This section shows that Brown followed this position to a point, diverging with a heavy emphasis on the means of growth within as well as the chief end of the kingdom of God. For more on this phrase within the Social Gospel, see J. Michael Utzinger, *Yet Saints Their Watch Are Keeping: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and the Development of Evangelical Ecclesiology, 1887-1937* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006), 128-32.

⁸¹ C.E. Brown, “The Colony of Heaven,” Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN, 3.

⁸² *Ibid.*

contemporary movements like the Social Gospel, however, but was present in early Christianity. Brown argued that the potency of the Church in antiquity came not from its preaching but from its selfless love and assistance to the marginalized.⁸³ At times, infighting within and between Christian groups introduced division where unity was intended. The common goal of evangelism was, in Brown's view, forming a sufficient basis of unity for the Church. He stated that the Church was not to be a "debating club" but "a construction crew, busily and eagerly engaged in building up the kingdom of God."⁸⁴ Brown contended, however, that the Church had faced obstacles and departed from the goal of advancing the kingdom of God throughout history and even in his own time.

Chief among the issues within the Church that significantly hindered unity was the widespread saturation of individualism. Brown pointed to the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation as well as early American intellectual figures like Ralph Waldo Emerson as evidence of how individualism was deeply ingrained in Western culture and, by extension, Western Christianity.⁸⁵ Drawing on the conception of the Church as the "Body of Christ," Brown pushed "to exchange to a large degree the religion of individualism for the religion of corporate fellowship in Christ."⁸⁶ That did not mean,

⁸³ C.E. Brown, "The Redemptive Community," Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN, 6.

⁸⁴ C.E. Brown, "Regarding Division in the Congregation," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 6, 1940, 1.

⁸⁵ C.E. Brown, "The New Incarnation," 2-3.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

however, that the individual was devoid of any significance or that Christianity's impact was purely social.

Brown retained a high degree of emphasis on the predominance of the personal component of sin. Focusing on broader social sins was important, but an overemphasis on this point made it possible for individuals to locate sin elsewhere in society other than themselves.⁸⁷ In seeking to balance the individual and the communal, Brown was not dismissive of any consequences of Christianity beyond the individual. He affirmed that "more enlightenment upon the social implications of Christianity" was a "worthy object of religious education."⁸⁸ The Church's first task, however, was to confront individuals about their sinfulness and then offer a systematic reflection on the consequences of their sinfulness. Commenting on the correct sequence and approach to the problem and its remedy, Brown quipped, "Do not try to teach algebra in a revival."⁸⁹ An understanding of sinfulness, rather than the implications of sin, was what had to confront and disrupt the sinner.

The Church's main advancement of the kingdom of God was to come through the salvation of individuals. Brown's writings consistently offered a strong emphasis on the importance of soul winning. Those saved because of their faith in Jesus Christ participated in and contributed to the redemptive community. Brown avowed that the "redeemed community becomes a redemptive community" so long as the redeemed

⁸⁷ C.E. Brown, "The Social Gospel and the Sense of Sin," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 16, 1931, 4.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

individual “remains in contact with the living source of his spiritual energy [and] becomes in turn a spiritual magnet to draw others to Christ.”⁹⁰ Brown strongly denounced any conception of salvation outside of Christ but saw the Christian community as encouraging and facilitating others toward an encounter with Christ. The efforts of the Church were made in vain if they remained individualized and independent and were misguided if they neglected the root issue. Brown proposed that “the truly redemptive community will use all its benevolent efforts as a basis for the performance of its highest idealistic task, namely the salvation of souls.”⁹¹ This conviction spanned Brown’s editorial career. At the beginning of his editorship, Brown proclaimed to *Trumpet* readers that “the spirit of revival is the cutting edge of the church.”⁹² For those readers who expressed hesitancy about the primary work of the Church, Brown flatly stated that, above all else, the Church was “to extend the kingdom of God by actually winning men and women—yes, and boys and girls—to Christ.”⁹³ Soul-winning was the hallmark of the Christian tradition.

Missionary Work and Revivalism

Brown frequently discussed the manifestation of soul-winning in the form of mission work. This theme is partly a result of Brown’s tenure as Missionary Board

⁹⁰ C.E. Brown, “The Redemptive Community,” 1.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹² C.E. Brown, “The Cutting Edge of the Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 14, 1930, 3.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

president was nearly coterminous with his *Trumpet* editorship. Throughout his editorial career, Brown updated *Trumpet* readers on the organization and status of the Church of God missionary efforts and offered commentary on broader developments like the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry.⁹⁴ However, beyond logistics and trends, Brown also emphasized the missional nature of the Church. He described missionary work as "an authentic and reliable index of the spiritual health and vigor of the home church."⁹⁵ Without question, Brown sought to promote the work of home and foreign missions equally. The front cover of the October 19th, 1940 *Trumpet* issue, which solely covered the Church of God's mission efforts, laid before the reader the religious breakdown of the world by continent and, under a lineup of the Russian hammer and sickle, the Christian cross, and the Nazi swastika, ominously declared "The World Is Choosing." This work, however, was not only carried out in a one-way fashion from the United States to the unconverted in foreign lands.

Brown made a concerted effort in the *Trumpet* to communicate the importance of mission work in areas often considered Christian. "Evangelical Christians have girdled the earth," declared Brown, and even though the missionary work was far from complete, Europe remained as the "most neglected mission field in the world."⁹⁶ When Europe

⁹⁴ C.E. Brown, "The Greatest Need On the Mission Field," *Gospel Trumpet*, December 3, 1932, 2; C.E. Brown, "New Trend in Missions," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 14, 1933, 2-3; C.E. Brown, "We Reach Our Hands to the Far East," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 24, 1937, 4; C.E. Brown, "Why We Must Send The Gospel," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 13, 1945, 1-2; C.E. Brown, "Our Greatest Historic Opportunity," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 8, 1949, 1-2.

⁹⁵ C.E. Brown, "The Measuring Rod of the Church," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 19, 1949, 1.

⁹⁶ C.E. Brown, "A Neglected Mission Field," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 6, 1934, 4.

plunged into the Second World War, Brown urged all missionaries to remain in the field as “the ambassadors of good will still pleading before the chancelleries of the human conscience in behalf of love, forgiveness, and co-operation.”⁹⁷ Within a year, however, war forced the missionaries to evacuate the European field, but Brown stated to *Trumpet* readers that the continent would soon become “one of the most needy fields for foreign gospel work.”⁹⁸ Brown’s vision was affixed intensely on Europe but not solely. He devoted space in the same editorial to comment on the growth of Asia’s population and his desire to send missionaries, rather than soldiers, to that continent.⁹⁹ Within weeks of the unconditional surrender of Nazi armed forces, the Gospel Trumpet Company voted to send Brown to Europe to assess the conditions of the continent and the prospects of the missionary work.¹⁰⁰ Brown embarked on the tour of Europe a couple of years later in the latter half of 1947. His desire to grow the work of the Church of God in Europe, and Germany in particular, remained steadfast. “By no means shall we ever forsake the heathen missions,” declared Brown to *Trumpet* readers, but the post-World War II situation afforded the Church of God an opportunity to build upon previous missionary work that would allow them to “challenge the future for the truth in Europe.”¹⁰¹ While

⁹⁷ C.E. Brown, “Ambassadors Of A Better Day,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 19, 1940, 1.

⁹⁸ C.E. Brown, “The Unresting Labor of Love,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 18, 1941, 1.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁰⁰ C.E. Brown, “The Work In Europe,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 4, 1945, 1.

¹⁰¹ C.E. Brown, “Our Greatest Historic Opportunity,” 2.

always maintaining the universal need for soul-winning, Brown also highlighted the necessity of revival at home.

Whereas foreign missions involved strengthening existing efforts and expanding into new fields, home mission efforts focused on reviving the fervor of the faithful. Brown's contributions to the *Gospel Trumpet* offered a positive, if not romantic, view of the role of revivalism in the native country of many *Trumpet* readers. Amid significant financial depression, Brown posited that bleak economic conditions had preceded many of the greatest revivals in history.¹⁰² Moreover, he described the history of revivalism in the United States as the direct contributor to the country's premier status. Brown claimed that the revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries made the United States "the crown and glory of all lands" and credited them with "the superior development of North America."¹⁰³ Often appending descriptors like "old-time," "Holy Ghost," or "New Testament" to revival, Brown offered revivalism as a trope that elevated the past as an ideal to be realized anew in the present. In one editorial, he noted that true "old-time revival" is the "kind we hear so much about and see so seldom."¹⁰⁴ The gospel work in the United States was carried out in a context that required a renewed commitment to a previous standard.

The chief means of fostering revival was evangelism. As tensions mounted between the United States and the Soviet Union in the early years of the Cold War,

¹⁰² C.E. Brown, "Adversity and Spiritual Revival," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 24, 1931, 3.

¹⁰³ C.E. Brown, "The Hope of the World," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 3, 1945, 1; C.E. Brown, "The Place of Revivals in Evangelism," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 15, 1947, 2.

¹⁰⁴ C.E. Brown, "Cutting Edge of Church," 3.

Brown offered an evaluation of the status of not only the United States but of Western civilization. He declared that the Western world existed in a “post-Christian age” and called for an increase in “the sacrificial service of consecrated and talented professional men and women in the service of an enriched Christian evangelism at home.”¹⁰⁵ This plea urged for renewed dedication to a practice that spanned the history of the Church of God.

From its earliest days, the *Trumpet* was the primary organ in the Church of God’s program of literature evangelism.¹⁰⁶ Although campaigns to distribute a staggering number of tracts, ten million in total, also received the editor’s full-throated support.¹⁰⁷ The unflinching commitment to literature evangelism led Brown to evaluate as “childish” the suggestion that radio would eventually supplant religious periodicals as the primary mode of evangelism.¹⁰⁸ Although Brown misread the impact of technological developments on Christianity, he was not opposed to innovation in evangelistic techniques. Even if the practice of doorbell evangelism seems antiquated, if not aggressively intrusive, by modern standards, Brown fully embraced the tactic as an engaging method for addressing the growth of suburban America.¹⁰⁹ Whether in the

¹⁰⁵ C.E. Brown, “The New Incarnation,” 9.

¹⁰⁶ Referred to as the “flying roll,” the *Trumpet* was simultaneously a means of connecting and defining the movement but also as an extension of the Church of God faithful in convicting both non-Christians and Christians in denominationalism. It was common for early *Trumpet* readers to finish reading the latest issue and leave their copy in public places, such as train cars. See Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 53-78.

¹⁰⁷ C.E. Brown, “An Integral Part of Our Work,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 5, 1935, 4; C.E. Brown, “Now for Another Big Campaign,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 26, 1938, 2.

¹⁰⁸ C.E. Brown, “An Unused Opportunity,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 13, 1932, 2.

¹⁰⁹ C.E. Brown, “The Mid-Century Advance,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 3, 1951, 1.

United States or beyond, Brown urged, “let us challenge all Christians to witness... to the world’s danger and the only hope of the world’s salvation.”¹¹⁰ Christians were compelled to evangelize for the sake of the individual and the world.

The Outcomes of Revival

Much of Brown’s editorship coincided with national economic depression and international military conflict, and he saw the Church as holding a unique position for facilitating healing and restoration. Brown read the world in spiritual terms and declared that the deprivation of “Holy Ghost New Testament revival” led to the earth “cracking open in wide social divisions and deep chasms of hatred and ill will among humanity in all lands.”¹¹¹ Although Brown saw plenty of evidence of the lack of revival abroad, he also found many indications of its absence in his own country, such as political discord and opposition between labor and capital.¹¹² In a time of fracture and despair, Brown was well aware of the temptation to idealize the past. But he believed that he was living in a time of increased religious indifference, particularly in America, and prayed for God to raise “consecrated, spirit-filled, prophetic apostles and forerunners of a new day of spiritual revival.”¹¹³ Revival would, in Brown’s view, heal division and improve the conditions of life in the world. The prerequisite for unity in the world, however, was

¹¹⁰ C.E. Brown, “The Redemptive Community,” 9.

¹¹¹ C.E. Brown, “Let Us Go Deeper,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 23, 1938, 2.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ C.E. Brown, “The Need of a World-Wide Revival,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 7, 1936, 4.

unity amongst Christians. Brown called for “fellowship so deep that it goes down beneath the awful chasms created by war, by race hatred, by differences between age groups...[and] beyond social caste.”¹¹⁴ The fellowship intended in the kingdom of God extended beyond spiritual unity to include social and material realities, but whether the fellowship fundamentally altered those realities was another matter. The display of unity in the Church then served as a model for unity in the world.

Just as Brown invested revivals with tremendous importance in facilitating the preeminence of the United States, he also discussed the need for and prospects of revival in the United States. Brown looked to widespread revival, rather than revolution, throughout the United States as the most effective means of achieving “social justice and fair play between industrial leaders and the laboring masses.”¹¹⁵ Lasting, effective social reform came first through the work of resolving the issue of sin within individuals. Rather than seeing inevitable gradual improvement and progress within humanity, Brown thought that only the conviction of sin through revival would enable the slow diffusion of Christianity throughout communities and “raise the spiritual standards of public opinion.”¹¹⁶

Brown upheld that revivalism effected more than spiritual change. He maintained that revival would make Americans “more sympathetic toward the oppressed and the disinherited; more just in our social relations, more restrained in our demands for our

¹¹⁴ C.E. Brown, “The New Incarnation,” 4-5.

¹¹⁵ C.E. Brown, “A Service to Our Country,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 16, 1938, 2.

¹¹⁶ C.E. Brown, “The Changeless Levels of Life,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 3, 1940, 2.

rights, more willing to bear a fair share of the burdens of human misery that grieve our land.”¹¹⁷ Although Brown often presented the scope of revivalism as worldwide, he occasionally delimited the influence of revival to its political implications in the United States. The reading of the Bible in public schools, the religious education of children, and the observation of Sunday as a day of worship were required to “turn the nation back to God” and to “save America from Communism, from revolutions, from war, and from ruin.”¹¹⁸ Revival would not only stave off specific political ideologies but would also eliminate war by addressing the root of all war: sin.¹¹⁹ The redemptive community restored individuals and the world toward right relationship with God through increased fervor for the gospel message.

Conclusion

During Brown’s editorship, *Trumpet* readers encountered distillations of the practical components of the Christian life. The *Trumpet* editor elevated the centrality of the conversion experience and advocated for individual reflection upon insights from the broader movement’s teaching to inform and develop the significance and outcome of the experience. Although the experience stressed the individuality of sin, the conversion and

¹¹⁷ C.E. Brown, “The Hope of the World,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 22, 1938, 2.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 12. Brown aligned with other leading figures in fundamentalist and pentecostal circles on this point. Although reading the Bible in public school was not deemed unconstitutional until *Abington v. Schempp* (1963), throughout the twentieth century and before Protestants put forth great effort to delimit the content that was permissible, if not required, for the classroom, often displaying deep anti-Catholic or anti-communist sentiment. Sutton, *American Apocalypse*, 160-166.

¹¹⁹ C.E. Brown, “The Hope of the World,” March 3, 1945, 1.

its unfolding consequences moved the Christian beyond themselves. The Holy Spirit enabled the saved and sanctified believer, who participated in the broader communion of the Church, to join the work of proclaiming Christ to the world. Rather than merely repeating prior conceptions of the faith, Brown urged readers to explore and innovate. Fidelity to God included experiential familiarity with, curiosity about, and responsiveness to a theological heritage's beliefs and ideas. Because the Christian life was communal, the issue for Brown, however, was to provide *Trumpet* readers with an assessment of the abundance of denominations and theological traditions that comprised Christianity.

CHAPTER THREE
ECCLESIOLOGY: THE FOUNDATION OF UNITY IN HOLINESS
FUNDAMENTALISM

In the fall of 1950, C.E. Brown received a letter from fellow Church of God minister and eventual long-time faculty member of the sociology department at Anderson College, Valorous B. Clear. The note captures a fledgling academic turning to an elder statesman in the Church of God with a request that was equally respectful and daring. At the time of the inquiry, Clear was teaching courses at Anderson while also working toward earning his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.¹ Clear asked Brown to outline the Church of God's connection to evangelical Christianity and to evaluate the movement's relationship to ecumenical efforts like the Federal Council of Churches.² Clear's invitation to Brown was to reflect upon not only the Church of God's historical relationship but also what Brown thought the movement should do in the present. The up-and-comer was entreating the *Trumpet* editor to engage in a task that previous generations had opposed, even outright condemned, namely defining the Church of God's position alongside other trends in Christianity in a constructive manner. Clear realized the gravity of his request as he described these twin issues as "sticks of

¹ Clear's doctoral dissertation, which was developed through the insight and guidance of figures like James Luther Adams and Sidney Mead, was completed in 1953 and evaluated the institutionalization of the Church of God in strictly sociological categories. See Clear, "Church of God: Social Adaptation," 1953. For more on Clear's influence on the Anderson College campus, particularly regarding his views on race and homosexuality, see Strege, *Desk As Altar*, 184-186, 286-288.

² Val Clear to C.E. Brown, October 22, 1950, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

dynamite.”³ Coaxing Brown to consider undertaking the task, Clear wrote, “Only one with your prestige and scholarly judgment would dare attempt handling them.”⁴ The Church of God may not have been in a position to engage those conversations, but the questions had significance, in Clear’s view, for the current and future status of the movement. Clear concluded the letter by stating that, whether Brown decided to engage or not, considering the twin issues “would be a good thing for the graduate students to deal with.”⁵

Brown’s departure from the various institutional positions in the coming years and the publishing of his history of the Church of God, *When The Trumpet Sounded* (1951), prohibited any prompt response to the invitation. Brown eventually gave two lectures on these topics in early 1953 before a gathering of Church of God students and ministers that roughly totaled 130, over twice the number of the students enrolled at the School of Theology.⁶ In the interim between Clear’s letter and the lectures, the list for Brown swelled from Clear’s three initial questions to approximately twenty-five that included inquiries from other Anderson College faculty.⁷ The first talk attended to the Church of God’s relationship to ecumenical Christianity. The other, while billed as a lecture on the movement’s connection to fundamentalism and liberalism, was mainly

³ Clear to Brown, October 22, 1950, Brown Papers.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Harold L. Minkler, “Dr. C.E. Brown’s Lectures Stimulating,” *Alumni News* 35, no. 10 (May 1953): 8.

⁷ “Questions on Lecture Series: The Relation of the Church of God to Fundamentalism and Liberalism,” Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

directed against fundamentalists' commercialization of the faith. Although addressing only a portion of the assembled questions, these lectures served as the capstone of a career that devoted editorials and monographs to the Church of God's ecclesiology and its relation to other Christian groups.

Ecclesiology, or the study of the nature and structure of the Church, was foundational to the initial theological identity of the Church of God. This chapter begins with a brief review of the ecclesiological position of first-generation Church of God reformers. These leaders commanded other Christians to eschew their denominational identity and join the movement to restore unity to God's Church. Brown's writings noticeably shifted the movement's ecclesiological identity by stressing the historical, rather than eschatological, foundation of the Church of God's role within Christianity.⁸ This chapter highlights Brown's understanding of the critical elements of the nature and structure of the Church to situate him in the broader thinking of the Church of God. The deep aversion to the perceived division introduced to Christianity by denominations from the movement's inception persisted through Brown's editorship. Although the Church of God played a critical role in the movement toward unity, Brown emphasized the broader historical developments in the reformation of God's Church. As a result, the strict exclusiveness of the movement's message about the necessity of belonging to the Church of God faded.

⁸ For a helpful overview of Brown and the contributions of his monographs, see Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 213-222.

By the time of his 1953 lectures, the critique of improper approaches to unity accompanied and began to outweigh the decrying of denominationalism in Brown's writing. With an increase in ecumenically concerned Christians, Brown contended that the message of the earliest Church of God reformers about the unity of the Church was compatible with a broader audience within Christianity. The diffusion of interest in union was not credited solely to the Church of God but only further indicated how the Church of God historically participated in a broader reform movement within Christianity. Nevertheless, Brown believed that the Church of God still possessed the only correct solution to the malady of Christianity's division.

After reviewing Brown's understanding of unity, the chapter turns to what has received less attention, namely how Brown's theoretical foundation translated into practice through his evaluation of other Christian groups. Throughout his editorial career, Brown's musings about the Church led him, directly or indirectly, to a discussion of other contemporary Christians, such as pentecostalism, Catholicism, and theological liberalism. While Brown regarded these groups as misguided or incomplete, if not potentially dangerous, forms of Christianity, they remained Brown's primary point of contact for theological reflection. His awareness of developments and trends within these groups equaled his dissatisfaction with their theological commitments.

Whereas Brown generally cast those groups in a negative light, he lavished praise upon Christianity that was evangelical and fundamentalist. At this point, his ecclesiological conviction about the division of the Church walked a fine line. Throughout his career, Brown was avowedly a fundamentalist and, as such, made claims

about the fundamental teachings of evangelical Christianity. These monikers were typically treated, at least in their ideal form, as dispositions. Brown rarely, if ever, described or commented upon evangelicalism as a discrete group; his focus was on describing the attitudes and practices that marked evangelical Christianity. However, he distinguished, if indirectly, between fundamentalist Christianity and the tradition of fundamentalism. Fundamentalism was at play in the holiness movement albeit in an entirely different form. This chapter demonstrates how a holiness leader's view of the Church and other Christian groups nuances the dichotomy of conservative and liberal or fundamentalist and modernist.

Early Church of God Ecclesiology

The nature and structure of the Church was a concern of the Church of God from its inception. D.S. Warner separated from a holiness offshoot of the Church of God (Winebrenner) called the Northern Indiana Eldership of the Church of God because that group bestowed church membership and granted ministerial licenses.⁹ To Warner, these ecclesial practices invested humans with insight and authority that belonged only to God. Warner contended that salvation conferred membership in the Church and that the Holy Spirit organized the Church, including the calling and equipping of ministers.¹⁰ All of the various human efforts to organize the Church effectively resulted in denominationalism, or the fragmentation of the Church. The solution to the fracture of the Church was to

⁹ Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 36-37.

¹⁰ Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 22-24.

plead for those entrapped in the various sects to come out of human organizations that masqueraded as God's Church.¹¹ In addition to spotting imitations of the Church, these reformers identified the marks of the Church. Holiness accompanied unity and Holy Spirit leadership as the traits of the Church that God intended.¹² Although early leaders opposed organization, institutional structures nevertheless emerged out of necessity in the earliest decades of the twentieth century.¹³ One of the most significant justifications of the ongoing institutionalization came from Brown's distinction between organizing the Church and organizing the work of the Church.¹⁴ Directing the efforts and increasing the efficiency of the Church was a necessary and beneficial task.

While the Church of God was ironing out its approach to the Church's structure, an apocalyptically grounded narrative about the movement's beginning also emerged. The location of the publishing efforts of the *Gospel Trumpet* moved throughout Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan a total of four times within the first two decades of the Church of God's existence. Despite its semi-nomadic tendency, the young Church of God movement was always located near the hotbed of activity for Seventh-day Adventists in Battle Creek, Michigan, and competition between the two groups' ideologies emerged. In the mid-1880s, against the biblical exegesis of the Seventh-day Adventist leader, Uriah

¹¹ Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 88.

¹² *Ibid.*, 88-90.

¹³ Chapter one mentioned the formation of various agencies to facilitate the work of the Church of God. However, other developments include the compilation of a list of the approved ministers of the Church of God in the early 1900s to receive discounted fare on railroad tickets. For an assessment of the agencies of the Church of God, see Forrest, "Basic Doctrines and Institutional Patterns," 232-254. For the creation of the ministerial list, see Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 86-87.

¹⁴ C.E. Brown, "Working Together for the Lord," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 3, 1943, 1-2.

Smith, D.S. Warner argued that the apocalyptic sections of the biblical text contained references to the rise of the Church of God.¹⁵ Warner and others utilized an interpretive framework that mapped references in the biblical texts to events and dates in the history of the Church and consequently divided that outline into four ages. In this “church-historical” schema, apostolic Christianity was the gold standard, known as the Morning Light Age, that was abandoned during the Papal Age, partially restored in the Protestant Age, and fully restored in the Evening Light Age.¹⁶ The squabble between Smith and Warner over which year in history marked the inception of the Evening Light Age was fundamentally a claim about which group embodied the true and complete restoration of the holiness and unity of apostolic Christianity.¹⁷ Those who did not belong to the full restoration were embracing, by default, an incomplete and flawed form of the faith. Coupled with Warner’s convictions about ecclesial practices, this apocalyptic identity led the Church of God to consider those trapped in denominationalism as illegitimate Christians with whom they should not associate or work.¹⁸ The design for God’s Church was unity, and the only way to participate in the Church was to come out of denominationalism and into the reformation movement.

¹⁵ Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 95-96.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 95-99.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 96-97.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 104.

The Nature of the Church

Despite the early Church of God reformers' clear attestations, Brown thought that they had not exhausted all possible commentary on the Church. Moreover, they were mistaken. After all, every Christian was called to explore and uncover new insights about the Christian life, and no other subject captivated Brown's thought more than the Church. During his *Trumpet* editorship, Brown produced three monographs on ecclesiology: *A New Approach to Christian Unity* (1931), *The Church Beyond Division* (1939), and *The Apostolic Church* (1947). He developed a 1951 lecture series at the School of Theology that focused significantly on ecclesiology into his penultimate monograph, *When Souls Awaken* (1954).

In the preface of *A New Approach*, Brown indicated the personal impact of the subject of the Church's unity. Approaching fifty years old, he wrote, "the central thought of the book has been slowly wrought out in my soul more painfully than any other belief of my life."¹⁹ Discussions with his father about pursuing his education at a sectarian institution undoubtedly contributed to that pain. While other youths were in a "crisis period of doubt and uncertainty about God and life's ideals," Brown noted that he was "plunged into such a maze of uncertainty that my distress became at times intense mental anguish" over the nature of the Church.²⁰ The import of the subject stayed with Brown throughout his editorship. He confessed as much to *Trumpet* readers during the waning years of his editorial career as he began a series of articles in 1948 that reviewed *The*

¹⁹ C.E. Brown, *A New Approach to Christian Unity* (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 1931), v.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, v-vi.

Divine Imperative by the Swiss theologian, Emil Brunner. As a disclaimer of sorts, Brown noted his restraint and conscious choice not to overpublish on the topic of the Church even though he asserted, no doubt with a healthy dose of hyperbole, that he could have written an editorial on the subject every week.²¹ The division, conflict, and desire for unity within Christianity in the middle-third of the twentieth century beckoned for the renewed study of the Church.

Brown was a holiness leader who believed that the mission of the Church involved more than spreading a message about the need for conversion and a subsequent life of holiness. One of Christianity's fundamental components was understanding the mutual dependence of the individuals within the Church and their collective call to action. Ideas, specifically doctrine, played an irreplaceable role in the formation of the Church. In a classroom interview, Brown demurred at the suggestion that *The Meaning of Sanctification* was his most important work.²² He opted instead for *The Apostolic Church* because, with its investigation of the ideas and history of the Church, he thought it was a counterbalance to what he perceived to be the overemphasis on the emotional appeal employed in Christianity.²³ Teaching about the Church, primarily calling for unity in the midst of division, revealed that there was more to the Christian life than eliciting a conversion experience or defending past conceptions of the faith.

²¹ C.E. Brown, "The Importance of the Church," *Gospel Trumpet*, May 22, 1948, 1.

²² C.E. Brown, interviewed by John W.V. Smith, April 21, 1971, recording, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

²³ *Ibid.*

The Kingdom of God and the Church

At the heart of Brown's ecclesiology was a distinction between the kingdom and the Church. A coherent and convincing articulation of the error of denominationalism required careful clarification of these two terms. Before exploring their relationship, it is important to note the peculiarity of Brown's writing style. Brown typically referred to the universal body of believers as the "church" or the "church of God" and used "Church of God" for a local congregation of Christians as well as for the broader reformation movement.²⁴ To add another layer of complexity to the issue, Brown reflected upon two different usages of "kingdom" in the biblical text. The kingdom of God referred to either a discrete collection of people or to a pervasive influence.²⁵ In both meanings, the kingdom and the Church were never coterminous.

Concerning membership, the Church was a subsection of the kingdom of God. The Church, which Christ initiated, was comprised of all who accepted Christ as savior, while the kingdom of God included God's people in history before Christ as well as young children.²⁶ In this sense, Brown opted to compare the kingdom to a nation and the Church to the nation's electorate, specifically those who possessed the ability to fulfill particular duties and obligations for the good of the country. Christians engaged in

²⁴ I follow the convention of capitalizing the word when referring to the universal collection of Christian believers but also preserve the integrity of Brown's approach in direct quotations. His usage was nearly consistent and typically easy to understand in the context of the writing. For an example in which his usage is less tidy, see C.E. Brown, "The Church of God," *Gospel Trumpet*, May 27, 1939, 2.

²⁵ See chapter two for the discussion of the specific role of the Christian in participating in the kingdom of God.

²⁶ C.E. Brown, "The Kingdom and The Church," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 4, 1942, 1.

various degrees in the work of the Church, but Brown contended that complete neglect of Christian work resulted in a loss of citizenship.²⁷ Moreover, the connection among those within the Church was much closer than a voting body. The members of the Church were, strictly speaking, unable to join or to operate within the Church like they would a political party or government. As the head of the Church, Christ determined its composition, while Christians were tasked with working to advance its message and to care for the world by organizing the efforts of the Church.²⁸ Brown thought the Pauline notion of the “body of Christ” was “a transcript of reality” in which the Church’s true existence occurred in organic union.²⁹ The various parts of the Church worked in tandem to grow the family of God.

Brown’s chief interest was not determining the boundaries of the Church or in validating its members. The Church of God historically believed that, when a human promoted creeds or other tests of belief as defining membership, they were meddling in God’s affairs.³⁰ Most often Brown delineated between the kingdom and the Church through a description of their proper relationship and purpose. The Church was a physical entity, and the kingdom referred to a spiritual reality. The Church was the body, while the kingdom of God was the soul that animated the body.³¹ The kingdom’s impact was not

²⁷ C.E. Brown, *The Church Beyond Division* (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 1939), 94-95.

²⁸ C.E. Brown, “Working Together,” 1.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Smith and Stregé, *Holiness and Unity*, 87-88.

³¹ C.E. Brown, “Questions and Answers,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 7, 1951, 14.

restricted to the Church but was “constantly leavening all society...healing and saving as much as the world will allow and permit.”³² Brown maintained that love and goodness, which were the fundamental characteristics of the kingdom, had begun to motivate the actions of individuals who had not yet received Christ.³³ Although the Church found its vitality in the kingdom, the possibility remained that the interests and actions of the Church could diverge from the kingdom.

Despite language that highlighted the pervasiveness of the kingdom in society, the Church’s focal point was the individual. The initial point of contact for the Church was ministering to the individual, although their sinful nature predisposed them to resistance, and drawing out the kingdom’s influence on their soul.³⁴ With this understanding, Brown reprimanded premillennialists and modernists for their treatment of the Church’s connection to the coming of the kingdom of God as an eventual physical reality. In Brown’s view, modernists taught that the Church realized the kingdom of God through the perfection of the economic and political conditions of society, and premillennialists promoted a plan of maximizing the number of souls converted before Christ’s return to the detriment of improving society.³⁵ Properly understood, according to Brown, the Church was partially involved in the twin tasks of evangelism and societal

³² C.E. Brown, “A Theory Which Will Not Fit The Facts,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 18, 1942, 1.

³³ C.E. Brown, “Kingdom and Church,” 1.

³⁴ C.E. Brown, *Church Beyond Division*, 207.

³⁵ C.E. Brown, “Theory Which Will Not,” 1.

improvement.³⁶ The scheme of the Church in the New Testament was “always that of a society sensitive to pain and misery, and active in its relief.”³⁷ As indicated by Brown’s emphasis on evangelism and education, the Church was to balance the conversion of souls with the amelioration of human conditions. The principal problem hindering the Church’s efforts was the pervasiveness of division within the body of Christ in the form of denominations.

The Sin of Denominationalism

Brown’s position on denominations demonstrated partial continuity with his Church of God predecessors. He contended flatly that the biblical decree for the status of God’s Church was clear and that denominations incited division where God intended unity. Perpetuating division, then, was regarded as one of the gravest errors for Christians. On one occasion, Brown situated denominationalism alongside slavery and drinking alcohol, all of which he saw as sins. Brown contended that the prospect for misinterpreting scripture to justify one of those practices was the most difficult for denominationalism.³⁸ When looking upon the proliferation of denominations in his context, Brown saw movement away from what he regarded as the clear witness of the Bible. Often offering Christ’s prayer for unity in John 17, Brown argued that visible,

³⁶ The next chapter explores the specific details of the manner and sequence of the Church’s role in society.

³⁷ C.E. Brown, *Church Beyond Division*, 205.

³⁸ C.E. Brown, “The Most Grievous Sin of Our Age,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 5, 1931, 3.

organic unity was not an ideal form of the Church but rather a status to realize within the historical, contingent Church.³⁹

Following Church of God precedent, Brown took aim at denominationalism by criticizing the notion that joining a denomination was equated with joining the Church. Rather than joining the Church, Brown argued that individuals belonged to the Church or, using thoroughly evangelical language, were “born into [the Church] by the operation of the Spirit of God in the forgiveness of sin and the experience of regeneration.”⁴⁰ With a heightened emphasis on the conversion experience, attempts to make participation in the Church a matter of intellectual assent or even something that humans could organize and validate were repudiated. The system of denominations offered nothing more than “man-made creeds pretending to crystallize the eternal truth in words of human construction” and “man-made sectarian organizations pretending to imprison the holy body of Christ in a corporation of human manufacture.”⁴¹ He rejected denominations because they imposed artificial barriers beyond the baseline requirement for belonging to the Church. In contrast to the form of Protestantism characterized as sectarian or denominational, Brown placed another form, evangelical Christianity. This form, which is explored later in the chapter, highlighted a zeal for revival and a desire to promote Christian work at home and

³⁹ C.E. Brown, “The Ideal Church in History,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 3, 1924, 2.

⁴⁰ C.E. Brown, “The Importance of Belonging to the Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 12, 1938, 2.

⁴¹ C.E. Brown, “The Future of Protestantism in America,” *Gospel Trumpet*, May 25, 1946, 1.

abroad.⁴² Although Brown aimed much of his criticism at the division induced by the Protestant Reformation, Brown read much of Christian history as one of division.

A Historical Assessment

Brown departed from early Church of God teaching in positioning the movement as a return to the form of apostolic Christianity in historical, rather than apocalyptic, terms.⁴³ During the time of Brown's editorship, the influence of the historical-critical method of biblical exegesis undercut the institutional foundation of the earlier generation's "come-outism."⁴⁴ One of the primary challengers of the church-historical view was Otto F. Linn who received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in the mid-1930s. Under Brown's editorial watch, the *Trumpet* featured a series of Linn's commentary upon most books of the New Testament from the last issue of 1939 through most of 1940. Brown granted the challenger with a sympathetic hearing.⁴⁵ Brown's sympathy was limited, or at least shrewd, as the feature ended abruptly with no

⁴² C.E. Brown, "The Greatest Need of Protestant Christianity," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 20, 1945, 1.

⁴³ Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 218.

⁴⁴ Challenges to the apocalyptic ecclesiology were emerging across the Church of God from the classroom to the ministerial assembly and the mission field between 1910 and 1930. The first chapter discussed how the dispute between R.R. Byrum and F.G. Smith created the circumstances in which Brown assumed the *Trumpet* editorship. For an overview of the challenges that George P. Tasker posed from the mission field, see Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 185-188.

⁴⁵ About Linn's commentary series, Brown stated that he felt "deeply stirred in my soul to urge all our people to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity for deepening and enriching the total life of the Church by a year of studying the New Testament together." C.E. Brown, "A Conducted Tour Through The New Testament," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 27, 1940, 1.

commentary on Revelation.⁴⁶ Affinity for the apocalyptically grounded ecclesiology did not disappear immediately, but Linn and others indicated that change was coming. The weakening of the apocalyptic reading of the Church of God's inception made it possible, even called for, a new framework to understand the movement and its teaching about the Church. Brown proposed to situate the Church of God historically as the latest installation in the movement of Christianity. Although rejecting the apocalyptic method of the early Church of God, Brown followed their form of evaluating the various ages of the Church.

Without question, apostolic Christianity was the benchmark.⁴⁷ Described as a "Christian primitivist," Brown scoured the history of Christianity and elevated those individuals who shed the prevailing norms to return to the pattern of the early church.⁴⁸ That era's animating ethos, which Brown referred to as "spiritual democracy," held the most weight for contemporary Christianity.⁴⁹ Any organization of the Church's work was permissible inasmuch as it did not "transgress the fundamental doctrine of spiritual

⁴⁶ Issues surrounding Linn's interpretation of Revelation persisted in the printing of his three-volume commentary series, *Studies in the New Testament*, in the early 1940s. See Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 203-208.

⁴⁷ In late 1928, Brown authored a series in the *Trumpet* titled "The Eternal Church and Her History." Five of the ten articles dealt with the first few centuries of Christian history. In the second article, Brown summarized the conditions of the early church as empowered, holy living, the presence of miracles, a desire for missions, living in anticipation of Christ's return, and visible, organic unity. C.E. Brown, "The Eternal Church and Her History: The Apostolic Church," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 22, 1928, 11-12.

⁴⁸ Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 216-217.

⁴⁹ Brown's promotion of this idea undercut his authority as it moved the Church of God away from the concentration of the power in the hands of the *Trumpet* editor. Decisions on issues were increasingly considered the domain of local pastors or assemblies. Smith and Strege, *Holiness and Unity*, 313-316.

equality and the universal priesthood of believers” or “violate the unity of the church.”⁵⁰ While humans organized the work of the Church, the Holy Spirit was active in the organization of the Church. For Brown, Holy Spirit leadership occurred both “in the spiritual work of saving souls, sanctifying believers, healing the sick, and the like” and “in the management of the temporal affairs of the church.”⁵¹ To avoid the concentration of power in the hands of a few, Brown contended that the vote of all believers, who actively sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit, expressed the will of God.⁵² He never directly addressed the issue of a local congregation split evenly over a particular problem. Ostensibly, he believed that an earnest attempt to seek the Holy Spirit’s direction was fundamentally incompatible with overpowering and commandeering behavior and naturally lent itself to humility and further consideration of the issue.⁵³ If the Holy Spirit was accessible to all, then women played a vital role in the Church. The testimony of women in the New Testament and apostolic Christianity demonstrated the imperative for the inclusion of women in present ministerial efforts.⁵⁴ Rather than appealing to narrow

⁵⁰ C.E. Brown, *The Apostolic Church* (Anderson, IN: Warner Press, 1947), 30-31.

⁵¹ C.E. Brown, “Man Rule In The Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 22, 1941, 1.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵³ C.E. Brown, “Questions and Answers,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 6, 1945, 14.

⁵⁴ The 1933 article on the subject concluded with the following, “It is only when the church is in deep spiritual apostasy that the voice of her female prophets is silenced. Whenever the Spirit of God begins to stir in her midst women preachers come forth as in the apostolic church, as in the great revivals under George Fox and the Wesleys, and as in these last days of the church’s ministry to the world.” C.E. Brown, “Woman’s Place in the Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 14, 1933, 5; C.E. Brown, “Women Preachers,” *Gospel Trumpet*, May 27, 1939, 5, 13.

views of the biblical text or claims of individual insight, Brown sketched the Church's authority communally.

For all the benefit and insights that apostolic Christianity provided, Brown remained sensitive of the need to avoid overridealizing the apostolic church and contended that some problems plagued the early church.⁵⁵ In comparison, the situation of contemporary Christianity was not nearly as gloomy. Apart from unity, Brown saw overwhelming continuity between the ancient church and modern Christianity.⁵⁶ The task facing contemporary Christianity, however, was monumental: reverse the trend against unity in the Church that existed for over a millennium. Free from the church-historical framework's restriction of identifying a date for the eclipse of apostolic Christianity, Brown decried the general developments that occurred during the reign of the Roman emperor, Constantine the Great.⁵⁷ Above all, imperialism skewed the Church's nature into one of conquest and empire, and an imbalanced hierarchy and the "magic of heathen religion" were infused into the Church's structure.⁵⁸ The eleventh century split between Eastern and Western Christianity, which contained those groups that ironically claimed unity and orthodoxy, was the final act that shattered the unity of apostolic Christianity.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ C.E. Brown, "Eternal Church: The Apostolic Church," 12.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Brown stated, "In outward appearance the church of the age of Constantine conquered the world; in inward reality the world conquered the professed church." C.E. Brown, "The Eternal Church and Her History: The Splits Among Protestants," *Gospel Trumpet*, December 27, 1928, 9.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ C.E. Brown, "Is Unity Desirable?," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 16, 1928, 3.

The first millennium of the Church's history revealed a gradual movement away from the Church that God intended.

Whereas the church-historical framework positioned the Protestant Reformation as a positive yet incomplete recovery of apostolic Christianity, Brown's assessment was noticeably mixed. The Reformation simultaneously signaled disintegration and advancement. On the one hand, the Reformation greatly exacerbated the sectarianism that took root within the Catholic Church.⁶⁰ Because Protestants proliferated the division of the Church, they set about to rework their understanding of the unity of the Church. How Protestants utilized the distinction between the visible and invisible Church that existed before the Reformation led them, in Brown's view, to abandon apostolic Christianity's visible unity and to promote only the spiritual unity of the invisible Church.⁶¹ This approach resulted in dual membership, one in the invisible church by salvation and one in the visible church by recognition in a local congregation.⁶² Brown constantly reaffirmed that salvation by faith in Christ bestowed membership in the invisible church and the local congregation.⁶³ On this point, although taking a different approach, Brown was in unison with the early Church of God reformers.

⁶⁰ C.E. Brown, "Eternal Church: Splits Among Protestants," 9.

⁶¹ C.E. Brown, "Is Unity Desirable?," 3.

⁶² Brown, *New Approach to Christian Unity*, 179.

⁶³ Brown noted, "Every local congregation of the church of God in the world is a microcosm of the universal church. ...Every Christian on earth and in heaven is spiritually a member of that local congregation." C.E. Brown, "The Local Church," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 28, 1950, 2.

Despite the Reformation's contribution to the division of the Church, Brown also viewed it as an advance toward the Church that God intended. He noted that a renewed emphasis on the salvation of sinners preceded "every great advancement of the Christian church."⁶⁴ Although aware of pre-Reformation efforts at reform, like the Waldensians and Jan Hus, Brown regarded the Reformation as a momentous turning point in the history of the Church.⁶⁵ Perhaps more accurately, what Brown deemed most significant was the impulse of reform that emerged in response to the Reformation. Most notably, Brown referred to the "great revival" found in Pietism and the subsequent movements toward sanctification by John Wesley and unity by John Winebrenner and D.S. Warner.⁶⁶ Against the exclusiveness of the early Church of God's ecclesiology, Brown's understanding of reform positioned the Church of God as one impulse in the broader impetus to restore God's Church.⁶⁷ Brown's conceptualization of the movement made no allotment for embracing the status quo but only for challenging the present practices to return the Church to its apostolic standard.

⁶⁴ C.E. Brown, "Prayers Which Mold History," 1.

⁶⁵ C.E. Brown, "The Eternal Church and Her History: The Restoration of Truth Under Luther," *Gospel Trumpet*, December 20, 1928, 5-6.

⁶⁶ C.E. Brown, "Prayers Which Mold History," 1; Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 226-227.

⁶⁷ One historian has noted that, despite Brown's occasional misreading of history, Brown was significant for the Church of God because he was "the first editor to think out of a historical understanding." Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 214-216.

The Trajectory of the Church

As Brown was busy writing about the unity of the Church and the sin of denominationalism, the Church of God was growing dramatically in size. The editor hoped that the new readers found, as the baseline of the *Trumpet*, “the dominant evangelical message of the crucified and risen Christ—Christ, the Son of God whose death atones for sin—which has warmed and thrilled the heart of Christ’s people from the dawn of Christianity.”⁶⁸ With such an influx of new participants, especially during the 1930s, Brown realized that the composition of the *Trumpet* audience was changing, and many were encountering an unfamiliar message about the Church’s unity. In facing novel ideas about the unity of the Church, he implored these same readers to demonstrate patience and charity. Brown assured the new readers that none of the Church of God faithful would attempt to “un-Christianize” them for not accepting the message immediately but hoped nonetheless that they would test the message against the dictates of Scripture.⁶⁹ As new readers replaced earlier generations of the Church of God faithful, Brown’s writings reminded all *Trumpet* readers that the Church of God was participating in the broader development of Christianity.

Sect or Movement?

In rejecting denominationalism, Church of God leaders continually asserted that their group was a movement and not a sect or denomination. Brown laid out this

⁶⁸ C.E. Brown, “To Our New Readers,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 3, 1934, 4.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

argument for his new readers. He defined a movement as “a trend in the universal church” and likened the “zeal and purpose” of a movement in the Church to the temperature and direction of the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic Ocean.⁷⁰ The movement was active and in pursuit of something beyond itself. Using “reformation” as a descriptor of the movement meant that the Church needed improvement, and the vital aspect of the reform was a restoration of the “body of revealed spiritual truth pertaining to the church which teaches its true character, nature, quality, and mode of existence.”⁷¹ The Church of God reformation movement was one effort to disrupt the status quo and to correct the ideas and practices of other Christians.

Brown realized that, regardless of how insiders described the Church of God, non-Church of God folk might still classify the movement as a denomination. His response to that hypothetical detractor was that taking a stand against sectarianism did not mean that the movement had “no message and no principles.”⁷² It meant that the message and principles were rooted in the Church founded on Christ, rather than in an organization determined by humans. As an illustration, Brown offered a fairly dubious thought experiment in which the apostolic church was transported from its context of visible, organic unity to the present time and transformed into model citizens of England, while nonetheless preserving the “same spiritual standards and experiences” of their original

⁷⁰ C.E. Brown, “The Idea of Movement in the Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 2, 1945, 1.

⁷¹ C.E. Brown, “Is The Church Restored Or Reformed?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 29, 1939, 2.

⁷² C.E. Brown, “Where Do We Stand?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 11, 1939, 2.

context.⁷³ Brown argued that an outside reporter would undoubtedly describe them as “immersionists, sanctificationists, divine healers, fundamentalists, congregationalists, etc.,” all of which were merely external categorizations of their message.⁷⁴ Participation in God’s Church involved certain principles and dispositions, and the zeal and purpose of restoring that Church galvanized the reformation movement known as the Church of God. Division disappeared in the restoration of the Church’s unity, and the Church of God had insight on how to realize that goal.

True Unity

In *A New Approach*, Brown surveyed the possibility of returning visible, organic union to the Church and the actions needed to accomplish the task. Most of his *Trumpet* articles, however, focused solely on the former. As an evangelistic organ of the Church of God, the *Trumpet* heralded the sin of denominationalism and decried improper approaches to unity.⁷⁵ The method for achieving unity was found primarily in the final portions of *A New Approach*. Because of the prominence of the individual’s right to decide for themselves, Brown relied on reaching a critical mass of Christians who would, by leaving various denominations, press denominational leaders to act.⁷⁶ Unity had to

⁷³ C.E. Brown, “Is The Reformation A Sect?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, May 6, 1939, 2.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ To generate interest in the publishing of Brown’s book, *The Church Beyond Division*, in 1939, the *Trumpet* published *A New Approach* in serial form in December 1938. However, the only chapters published were from part I, which dealt with the division of the Church and the need for unity.

⁷⁶ As a part of the Church of God’s 50th anniversary, designated the “Golden Jubilee,” the “Unity Book Fund” effort sought to raise \$1,000 to send 1,000 copies of *A New Approach* to world leaders of

occur voluntarily. Brown believed that he knew the necessary steps, and his disparagement of denominations indicated one of the two major requirements. However, Brown was not interested in detailing the schematics of visible, organic union beyond pointing to the testimony of the apostolic Christianity and indicating the need for spiritual democracy. Because he was vehemently opposed to any humanly organized substitute for the Church, he was barred from anything other than pointing the way to return to Holy Spirit leadership through the rejection of creeds and denominations.

Brown provided, with great brevity, the details of his approach to unity in two chapters. The first chapter, titled “Spiritual Disarmament,” focused on historical and denominational creeds. Brown’s deep desire for the Christian’s doctrinal formation indicates that his opposition to creeds was not based on an extreme aversion to the intellectual exploration of faith. Rather, although individuals operated with a set of beliefs, Brown opposed “division makers,” or holding any given conceptualization of the faith as a prerequisite for Christian fellowship.⁷⁷ Requiring the affirmation of creeds limited the freedom of the individual conscience.⁷⁸ As the “armament of the militant sectarianism of Christendom,” creeds served only to isolate, separate, and create hostility in the body of Christ.⁷⁹ The body of Christ had specific parameters, and his understanding of the fundamentals of the faith limited his anti-creedalism. Brown was not naively

Christianity, though no indication was given of who constituted that group. “Unity Book Fund,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 22, 1931, 29.

⁷⁷ Brown, *New Approach*, 149-150.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 150-152.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 159.

suggesting that doctrinal differences were inconsequential but rather that the basis of human participation in the body of Christ was fundamentally experiential and determined by God.

The logical consequence of abandoning creeds was to abolish the structures that had grown up around creeds in the form of denominations. The enervation of creeds effectively drained the vitality of denominations. Much of the “Spiritual Demobilization” chapter reaffirmed the ability of humans to organize the work of the Church through agencies and the “inward urge of the Spirit of God” to organize the Church.⁸⁰ By shedding creeds and denominations, the only remaining spiritual foundation for Christians was Christ. Brown concluded, “There will then be plenty of time to compare and study doctrines, when the clamor of debate has given place to the silence of the humble and earnest pupils in the school of Christ.”⁸¹ What the organization and practices of those enrolled in the school of Christ looked like in detail, Brown ultimately could not say. He believed that the true unity of the Church mandated the inclusion of all Christians and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Involved in providing the case for the achievement of visible, organic union was the refutation of popular arguments for denominationalism. Brown did not have to look beyond the holiness movement to find an opponent. Although his title suggested a new approach, he selected an interlocuter from the previous century. In the monograph’s conclusion, Brown engaged in a point-for-point evaluation of the text that he regarded as

⁸⁰ Brown, *New Approach*, 167-169.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 170.

offering the most refined argument in defense of denominationalism: *The Elements of Theology* (1856) by the Wesleyan Methodist leader, Luther Lee. Readers encountered familiar points of debate, such as conversion bestowing membership, the ability of the local congregation only to recognize, not determine, membership in the Church, and organizing the work of the Church.⁸² Although it provided readers with a convincing refutation of a holiness leader, the underlying conclusion was that the Church of God was operating in a context saturated with attempts to foster unity. As the *Trumpet* editor, Brown spoke against those solutions that he regarded as misguided and harmful.

Evaluating Proposed Solutions

During Brown's editorship, the portrayal of the movement that pursued the unity of the Church was never limited solely to the Church of God. The editor contended that there was a noticeable shift in the attitude of Christians on the topic of denominationalism and unity since the beginning of the twentieth century.⁸³ A desire for unity was no guarantee for arriving at the appropriate means for achieving the goal. The impulse for unity was found throughout Christianity in places that were quite far from the Church of God theologically, such as the report of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry.⁸⁴

⁸² Brown, *New Approach*, 179, 183-184, 198-199.

⁸³ C.E. Brown, "Do We Want Christian Union?," *Gospel Trumpet*, December 3, 1932, 3.

⁸⁴ The report of the Commission of Appraisal was published as *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry After One Hundred Years* in 1932 and was referred to as the "Hocking Report" after the inquiry's leader and Harvard philosopher, William Ernest Hocking. This study of mainline missionary efforts in Asia emphasized the need for indigenization of missions and for an emphasis on education and improvement rather than preaching. For more on the Hocking Report, see William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 158-175.

Although the report was “deeply tinged with religious liberalism and modernism,” Brown affirmed its position on some topics, specifically the detriment of denominations to mission efforts and the need for indigenous control.⁸⁵ However, Brown departed sharply from the report’s suggestion that a merger of denominations, or what he called the “doctrine of federationism,” was the cure for the division.⁸⁶ The approach of federationism was, for Brown, the epitome of human interference and meddling in the spiritual organism of the Church. Unity of the Church would not come through “tinkering up and carpentering the creeds and denominations of a past age.”⁸⁷ The urgency of speaking against federationism increased for Brown in 1937 as representatives met at the Conference on Life and Work in Oxford and the Conference on Faith and Order in Edinburgh.⁸⁸

Brown saw many problems in the proposed solutions of these ecumenical conferences. Theologically, Brown argued that the proper response to the sin of denominationalism was not the modification of the system but outright rejection.⁸⁹ As such, Brown believed that the emergence of a federated church would perpetuate, if not greatly exacerbate, the evils of denominationalism. The federated church would continue

⁸⁵ C.E. Brown, “The New Trend in Missions,” 2.

⁸⁶ C.E. Brown, “What Is the Matter with China?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 26, 1933, 2-3.

⁸⁷ C.E. Brown, “Federation Is Not the Road to Unity,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 10, 1934, 12.

⁸⁸ For more on these conferences and their merger into the World Council of Churches, see W. A. Visser’t Hooft, *The Genesis and Formation of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982); *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Ecumenical Councils” (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002).

⁸⁹ C.E. Brown, “Visible Unity and How Accomplished,” 11.

the division of Christians, introduce greater power to a limited number of people, and force a multitude of Christians to compromise with a generic creed.⁹⁰ Perhaps the greatest problem, though, was the non-theological consequence. The human-led reorganization of the Church, even if it did not express the intention, could eventually suppress religious liberty in the United States and beyond. Brown declared that “throughout all history no monopolistic ecclesiastical organization has ever flourished without exercising its authority to repress freedom of thought, freedom of belief, and freedom of speech.”⁹¹ Not only would a federated church threaten religious convictions, but it fomented a possible undercutting of the institutions of democracy, which as chapter five shows, Brown cherished and defended thoroughly. Although the aim of ecumenical Christianity possessed some promising aspects, overall Brown regarded it as hazardous. However, when Brown rose and gave his lecture on the topic in 1953, Church of God students and ministers heard a noticeably different assessment.

All three of the initial questions that Val Clear submitted to Brown dealt with the relationship of the Church of God to ecumenical Christianity, and Brown responded in full force in the first lecture of the day. Brown displayed his historical interests as he attended to broader social developments and specific trends toward unity in revivalism, highlighting the emergence of the Plymouth Brethren, the Stone-Campbell Movement,

⁹⁰ C.E. Brown, “Visible Unity and How Accomplished,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 12, 1938, 15; C.E. Brown, “Tendencies Toward A World Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 18, 1938, 2; C.E. Brown, “Implications Of The Proposed Ecumenical World Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 25, 1938, 2;

⁹¹ C.E. Brown, “Visible Unity and How Accomplished,” 15.

and the Church of God (Winebrennarian) in the early nineteenth century.⁹² Unity was a theme born out of a renewed and devoted interest in reviving piety. He transitioned to an overview of the origins of the various conferences and efforts that coalesced into the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. To show his personal connection and interest in the subject, Brown paused and claimed that, for both the World Conference of Life and Work held in Stockholm in August 1925 and in Oxford in July 1937, he was present in the respective city at the time of the meeting but was lacking the appropriate credentials to attend.⁹³ Before detailing the Church of God's relationship to ecumenical efforts, Brown offered a mixed evaluation of the World Council of Churches, founded in 1948, which he often interchanged with the general label of ecumenical

⁹² C.E. Brown, "The Relation of the Church of God to Ecumenical Christianity," February 26, 1953, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN, 3-5.

⁹³ C.E. Brown, "Relation to Ecumenical Christianity," 5-6. Although Sweden was a remote destination in the 1920s for a leader of a small religious group, Brown's claim about Stockholm was accurate. Brown left for a three-month trip to Palestine in May 1925, with stops in western and southern Europe. An update in the *Trumpet* stated that Brown arrived in Karlstadt, Sweden in mid-August, roughly at the midpoint of the ecumenical conference. However, Brown lacked access not because he was denied credentials. At the 1925 camp meeting, the General Ministerial Assembly passed a resolution in response to an invitation from the Conference on Life and Work to send C.J. Blewitt to Stockholm as the movement's delegate, since he was already scheduled to visit Church of God mission stations in the area. Brown and Blewitt overlapped for a few days in Karlstadt before Brown departed for Norway and Blewitt for the meeting. His claim about Oxford is more difficult to substantiate, though it seems less likely. In June 1937, shortly after the Church of God's International Camp Meeting, Brown told *Trumpet* readers about the conferences being held in Oxford and Edinburgh during the summer and regarded them as positive signs of mounting opposition to denominationalism. In September, the *Trumpet* printed a letter from Brown in which he shared that "private funds" enabled him to take a trip to visit congregations throughout the world. In a subsequent update, Brown recalled that, shortly before he departed for Liverpool, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited Belfast, which occurred in late July 1937. It seems likely that Brown was in England after the Oxford Conference concluded. The *Trumpet* makes no mention of any Church of God delegate to the 1937 meeting. For articles on Brown's travels in 1927 and Blewitt's participation in the Stockholm Conference, see "With The Brethren," *Gospel Trumpet*, May 21, 1925, 12; W.B. McCreary, "Important Resolutions and Reports of Committees," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 9, 1925, 12; L.P. Peterson, "From the Field—Sweden," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 10, 1925, 15. For articles on the Oxford Conference and Brown's travels in 1937, see C.E. Brown, "The Voice of the Sheep," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 26, 1937, 4; C.E. Brown, "Going Down to the Sea in a Ship," *Gospel Trumpet*, September 11, 1937, 4; C.E. Brown, "Meeting Old Friends," *Gospel Trumpet*, September 25, 1937, 4, 11.

Christianity throughout the lecture. He referred to the World Council as “an effort to unite the oil and water of sacramental Catholic Christianity with Evangelicalism” and was deeply suspect of the possibility of unity among Catholics and Protestants, given that he believed the doctrine of apostolic succession required Protestant ministers to submit to and be ordained again by Catholic bishops.⁹⁴ For any who had read his editorials or monographs, it was unsurprising that he levied his next critique against ecumenism’s laxity toward the denominational system and even offered the recent remarks of the long-time *Christian Century* editor, Charles Clayton Morrison, in support of his claim.⁹⁵ Although the format of the venue likely prevented a full exposition of the shortcomings, Brown limited himself to these two and pivoted to address common misunderstandings and to reflect on the strengths of ecumenical Christianity.

The corrections to prominent misconceptions that Brown offered were aimed at themes prominent in his work fifteen years earlier. Brown dismissed as “far-fetched” the idea that the ecumenical movement was an incubator for “a totalitarian church which will destroy the liberties of the next generation.”⁹⁶ Without question, World War II and the Cold War shifted the sights of Brown’s fears away from the prospect of a world church and toward geopolitical developments. Additionally, ecumenical Christianity was not merely a guise for liberal Christianity but placed conservative and liberal theologies on a

⁹⁴ C.E. Brown, “Relation to Ecumenical Christianity,” 7.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

relatively equal level.⁹⁷ These correctives opened the way for full affirmations. Brown reemphasized his position that ecumenical Christianity was a faithful response to the movement of the Spirit of God in their age and celebrated that it was a forum for discussing differences, rather than a method for unity.⁹⁸ Engaging in self-reflection before a public audience, Brown concluded that ecumenical Christianity's function as a platform for exchange was "an astonishing fact which we have never considered very earnestly before, perhaps."⁹⁹ After laying out the historical context and his evaluation of ecumenical efforts, the time came for Brown to divulge his thoughts on how the Church of God should act.

Not shrinking from conflict, Brown directed his focus first on evaluating the Church of God. He stood resolute in his conviction that D.S. Warner had not received insight that was "a fully worked out chart or diagram of the work to be done" but instead a perception of God's truth that required experimentation and creativity.¹⁰⁰ Brown had devoted serious study to the history of Christianity and discovered the narrowness and ultimately groundless nature of the apocalyptic claims. Although misguided, the claims were an expression of the first generation's creative investigation. Those attending the lecture were free, if not mandated, to take the same approach with the teachings that

⁹⁷ C.E. Brown, "Relation to Ecumenical Christianity," 8-9.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

Brown and others provided.¹⁰¹ Although the lecture continued, Brown had made his point. The issue was less about determining the validity of ecumenical Christianity and more about the Church of God's willingness to rise to the occasion in new contexts.

Brown stressed that there were no practical limitations on the Church of God's participation in ecumenical Christianity, at least on the basis that involvement was not an affirmation of denominationalism and thus a compromise of the movement's historical message. Noting that the Church of God had already made similar commitments to organizations like the International Council of Religious Education, Brown submitted that involvement only signified an interest in contributing to the discussion of approaches to unity.¹⁰² For Brown, it was impossible to frame the situation as a doctrinal issue but merely a matter of acting prudently.¹⁰³ As he approached the end of his lecture, Brown's presentation of the question of relating the Church of God to ecumenical Christianity was nonchalant, if not disinterested. Although the issue of ecumenicity was current, standing in full opposition to it was painfully outmoded. The vitality and efforts of the Church of

¹⁰¹ At this point, the prominent Church of God leader proclaimed, "This creative nature of our fellowship has been one of the most troublesome factors in the history of our development. Creativity involves, as Kierkegaard long ago pointed out, practically all the elements of temptation; the strain of anxiety over the necessity of making choices, the study of alternatives; the effort to compromise with the non-creative elements in our fellowship, the concern to conserve old values without sacrificing the possibility of gaining new values; all this is only a part of the burden of creativity. It is a concern for prophetic men. It is a duty to the Reformation. If any of us personally finds himself too old or too rheumatic to follow such a strenuous course, let us at least be charitable enough to make way for prophetic men among us who may know how to make the old principles com true in a new situation." C.E. Brown, "Relation to Ecumenical Christianity," 12.

¹⁰² C.E. Brown, "Relation to Ecumenical Christianity," 13.

¹⁰³ He asked rhetorically, "Do our fellow believers have enough light on the point to follow us with an easy conscience? And does the amount of money for expense involved justify its expenditure in this way at the present moment?" C.E. Brown, "Relation to Ecumenical Christianity," 14.

God were better directed elsewhere. Brown was approaching seventy years but still possessed the fervor and intensity of his earlier evangelistic years when he concluded,

Many of us have lightly assumed that denominational walls were all that divide Christians and prevent unity, whereas actually these are only a part of the problem. Racial hate and prejudice, the impassable gulf between rich and poor, and nationalistic hate as inspired by war, these all are undoubtedly barriers to unity. What are we doing about them? We plowed well in the fields opened to us seventy years ago, but what about thrusting the plow into new ground?¹⁰⁴

This plea appears to have been Brown's final word to the audience as a later review of the lecture ended with praise, though lacking exactness, for Brown's challenge "to produce men who might launch out into the investigation of this area of Kingdom work to formulate our position in an academic way."¹⁰⁵ However, it was not Brown's last word. He appended a few roughly edited, handwritten paragraphs to the lecture notes. It is unclear whether these were notes to an interested party, like Val Clear, or merely an effort to ease his conscience and augment the historical record. Regardless, Brown highlighted that he only spoke on the topic because of a request and that he felt "no urge to agitate the question."¹⁰⁶ Brown directed most of his remaining comments toward his desire to reject ecumenical Christianity if it meant compromising the Church of God's teaching, but a handwritten paragraph at the end reaffirmed that absolute non-cooperation was not the appropriate way for the Church of God to proceed.¹⁰⁷ This disposition of

¹⁰⁴ C.E. Brown, "Relation to Ecumenical Christianity," 14.

¹⁰⁵ Minkler, "Dr. C.E. Brown's Lectures Stimulating," 8.

¹⁰⁶ C.E. Brown, "Relation to Ecumenical Christianity," 15.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

cautious engagement was one that Brown had utilized toward other Christian groups throughout his editorial career.

Assessing Diverging Forms of the Faith

During Brown's editorship, the landscape of American Christianity was transforming, particularly as new holiness and pentecostal groups exploded in numbers alongside the older, more established denominations. By staking its position against division within Christianity, the Church of God's message was directed equally at the Christian and the non-Christian. Brown received a letter inquiring about the Church of God, specifically if the Church of God was a "superior and more spiritual church" and if its people were better than others.¹⁰⁸ Brown initially responded with a brief review of his recent book, *A New Approach*, and implored the curious correspondent to examine his argument in-depth. Brown concluded the letter with an affirmation, allegedly on behalf of the Church of God, "We believe that Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Protestants, everybody in fact who are Christ's people, are accepted of God as long as they walk in the light which they have personally."¹⁰⁹ Even with this affirmation, Brown continued, "if we uphold a system which we know is contrary to the will of Christ we shall do wrong and suffer in our soul."¹¹⁰ This response generally encapsulates Brown's approach toward other Christian groups. Despite significant divergence on some theological points, Brown

¹⁰⁸ C.E. Brown to Emma Dirks, January 7, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

was primarily interested in awakening others to the error of denominationalism and their perpetuation of the system, rather than the shortcomings of their theology. He disagreed strongly on some elements in certain Christian groups but avoided castigating their standing as Christian. He was interested in uniting Christians in one body rather than continuing the division. His engagement with three diverse forms of the Christian faith, namely pentecostalism, Catholicism, and theological liberalism, nuance the position that holiness leaders only roundly rebuked those outside the holiness movement.

Pentecostalism

To the outside world, the Church of God and pentecostalism appeared similar, if not identical.¹¹¹ Even as one of the fastest growing groups in the United States, Brown claimed that “top-drawer theological scholars” persisted in their association of the Church of God with pentecostalism or, at a minimum, regarded it as a small and

¹¹¹ In general, the difference between the holiness movement and pentecostalism is a difference in kind. Pentecostalism appended baptism of the Holy Spirit as a third religious experience after the second experience of sanctification outlined in the holiness movement. Pentecostalism is a Christian tradition that emerged in connection with the holiness movement around the beginning of the twentieth century from multiple sources, including the Welsh Revival (1904-1905), the revival at Pandita Ramabai’s Mukti Mission in India (1905-1907), and the Azusa Street Revival (1906). The practice of speaking in tongues, which predated the emergence of pentecostalism, was one indication of many for pentecostals that they were living in the time of the “latter rain,” or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit preceding the return of Christ. Showing a departure from the early interracial aspect of pentecostalism, the two main pentecostal denominations in the early twentieth century were the predominately white Assemblies of God and the predominately black Church of God in Christ, which were the second and third largest traditions in Van Dusen’s Third Force. As described later, Brown interacted with an Assemblies of God editor. For more on the origins of pentecostalism in the holiness movement and the tradition’s history, see Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*; Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997); Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Estrelida Y. Alexander, *Black Fire: One Hundred Years of African American Pentecostalism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011); Allan Heaton Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

ultimately inconsequential sect.¹¹² In Henry Van Dusen's eyes, at least, the Church of God and certain pentecostal denominations were reshaping the landscape of American Christianity. As a leader of a theologically related group, Brown was not much interested in the so-called "tongues people," at least regarding their potential impact and influence. He relayed the history of pentecostalism to *Trumpet* readers, including historical precedents in Christianity of speaking in tongues as well as the likelihood of the polygenetic emergence of the tradition.¹¹³ In the same editorial, which the Gospel Trumpet Company later published as a tract, Brown contended, "It would be a great mistake, however, to overestimate [pentecostalism's] growth and strength."¹¹⁴ By the writing of Van Dusen's Third Force article roughly a decade later, three pentecostal denominations had larger memberships than the Church of God, with the Assemblies of God nearly four times greater. Aside from his misguided assessment, Brown's general commentary on and interactions with pentecostalism reveals a multifaceted relationship that included theological critique and friendly cooperation.

The primary point of contact of the *Trumpet* editor with pentecostalism was on the issue of speaking in tongues. Brown was not wholly opposed to the practice but curtailed its range and importance for the Christian life. The gift of tongues was unquestionably active in the Church, but perhaps most tellingly all the significant reform efforts from Luther to Wesley and finally Warner never included a revival of speaking in

¹¹² C.E. Brown, "Just What Is Our Message?," *Gospel Trumpet*, September 9, 1950, 1.

¹¹³ C.E. Brown, "The Confusion of Tongues," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 13, 1943, 1.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

tongues.¹¹⁵ As a holiness leader, Brown vehemently opposed any notion that speaking in tongues was an indication of Holy Spirit baptism.¹¹⁶ Its role in the Christian life was secondary. When the gift of tongues occurred, Brown believed that it was always limited to the ability to speak, through supernatural intervention, in an existing language.¹¹⁷ Despite his conviction, those who emphasized the centrality of this practice or even believed that they were speaking in a divine language were not automatically derided, but Brown urged readers to remain cautious. The practice was not assuredly dripping with satanical influence, but pentecostal meetings demonstrated that speaking in tongues possessed a greater likelihood for misuse than other Christian disciplines.¹¹⁸ The main issue with the beliefs and practices of pentecostalism, particularly concerning speaking in tongues, was the perpetuation of excessive emotionalism. Always seeking moderation in Christian practice, Brown regarded excessive reason and excessive emotion as equally dangerous. In the editor's view, a good majority of pentecostal meetings exhibited the latter, to the point where "one becomes irrational and falls into a trance or acts like a demented person."¹¹⁹ Brown described the overly-emotional meetings, which pledged

¹¹⁵ C.E. Brown, "The Place of Tongues in the Life of the Church," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 1, 1949, 1-2

¹¹⁶ C.E. Brown to Louis Beck, January 11, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

¹¹⁷ C.E. Brown, "Questions and Answers," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 24, 1948, 20; C.E. Brown, "Place of Tongues in Church," 1; C.E. Brown, "What Is The Gift of Tongues?," *Gospel Trumpet*, August 6, 1955, 3.

¹¹⁸ C.E. Brown to Mrs. James Bell, January 23, 1932, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN; C.E. Brown, "Questions and Answers," April 24, 1948, 20.

¹¹⁹ C.E. Brown, "Confusion of Tongues," 16.

continuity with the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, as more representative of the judgment and confusion that occurred at the Tower of Babel in Genesis 7.¹²⁰ *Life* magazine's inclusion of the Church of God in the category of "sedate churches" was prescient.¹²¹ The misinterpretation and potential abuses of the gift of tongues, no matter how severe, were not grounds for Brown to advocate separation and complete repudiation.

Editorials and correspondence demonstrate that, amid theological divergence, Brown saw the vast majority of pentecostals as partners rather than enemies. Brown told *Trumpet* readers directly that the periodical would not take the offensive against the so-called "tongues people."¹²² In addition to a desire to resist the tendency toward hatred and division prevalent in the world, friendship also motivated Brown to engage with pentecostals charitably. He desired to describe and critique the pentecostal tradition "with the honest wish not to hurt, but to heal; not create ill will, but to love; not to rebuke, but to persuade, in the meekness and love of Jesus."¹²³

Brown's interaction with and support of the publishing efforts of an Assemblies of God editor show the concreteness of Brown's resolve for cooperation and the more extensive networks of influence at play in holiness and pentecostal circles. In early 1933, around the time that he urged *Trumpet* readers to pursue doctrinal instruction, Brown paid a visit to the office of Stanley H. Frodsham, who was the editor of the Assemblies of

¹²⁰ Brown, "Confusion of Tongues," 1.

¹²¹ "The Third Force in Christendom," *Life*, 120.

¹²² C.E. Brown, "Manifestations of the Flesh," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 16, 1937, 4.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

God's Gospel Publishing House.¹²⁴ Frodsham wrote Brown shortly after the visit to take Brown up on a proposal that Brown extended during the visit to use cartoons that appeared in the *Trumpet*.¹²⁵ Referring to Frodsham as a "brother in Christ," Brown responded that he would grant the use of the cartoons sent to Frodsham and that any images used only needed to credit the author and not the Gospel Trumpet Company.¹²⁶ Seizing an opportunity to evangelize for the movement, Brown sent Frodsham a copy of the *Trumpet* and concluded his letter by declaring, "we have a deep desire to cooperate with you in every way possible."¹²⁷ Despite profound difference on particular theological points, Brown generally approached the majority of pentecostals, who were unquestionably mired in denominationalism, as amiable partners in the work of the Church.

¹²⁴ The Assemblies of God was founded in 1914 at a meeting of pentecostal ministers in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Stanley Frodsham was editor of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, which was published in Springfield, Missouri, at the time of Brown's visit. For more on Frodsham, see Edith L. Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God: A Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism, Volume 1—To 1941* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1989), 282-83. For more on the Assemblies of God and its development in the United States, see Edith L. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

¹²⁵ Frodsham wrote that Dr. Charles G. Trumbull of the *Sunday School Times* retracted the Assembly of God's permission to use the work of Dr. E.J. Pace. Stanley H. Frodsham to C.E. Brown, June 14, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson IN.

¹²⁶ C.E. Brown to Stanley H. Frodsham, June 16, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

¹²⁷ Brown to Frodsham, June 16, 1933, Brown Papers.

Catholicism

Early Church of God leaders were not lacking in vitriol for the Catholic Church, and Brown's historical framework reveals vestiges of that sentiment.¹²⁸ Brown's statement on the mutually exclusive relationship of Catholicism and evangelicalism as oil and water along with his comments against apostolic succession and church hierarchy indicate that he thought the Catholic Church left much to be desired. However, because virulent opposition to Catholicism was not an animating feature of Church of God identity for Brown, he diverged in an important way from earlier generations. Brown initially evaluated the Catholic Church as relatively innocuous, and there were some elements of it that were worthy of emulation. In the last years of his editorship, however, Brown moved on the offensive against Catholicism because of what he perceived to be its leaders' grander political aspirations.

The *Trumpet* editor was generally disinterested in polemical exchanges with Catholics or any group for that matter. He advocated for a view of tolerance in which the "a kindly, inoffensive presentation of truth" provided the proper exorcism of the "demons of false belief."¹²⁹ This view emerged, in part, because of Brown's witnessing others interact with Catholics in ineffective and harmful ways. He regarded the "bitter anti-

¹²⁸ The church-historical schema explicitly demonstrates anti-Catholic sentiment. One of the foundational works of that schema offered the following: "As early as A.D. 270 the devil manufactured an apostate church. This apostate institution is what the woman, the great whore, represented. When the old persecuting imperial power revived, it entered the apostate institution and gave it its life under the popes and priests. It became the power that ruled this apostate church. Thus the woman sat upon this scarlet colored beast. This beast was imperial Rome under popes and priests, hence popery." D.S. Warner and H.M. Riggle, *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary* (Moundsville, W.V.: Gospel Trumpet Company, 1903), 329.

¹²⁹ C.E. Brown, "Freedom From Intolerance," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 1, 1938, 2, 12.

Catholic propaganda” encountered in his childhood as fallacious and deeply narrow-minded.¹³⁰ In the same article that he relayed his aspirations toward equity, he viewed the Catholic Church with suspicion.¹³¹ His call to action to *Trumpet* readers in conclusion declared, “Let us not stir up hatred and intolerance, but let us so faithfully promote the true doctrine of a spiritual church, in meekness and love, that there will be no room for religious intolerance on the one hand, nor for the political dominance of any human church on the other.”¹³² At the time, Catholicism posed a political threat in a faraway land. Over time, however, the intensity of Brown’s rhetoric against the political objective of Catholicism increased. In the immediate aftermath of World War II, Brown assessed the status of Christianity and the world. He concluded that the victory of the Allied powers had shifted Communism and Catholicism into the spotlight of public fear.¹³³ Because these two forces seemed to be locked in a battle with each other, he argued that “for evangelical Christians it is unreasonable to be alarmed to the point of panic about the growth of these forces.”¹³⁴ Perhaps seeking to pacify a readership as the reverberations of war were still settling, Brown offered his belief about Catholicism in the United States.

¹³⁰ Brown, “Freedom From Intolerance,” 12.

¹³¹ Ibid. His lens on the Catholic Church came by way of an article in the *Christian Century* about the actions of President Quezon in the Philippines taken against the Catholic Church to leverage an advantage in the government and politics.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ C.E. Brown, “No Tree Reaches Moon,” 1.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 1-2.

He vowed that “millions of Roman Catholics in America would never dream of persecuting Protestants.”¹³⁵ Catholicism, for the time being at least, was not a threat.

During the broader post-World War II revival of religion, Brown was attentive to the changes in the religious landscape and the specific development of Catholicism. Beginning in 1948, the *Trumpet* provided free advertisements for the *Converted Catholic* magazine, which was presented as a potent resource for converting individuals from the Catholic faith and warning those whom Catholics were proselytizing.¹³⁶ Catholicism was increasingly becoming a dominant force, and Brown relayed to *Trumpet* readers that there were lessons to glean from the approach and methods of Catholicism. Their detailed, systematic, and tireless efforts at evangelism, including the centrality of doctrine in that process, were worthy of emulation in the Church of God.¹³⁷ Protestantism, particularly evangelicalism, produced believers that were generally confused or disinterested in doctrine. Because of a generally lackluster approach to doctrine or anything beyond conversion, Brown proposed that “Millions of evangelical Christians do not know what they believe or why they believe one thing rather than another,” and, pointing to a recent article in *Christendom*, the problem extended beyond the Protestant laity to the clergy.¹³⁸ Apprehension increased, for Brown, as the production of well-trained clergy and the formation of a devoted laity fueled the expansion of Catholicism.

¹³⁵ C.E. Brown, “No Tree Reaches Moon,” 2.

¹³⁶ C.E. Brown, “A Special Ministry To Catholics,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 25, 1948, 2.

¹³⁷ C.E. Brown, “This Is Your Urgent Duty,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 9, 1948, 1.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

In the late 1940s, Brown's position on Catholicism changed dramatically. Within only a few years of urging *Trumpet* readers that most Catholics would not persecute Protestants, Brown shifted his view to the threat posed by the Catholic hierarchy. He posited that there was increasing awareness throughout the United States of the "sinister power of the Roman church in its opposition to the American principle of the separation of Church and State."¹³⁹ Brown was aware of the growth and vitality of Catholicism, but this new light upon Catholicism emerged from a meeting of the Associated Church Press in the nation's capital. While listening to Dr. Harold Fey and Dr. Willem Visser't Hooft comment on the World Council of Churches' organization and its prospect for enrichment, Brown realized that the conversation was rife with fear about Catholic involvement in American politics.¹⁴⁰ This contributed to his sense of a general increase in fears of Catholicism and sent him on an errand to survey the history of that sentiment. Brown surmised that "nearly every responsible Protestant leader" had disavowed the persecution of Catholics found in groups like the American Protective Association (APA) and the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and in magazines like *The Menace*.¹⁴¹ Satisfied with his

¹³⁹ C.E. Brown, "Thunder In The Distance," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 11, 1949, 2.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1-2. Brown's examples were expression of anti-Catholicism that had declined in impact by the late nineteenth century with the APA and by the early to mid-1920s with the KKK and *The Menace*. Brown failed to grasp the predominance of anti-Catholicism within more recent religious currents of his time. Fundamentalists led the charge against the presidential election of Al Smith in 1928, and leaders with roots in the holiness movement, like Alma White, exhibited virulent anti-Catholicism and support of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s. For more on the anti-Catholicism in the groups and periodical listed, see Justin Nordstrom, *Danger on the Doorstep: Anti-Catholicism and American Print Culture in the Progressive Era* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006). For more on the anti-Catholicism in fundamentalism and holiness movement, see Susie C. Stanley, *Feminist Pillar of Fire: The Life of Alma White* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 1993), 85-98; Barry Hankins, *Jesus and Gin: Evangelicalism, The Roaring Twenties and Today's Culture Wars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 187-212.

historical survey, Brown reversed his previous calls for tolerance and charity and thoroughly imbibed the anti-Catholic narrative. The role of Protestant leaders was “to oppose publicly the efforts of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to acquire power in the administration of the American government.”¹⁴² What Brown once regarded as mild was later thought to pose a dire threat.

Less than a month after calling *Trumpet* readers’ attention to the Associated Church Press meeting, Brown published a brief review of Paul Blanshard’s *American Freedom and Catholic Power*.¹⁴³ Compared to his typical review, this one was relatively brief and noticeably bland, but the monograph still merited a report in a holiness periodical. Brown provided readers with the context and results of Blanshard’s work but finished with the exhortation, “Anyone who believes in Protestantism and American democracy should know the dangers, both to their religion and to their democracy, which are increasingly being accented in action by the foreign Vatican state.”¹⁴⁴ The perceived threats to the structure of democratic life tested and ultimately broke Brown’s appreciation for the approach of the Catholic Church. Although the ongoing issues of evaluating Catholicism in the 1950s and the election of John F. Kennedy as President of

¹⁴² C.E. Brown, “Thunder in the Distance,” 2.

¹⁴³ Paul Blanshard was a lawyer and assistant editor of *The Nation* who wrote numerous monographs that played on anti-Catholic tropes and raised fears about Catholicism’s goal of overtaking the American government. *American Freedom and Catholic Power* was released in 1949 and received praise from figures such as Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, and John Dewey. This monograph focused on the seemingly all-pervading power of the Vatican over the Catholic masses by way of priests. For more on Blanshard, *American Freedom*, and the notion that Catholicism fundamentally opposed democracy, see John T. McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 166-188; Nordstrom, *Danger on the Doorstep*, 202-208.

¹⁴⁴ C.E. Brown, “Browsing In Books,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 2, 1949, 14-15.

the United States fell to other *Trumpet* editors, Brown's attitude toward Catholicism displayed sharp division at a time when unity was held at a premium.

Modernism and Theological Liberalism

Any precise distinction between modernism and theological liberalism was essentially inconsequential for Brown.¹⁴⁵ Both terms represented attitudes and practices that Brown found wholly incompatible with the Christianity that he described as “true,” “scriptural,” or “evangelical.” Despite opposition, Brown's disposition toward the ideas of theological liberals, such as Harry Emerson Fosdick and Charles Clayton Morrison, was not solely one of outright dismissal and contempt but persistent engagement. Certainly, he issued critiques of their ideas and even brainstormed ideas for cartoons to capture the distance between the Church of God and theological liberalism into the imagery of the *Trumpet*. However, the average reader of the *Trumpet* was much more likely to know about the latest article in the *Christian Century* than they were to hear about other evangelical, fundamentalist, or holiness bodies.¹⁴⁶ Although sure to depart

¹⁴⁵ Historians typically designate the German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher as a foundational figure in liberal theology. Figures like Horace Bushnell, Henry Ward Beecher, Washington Gladden, and Walter Rauschenbusch contributed to the tradition's development in the United States during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Liberals were committed to the modernist project, born from the Enlightenment, of engaging the Christian faith with the insights and discoveries of the modern world. For more on the history of the tradition in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see William R. Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); Gary Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology: Imagining Progressive Religion, 1805-1900* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001). For a discussion of the relationship of “evangelical” and “modernist” to the label of “liberal”, see Dorrien, *Making: Idealism, Realism, & Modernity*, especially 10-20.

¹⁴⁶ The inclusion of material in holiness or pentecostal periodicals was scant in comparison to Brown's use of the *Christian Century*, and Brown often turned to leaders in the Church of the Nazarene when dialoguing with a holiness denomination. Aside from the *Christian Century*, Brown generally shied

from a leading liberal figure on any number of points, Brown's desire to bridge division also meant that he possessed a measure of affinity with theological liberals.

Trumpet readers were often exposed to theological liberalism through Brown's examination of a perceived error on a specific issue, rather than through a full-fledged description and analysis of the tradition.¹⁴⁷ Because, according to Brown, *Trumpet* readers were likely deficient in the doctrines of the movement, they also would not have been able to articulate the positions of theological liberalism fully. In this vacuum, Brown's writing helped them to identify which ideas or approaches at least hinted in that direction. Perhaps more effective than the articles in communicating the dangers of theological liberalism were the cartoons published in the *Trumpet*. Brown solicited the cartoonist John Harden to produce images for the *Trumpet* in the early to mid-1930s and even provided numerous ideas to spark Harden's creativity.¹⁴⁸ Although not limited solely to theological liberalism, Harden's cartoons frequently depicted theological

away from naming a specific individual or magazine as his interlocuter. This move was not for lack of knowledge of or compatibility with other groups. He frequently recommended other religious periodicals with reservations. On one occasion, showing the range of his recommendations, he endorsed *The Sunday School Times* as a "radical premillennial" and "very conservative" magazine, *Theology Today* as a "scholarly magazine" that was not premillennial and less conservative than *The Sunday School Times*, and the *Christian Century* because of its "religious application which it makes to current world news" and not "its position and teaching." C.E. Brown, "Browsing in Books," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 12, 1947, 21. For Brown's commentary on Nazarene published works, see C.E. Brown, "A High Church Official Discusses The Church of God," *Gospel Trumpet*, December 27, 1941, 1-2, 8; C.E. Brown, "Fresh Light On Scriptural Teaching," *Gospel Trumpet*, May 1, 1943, 17.

¹⁴⁷ For instances in which Brown provided a multi-faceted analysis, including the influence of German idealism, the disenchantment with supernaturalism, and the integration with science, see C.E. Brown, "Why We Oppose Modernism," *Gospel Trumpet*, May 27, 1933, 1, 9; C.E. Brown, "What Is Modernism?," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 4, 1939, 2.

¹⁴⁸ C.E. Brown to John Harden, July 1, 1932, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN; C.E. Brown to John Harden, October 13, 1932, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

liberalism's misguided and faulty relationship to the biblical text, sin, efforts at reform, and the trajectory of the world.¹⁴⁹ *Trumpet* readers encountered a negative assessment of the ideas and prospects of theological liberalism in word and image.

Writing during a time steeped in economic depression and war meant that Brown frequently chastised theological liberalism for the tradition's underlying optimism and sense of inevitable progress in the world.¹⁵⁰ Although modernists had seemingly enjoyed victory over fundamentalists in the theological controversies of the 1920s, Brown felt no impulse to challenge the victors. He was content to point out the misguided elements of theological liberalism rather than lob fiery broadsides and rally *Trumpet* readers to defeat it. In a way, there was no need for battle because theological liberalism was defeating itself. Modernism's optimism rang hollow in a time of discord and relinquished any significant emphasis on the necessity of religious experience and resulted in a religion that was effectively "sterile, cold, and lifeless."¹⁵¹ Brown already regarded as inert that which seemed like a live issue to Val Clear in 1950. Those in attendance of Brown's afternoon lecture in 1953 who had an interest in the relationship of the Church of God to

¹⁴⁹ For relevant examples of Harden's images, see John Harden, "Holding the World from Destruction," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 9, 1932, 32; John Harden, "There Is Danger On Both Sides," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 20, 1932, 32; John Harden, "A Modernist Fisherman," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 4, 1933, 16; John Harden, "The Cage Is Too Small," *Gospel Trumpet*, September 15, 1934, 16; John Harden, "The Ruinous Work of Modernism," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 4, 1936, 16.

¹⁵⁰ C.E. Brown, "The Pessimism of the Optimists," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 31, 1934, 4; C.E. Brown, "Youth Does the Unexpected," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 28, 1936, 4; C.E. Brown, "Theory Which Will Not," 1.

¹⁵¹ Revealing his heightened emphasis on religious experience, Brown demonstrated the lack of liberalism's vitality writing, "It has no mourners at its altars, no shouts of the twice-born, no burning testimonies of men and women saved from the tragedy of sins, no miracle of fire-crowned, Spirit-filled, Holy Ghost-sanctified people living the victorious life." C.E. Brown, "The Bankruptcy of Modernism," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 18, 1939, 2.

theological liberalism were sorely disappointed. The recently-retired editor began with the assertion that the roots of modern theological liberalism lay in the optimism of the philosophy of Plato and Epictetus and that modern liberals were simply masking that philosophy in Christian terms.¹⁵² The remainder of the lecture veered away from liberalism and mostly focused on fundamentalism. However, around the middle of the talk, Brown paused to interject,

The liberal asks for a religion which has commercial value to a nation—something which will ward off communism, eliminate crime, improve business conditions, diminish bank defalcations, and at the same time relieve the individual's sense of guilt and make him happy without all the agony of Calvary and Gethsemane, both in Christ and in himself.¹⁵³

In this remark, Brown summed up his understanding of the necessity of individual conversion for social reform. Theological liberalism's strength lay in its stress upon the social aspect of Christian teaching, but the failure to identify the true root of effective change effectively rendered its social teachings a political commodity, not a theological conviction.

For all the distance between the Church of God and theological liberalism, Brown nevertheless read deeply in current literature throughout the duration of his life, especially the *Christian Century* and the work of the periodical's editor, Charles Clayton Morrison. The purpose of the *Trumpet*, according to Brown and his predecessors, was to proclaim the message of the Church of God, but Brown occasionally included discordant voices during his editorship. From all the possible theological sources, the *Christian*

¹⁵² C.E. Brown, "The Relation of the Church of God to Fundamentalism and Liberalism," February 26, 1953, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN, 1-3.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 9.

Century enjoyed a persistent presence. In the early 1920s, Brown began to read the *Century* consistently, but near the end of his life, in an evaluation of the periodical's influence on him, he proclaimed with tongue in cheek, "I've read the *Christian Century* for fifty years to find out what I didn't believe. I've never accepted anything in it."¹⁵⁴ Even if Brown thoroughly rejected all the contents of the *Century*, he previously justified its inclusion because of its influence and because "many of our readers (ministers in particular) read the *Christian Century*."¹⁵⁵ Such a prolonged engagement with the *Century* and its repeated inclusion in the *Trumpet* was absurd unless the *Century* offered something of value. Perhaps the *Century* filled the role of a natural sparring partner, or maybe the distance between the periodicals was not as vast as the terms "holiness" and "liberal" suggested.

Instead of intense opposition, during Brown's editorship the *Trumpet* approached the *Century* with inquisitiveness, amiability, and, at the appropriate times, critique. *Trumpet* editorials often included an excerpt from an article to evaluate the author's position, or sometimes the author.¹⁵⁶ When a severe grievance occurred under Brown's

¹⁵⁴ C.E. Brown, Smith interview, April 21, 1971.

¹⁵⁵ C.E. Brown, "Church Doctrine Is Still Important," *Gospel Trumpet*, August 17, 1946, 1.

¹⁵⁶ On one occasion, Brown engaged the remarks of Harry Emerson Fosdick, who had recently accepted the pastorate at Riverside Church, concerning the efficacy of prayer to influence the weather. After rejecting Fosdick's characterization of "crude, obsolete supernaturalism," Brown also included a jab at Fosdick and his congregation, who were "possibly more interested anyhow in the flow of oil than in the fall of rain." C.E. Brown, "Will Prayer Bring Rain?," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 30, 1930, 8. For comparatively innocuous examples, see C.E. Brown, "Do We Need a Substitute for Religion?," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 24, 1934, 4-5; C.E. Brown, "The Mathematics of Religion," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 5, 1944, 1-2, 16.

watch, the *Trumpet* positioned itself squarely against the *Century*.¹⁵⁷ At a minimum, the prestige of the *Century* and its editor indicated that familiarity with the liberal periodical was beneficial for *Trumpet* readers.¹⁵⁸ However, Brown's regard for Morrison, in particular, was more than a customary nod to a leading figure. Given Morrison's background in the Disciples of Christ, the two editors held ecclesiological views that nearly converged.¹⁵⁹ Brown also reasoned that many theological liberals, particularly Morrison in his older years, were drifting closer to Brown and conservative Christianity.¹⁶⁰ However, Brown's affinity for the *Century* was not due to theological similarity but to Brown's sense of many of its leaders' high moral character.

¹⁵⁷ Managing editor and Brown's eventual successor as *Trumpet* editor, Harold L. Phillips, responded to a series of articles in the *Christian Century* that counted the Church of God among the peripheral "cults" that were growing in the United States. Phillips suggested that mainline denominations were trying to revive their status by attacking thriving groups and went as far to say that declining membership and underutilized church buildings were the truest indicators of which groups were rightly identified as dispossessed. For the initial article in the series, see Charles S. Braden, "Why Are the Cults Growing?," *Christian Century*, January 12, 1944, 45-47. For Phillips' response, see Harold L. Phillips, "A Statement Concerning the Church of God," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 22, 1944, 1, 19-20; Harold L. Phillips, "A Further Statement Concerning the Church of God," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 29, 1944, 1-2.

¹⁵⁸ C.C. Morrison (1874-1966) was a Disciples of Christ minister who, along with three other individuals, purchased in 1908 the struggling denominational periodical that became the *Christian Century*. Brown told *Trumpet* readers that Morrison was "acknowledged to be the ablest religious journalist in America today" and the *Century* was "reputed to be the most influential Protestant religious journal in the whole Christian world." C.E. Brown, "Church Doctrine Is Still Important," 1. For more on Morrison and the status of the *Christian Century*, see Coffman, *The Christian Century*.

¹⁵⁹ C.E. Brown, "Are We Too Radical?," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 7, 1936, 4; C.E. Brown, "New Books Reviewed," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 7, 1953, 6.

¹⁶⁰ In a review of L. Harold DeWolf's *A Theology of the Living Church*, Brown noted that the book was "modernistic and liberal in its theology to a marked degree." Despite this tendency, Brown believed that DeWolf wrote with "a warm evangelical spirit, quite different from that of the old-time liberal who often seemed more like an atheist than a Christian" and, to Brown's great delight, that DeWolf believed in the new birth, miracles, and bodily healing. C.E. Brown, "New Books Reviewed," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 23, 1954, 6. For Brown's comments on Morrison, see C.E. Brown, "Power Words of the Gospel," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 25, 1942, 1; C.E. Brown, "Church Doctrine Is Still Important," 1.

In a move that surely shocked and likely infuriated *Trumpet* readers, the veteran Brown affirmed his belief that “most of the modernistic leaders in America—the professors and bishops and preachers who are extremely and utterly modernistic—live their lives on a high level of morality.”¹⁶¹ In general, the *Trumpet* editor regarded an attack upon a Christian because of different theological convictions to be baseless and destructive. In response to some fundamentalists’ treatment of Harry Emerson Fosdick, Brown noted that he rejected much of Fosdick’s teaching but still regarded him as “a man of the highest and finest moral character.”¹⁶² Whether interacting with pentecostals, Catholics, or theological liberals, Brown aspired for any critique to be levied against the idea rather than the person. With his insistence against division within the Church, the *Trumpet* editor declared that he wanted no association with “narrow-minded, fanatical theories which tend to shut the doors of the kingdom of God on honest, intelligent people.”¹⁶³ Although pentecostals, Catholics, and theological liberals are generally understood as the primary enemies of holiness folk, Brown’s writing demonstrates that he maintained, or at least desired, a fluid posture of embrace and criticism. None of these forms of the Christian faith, or any group that incited division in the Church, was the full embodiment of God’s Church.

¹⁶¹ C.E. Brown, “Who Is On The Lord’s Side?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 27, 1949, 1.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 2.

The Marks of Christianity

The form of Christianity to which Brown aspired was determinedly evangelical and fundamentalist. Brown presented these terms, which were loosely interchangeable, as descriptors of approaches and dispositions rather than as natural divisions within Christianity. However, Brown introduced some measure of division when he set evangelical Christianity in opposition to denominationalism and fundamentalist Christianity against modernist Christianity.¹⁶⁴ This configuration complicated Brown's view on the divisiveness of creeds because he was delimiting what he regarded as the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith. He firmly believed that he was not positioning his configuration of Christianity as normative, but instead offering the dictates and practices of the biblical text and early Christianity as the ideal to be realized. Although an experience with Christ determined membership in the Church, Brown believed that evangelical and fundamentalist Christianity was the most accurate reproduction of apostolic Christianity.

Evangelical

Brown frequently used evangelical as a descriptor but rarely defined the term beyond opposition to denominationalism or modernism. Evangelical Christianity was standing at a precipice in the early 1920s, and Brown was not reserved in his evaluation of the situation. As the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy was in its early stages, Brown proclaimed that "Evangelical Christianity has come to the most important crisis in

¹⁶⁴ C.E. Brown, "Greatest Need of Protestant Christianity," 1-2.

history since the days of Martin Luther” and portended the “passing of the Protestant Era.”¹⁶⁵ His assuredness in the outcome of the pending change was even bolder than his presentation of the situation. Evangelical Christianity was “destined to outlast the centuries,” posited Brown, and the teachings of D.S. Warner would eventually serve as “the common heritage (as they are fast becoming) of all evangelical Christianity.”¹⁶⁶

Although time and experience tempered his overly enthusiastic, sweeping assessments, Brown held fast to his view that evangelical Christianity was on the rise. Within a decade, Brown was in the early years of his editorship, and the Church of God was experiencing unprecedented growth. He identified the Church of God as “growing faster than any other evangelical movement in America” and pressed readers to maintain momentum by spreading the *Trumpet* message into every nearby neighborhood and town.¹⁶⁷ In the adjacent column, readers encountered Brown’s plea that evangelical Christianity’s survival was predicated upon the abolishment of denominations.¹⁶⁸ In this way, the term “evangelical” was mostly synonymous with early Christianity, particularly its unity and mission.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ C.E. Brown, “Greatheart’s Last Battle,” *Gospel Trumpet*, December 6, 1923, 1.

¹⁶⁶ C.E. Brown, “God’s Rallying-Point,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 16, 1923, 1.

¹⁶⁷ C.E. Brown, “Filling in the Gaps,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 16, 1933, 2.

¹⁶⁸ C.E. Brown, “That the New May Arise,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 16, 1933, 2.

¹⁶⁹ In opposition to the “Protestantism of divisive, combative, sectarian organization” known as denominationalism, Brown described evangelical Christianity as a “Protestantism which stands for the Bible and the fundamental truths of holy Christianity, a Protestantism which has preached the gospel around the world and set a glorious example of philanthropy and of evangelical zeal.” C.E. Brown, “Future of Protestantism in America,” 1.

At its core, however, evangelicalism was experiential. During the 1953 lecture series, Brown offered an anecdote in which his daughter returned from college and confronted him with questions about the veracity of the biblical text and the existence of God. Brown proclaimed, “Here I stood on the water shed [sic] between fundamentalism and true evangelicalism.”¹⁷⁰ He figured that he could draw on several disciplines, like archaeology, for proof but claimed, “How long and wearily I have followed Fundamentalists over those trails. I chose another method.”¹⁷¹ He decided to draw on the immateriality of their relationship as father and daughter. After describing the relationality and love that existed between the two, Brown extrapolated, “Through [God’s] self-revelation to me I have come to know Him and love Him. The things in the Bible stand true to me because they are just like the work of God revealed to me in Christ.”¹⁷² An evangelical Christian was not one who proved matters of faith but drew on an experience of and relationality with God. Although rejecting the path of the fundamentalists in his anecdote, Brown retained the term when describing himself.

Fundamentalist

Brown consistently referred to himself as a fundamentalist. For Brown, fundamentalism was “an extension into our time of the essential foundation elements of historic Christianity, as these were re-formulated and re-interpreted by the Protestant

¹⁷⁰ C.E. Brown, “Relation to Fundamentalism and Liberalism,” February 26, 1953, 8.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

reformers of the sixteenth century.”¹⁷³ At times, Brown used “fundamentalist” as a simple contrast to modernism but more often as a specific delimitation of theological convictions.¹⁷⁴ Rather than operating with a fixed list, like that of the “five points” of fundamentalism, Brown demonstrated notable fluidity in outlining the fundamentals of the Christian faith.¹⁷⁵ The closest approximation to the so-called five points came in the first few months of his editorship. In that list, Brown decried as apostates those who denied “the virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the vicarious sacrifice of his death, the reality of his resurrection, and the inspiration and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures.”¹⁷⁶ Across all lists offered to *Trumpet* readers after 1930, however, Brown never matched more than three of the so-called five points.¹⁷⁷ Almost every accounting included the unity of the Church, and many lists featured entire sanctification.¹⁷⁸ In this way, Brown’s

¹⁷³ C.E. Brown, “What Is Fundamentalism?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 25, 1939, 2.

¹⁷⁴ Brown often equated fundamentalist or evangelical with “conservative” or “orthodox” theology. See C.E. Brown, “What Strange People,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 12, 1932, 3; C.E. Brown, “The Blessing That Curses,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 19, 1942, 1.

¹⁷⁵ The “five points” of fundamentalism refers to the essential doctrines identified at the 1910 Presbyterian General Assembly. Although the 1910 list initially included the authenticity of miracles instead of the return of Christ, a historian’s misstep led to the “five points” as the inerrancy of Scripture, the virgin birth of Christ, substitutionary atonement, Christ’s bodily resurrection, and the imminent return of Christ. See Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 117.

¹⁷⁶ C.E. Brown, “A Word To The Seven Thousand,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 16, 1930, 3.

¹⁷⁷ When compiling a list of fundamentals, Brown never mentioned the imminent return of Christ, which receives attention in the next chapter, or the authenticity of miracles. Brown believed in miracles and wrote that, as a fundamentalist, he must “assert earnestly that there were miracles of healing in the New Testament church, and therefore there must be miracles of healing in the pure church of today.” C.E. Brown, “Divine Healing,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 6, 1938, 2.

¹⁷⁸ C.E. Brown, “Picture of an Editor,” 4; C.E. Brown, “The Accent of Christianity,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 9, 1945, 2; C.E. Brown, “The Church and Modern Cults,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 10, 1945, 1; C.E. Brown, “Our Most Fundamental Doctrine,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 15, 1949, 1; C.E. Brown, “The Folly of the Wise,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 29, 1949, 1.

fundamentalism balanced the belief in the immediate aspects of the work of Christ with a plea for the ongoing development of the Christian and the Church in the present. Fundamental doctrines were not merely relics of the past to which one must assent intellectually but instead convictions oriented around the manifestation of the Christian life in the present. Brown's compilations of fundamentals show not only the contours of a holiness fundamentalist but also illustrate a complicated relationship to the tradition of fundamentalism.

In evaluating Brown's self-identification as a "fundamentalist," historians have concluded that Brown distinguished, though with a fair measure of ambiguity, between being a fundamentalist and the contemporary tradition of fundamentalism.¹⁷⁹ An assessment of the broader *Trumpet* readership's conception of fundamentalism is difficult, but it is the case that Brown had a solid grasp of the framework of a broader fundamentalist movement.¹⁸⁰ With knowledge of this system, Brown exercised freedom in affirming and rejecting aspects of it. In the early years of his editorship, Brown

¹⁷⁹ Susie C. Stanley pointed to Brown as one of the few holiness leaders who identified as a fundamentalist. All these leaders "provided their distinctive definitions, in the process disassociating themselves from what they understood to be the general understanding of what it meant to be fundamentalist." Merle Strege offered the assessment of the Church of God leaders, Harold Phillips and Milo Chapman, on Brown's use of fundamentalist. The two asserted that "Brown was certainly not a Fundamentalist but that by this term he meant his belief in the fundamental teachings of Christianity." Strege concluded, rightfully so, that it "seems more than a little disingenuous of Brown to have thought that, at a time when the term was widely used in conservative Protestant circles, his listeners would not have assumed that he aligned himself with the Fundamentalists." See Susie C. Stanley, "Wesleyan/Holiness Churches: Innocent Bystanders in the Fundamentalist/Modernist Controversy," in *Re-Forming the Center: American Protestantism, 1900 to the Present*, ed. Douglas Jacobsen and William Vance Trollinger, Jr. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 175; Merle D. Strege, *I Saw The Church*, 223n25.

¹⁸⁰ Because, as the next chapter explores, Brown contested the importance of premillennialism for fundamentalism, his description of the fundamentalist tradition's view on the return of Christ was typically argumentative. Nevertheless, leaving that point aside, Brown wrote, "Fundamentalism stands for the lordship and deity of Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His suffering and atonement for sin, and His literal physical resurrection from the dead." C.E. Brown, "What Is Fundamentalism?," 2.

assented to the hardline stance of fundamentalists in the Reformed tradition about the inerrancy of the biblical text. After rejecting the “infidel theory” that undercut Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, Brown proclaimed his belief that the Bible “is verbally inspired of God in every word and syllable, and that it is without error as it comes from the hand of its divine Author.”¹⁸¹

Over the course of his editorship, Brown softened his tone on the nature of the biblical text or at least minimized the immediacy of the issue, in no small part because of his engagement with premillennialism.¹⁸² Abandoning the language of inerrancy, at least in the *Trumpet*, Brown described the Bible as infallible and introduced perceptible distance between the Bible and the interpreter. “For me, the Bible as the revelation of God is infallible, real, objective, eternal, unchanging, immovable truth,” wrote Brown, but the efforts that produced theology and doctrine were “at best only an attempt to interpret correctly that infallible revelation of God.”¹⁸³ Brown’s final outline of the fundamental teachings of Christianity illustrates the waning emphasis given to a specific view of the biblical text as that list was silent on the Bible entirely. Instead Brown claimed that the deity of Christ and “that we are saved, sanctified, healed, and kept by his

¹⁸¹ C.E. Brown, “These Words Are God-Breathed,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 29, 1932, 2-3. For other editorials in which Brown outlines inerrancy, see C.E. Brown, “The Battle Line Is Forming,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 15, 1931, 3; C.E. Brown, “Where Do We Strike Bed Rock?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, May 21, 1932, 4; C.E. Brown, “What Is Fundamentalism?,” 2.

¹⁸² In his last monograph on eschatology, Brown briefly introduced himself as “a conservative Christian who accepts the Bible as the inerrant word of God” before telling readers that an appropriate grasp of the language and context of the biblical text was necessary for interpretation. C.E. Brown, *The Reign of Christ* (Anderson, IN: Gospel Trumpet Company, 1948), xiii.

¹⁸³ C.E. Brown, “Revelation and Doctrine,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 18, 1939, 2.

atoning grace” were the common fundamentals of “universal Christianity” to which the Church of God included the unity of the visible and invisible Church.¹⁸⁴

The importance of inerrancy nevertheless persisted as a personal conviction for Brown. His lecture on fundamentalism and liberalism affirmed his affinity with fundamentalists on the “unquestioned authority of the Word of God” and his repudiation of higher criticism.¹⁸⁵ However, quite tellingly, Brown concluded the lecture by recalling the “type of fundamentalism regarding the authority of the Bible held by the pioneers of this reformation.”¹⁸⁶ Brown quoted lengthy excerpts from H.C. Wickersham’s *Holiness Bible Subjects* (1894) that argued for the inspiration of the authors, rather than the words, of Scripture and that upheld the authority of the Pentateuch even without Mosaic authorship.¹⁸⁷ Although captive to personal convictions about the biblical text, Brown was most interested in laying out the fundamental beliefs of the reformation of God’s Church. Immediately before his description of the Church of God’s form of fundamentalism, Brown boldly predicted that “all the liberal Christian movements will perish and Christianity will go forward into the future as a fundamentalist movement.”¹⁸⁸ The Church of God was, without doubt, a movement that sought to unite people with an experience in Christ in a way that was faithful to the biblical text and apostolic

¹⁸⁴ C.E. Brown, “Our Most Fundamental Doctrine,” 1.

¹⁸⁵ C.E. Brown, “Relation to Fundamentalism and Liberalism,” 16.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

Christianity and not based upon past conceptions of the faith. Brown was convinced the dispositions that marked the faithful representation of apostolic Christianity in his time and the future were evangelical and fundamentalist.

Conclusion

The study of the Church was foundational for the Church of God and the intellectual career of C.E. Brown. For Brown, the method of earlier Church of God writers in conceptualizing unity and division was misdirected, but their message was an indication of the widespread inbreaking of reform in the Church. Other Christians needed a conversion experience of sorts that raised their awareness of the harm of denominations to the unity of the visible and invisible Church. In his interactions with other Christian groups, Brown was aware of sharp points of theological separation but pursued cooperation as the most effective means of overcoming division. Rather than claiming an exclusive message, Brown thought that the Church of God received new insight on the correct solution to the problem. The reformation movement was always looking forward and moving ahead to uncover barriers to the goal of unity, or at least that was its task.

Brown assessed the contours of the Church of God's ecclesiology and the tasks before the movement intermittently throughout his editorship and with force in the lecture series in the early 1950s. Brown was called upon to do the same near the end of his life during an interview in John W.V. Smith's classroom. Concluding a session of reflections on his life and career, the long-time editor fielded general questions from students and more directed questions from the professor. In a ploy to assist his students with their

upcoming paper, Smith asked his most probing question, “Where is the Church of God going?”¹⁸⁹ Brown slyly indicated that the students’ answer was more significant than his. He interjected, “Hmm, what to think!,” before briefly remarking, “I believe that it’s going to go into all Christendom and find a way to make alignment with all Christendom. Ecumenicity will become a feature of the Church but an ecumenicity that is evangelical and emphasizes the reality of Jesus Christ.”¹⁹⁰ Evangelical Christianity was moving toward the realization of the ideal Church in history. The Church was spiritual, but it was also physical and thus involved in the broader society.

¹⁸⁹ C.E. Brown, Smith interview, April 21, 1971.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR

**CONTENDING FOR FUNDAMENTALISM AND EVANGELICALISM:
ESCHATOLOGY AND THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY**

In the afternoon session of his 1953 lecture series, C.E. Brown shifted his attention to the Church of God's relationship to fundamentalism and liberalism. On this point, the lecture departed in a subtle yet significant way from Val Clear's initial inquiry in 1950. Clear asked Brown to reflect on the Church of God's role in "historical evangelical Christianity," but evangelical Christianity was a peripheral concern for Clear as each of his preliminary questions for Brown dealt with ecumenical Christianity.¹ In the two-and-a-half-year interim between Clear's letter and the lecture series, inquiries about fundamentalism and liberalism replaced what Clear had asked about evangelical Christianity. The final set of questions for the lecture series dubbed these traditions as "two extremes" of Christianity and isolated the Church of God from either end of the spectrum.² Brown's lecture affirmed the Church of God's distance from both. Rather than offering a dispassionate evaluation of the contours of each theological approach, the Church of God leader was prepared to expose the perceived shortcomings of each tradition. Somewhat surprisingly, his sharpest comments were directed not at liberalism but fundamentalism. Rather than indicating that he was sympathetic with theological

¹ Clear to Brown, October 22, 1950, Brown Papers.

² The first question asked why the Church of God was generally uninvolved in the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy of the 1920s, and the last question raised the possibility of generating verbiage to distinguish the novelty of the Church of God's distinctive teachings. "Questions on Lecture Series," Brown Papers.

liberalism, this shows Brown's proximity to fundamentalism. He sought a fundamentalist approach to Christianity but was at variance with the pursuits of most contemporary fundamentalists.

As a leader of a small but rapidly growing holiness group, Brown explored and staked out the movement's identity by contending for the term "fundamentalism." He differentiated, almost always implicitly, between the tradition ("Fundamentalists") and the disposition ("fundamentalist"). Quite unsurprisingly, the former deviated in crucial respects from Brown's conception of the latter. Brown was not only claiming that he and the Church of God encapsulated the true fundamentalist disposition but also that fundamentalism and evangelicalism were overlapping and mutually reinforcing traditions. Brown generally employed "fundamentalist" when exploring ideas and "evangelical" when describing actions, but his work elided that dichotomy into the disposition of fundamentalist-evangelical. As chapter two demonstrated, Brown believed that the broader fundamentalist tradition departed from evangelicalism by jettisoning experience for epistemic certainty. True evangelicalism, however, was not based solely on experience. The foundation of the Christian life was experiential, but doctrine effected one's maturity and ultimately spurred them into action because of their encounter with Christ. Although the phrasing of the lecture's animating questions changed, Brown's lecture still addressed Clear's initial interest in evangelical Christianity. Brown thought the Church of God was disrupting settled notions about these traditions and restoring fundamentalism and evangelicalism.

This lecture, when taken with Brown's editorials and monographs, indicates that more than one form of fundamentalism and evangelicalism was at play in American Christianity during the first half of the twentieth century. Brown conveyed the varieties of Christianity, especially the arrangements that fervently opposed modernism, to the *Trumpet* readership. Almost a decade before his rise to the editorship, Brown noted the doctrinal distance between the Church of God and fundamentalist leaders like J. Gresham Machen.³ Brown speculated, "there are probably millions of conservative Christians who are feeling restive under the modernistic apostasy but who have no connection with the so-called Fundamentalist movement."⁴ Even if he exaggerated the figures, Brown saw a plurality of Christians, whether designated as conservative, evangelical, or fundamentalist, that were vying for recognition as the faithful representation of Christianity. All other forms were ultimately incomplete, and Brown's work in the *Trumpet* specified what evangelicalism and fundamentalism meant in a holiness casting. This chapter explores two areas through which Brown directly distinguished the Church of God from contemporary radical holiness, fundamentalist, and evangelical traditions.

First, throughout his intellectual career, but particularly during the emergence of neo-evangelicalism in the 1940s, Brown doggedly opposed the eschatological position of

³ Machen was a Presbyterian and New Testament scholar at Princeton Seminary in the early twentieth century. Although he rejected the designation of "fundamentalist" for himself, Machen opposed theological modernism within Presbyterian education and missions throughout the 1920s and 1930s. His objections to the inroads of modernist theology led him to leave Princeton to form Westminster Theological Seminary and to create the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. For more on Machen, see D.G. Hart, *Defending the Faith: J. Gresham Machen and the Crisis of Conservative Protestantism in Modern America* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2003).

⁴ C.E. Brown, "A New Era in Church History," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 8, 1923, 1.

many fundamentalist and holiness adherents: premillennialism. Brown's writings on eschatology often targeted premillennialism's apparent sensationalism, its misunderstanding of prophecy, and its overemphasis on the epistemic orientation of the Christian faith. Brown believed in the second return of Christ and occasionally indicated his belief in the proximity of that event. However, the kingdom of God was an extant reality. Christians were not supposed to usher it in or to wait upon the return of Christ to instantiate it. This chapter establishes how Brown's formulation of holiness fundamentalism opposed the possibility of uncovering signs of the Second Coming in the biblical text and current events.

The second area that this chapter explores is Brown's theoretical description of the social implications of Christianity. His remarks on eschatology highlighted the need for the ongoing participation of every Christian in the broader society. Those Christians who pressed for conversion and were silent on or spoke against social reform offered, in Brown's view, an incomplete and damaging articulation of the faith. Speaking on "The Social Goals of Christianity" at the 8th International Young People's Convention in 1932, Brown declared, "I am a fundamentalist, but I think we fundamentalists make a mistake by allowing the modernists to claim that they are the only Christians who are interested in the social teachings of Christianity."⁵ This point was not another battlefield upon which to engage modernists by parsing out the critical issues and designating the superior approach. Instead, Brown thought the vitality and efficacy of fundamentalist Christianity

⁵ L. Helen Percy, "Eighth International Young People's Convention," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 19, 1932, 7.

depended on its ability to move beyond the need for conversion. This emphasis supplemented and resulted from the primacy of individual conversion, but Brown forecasted a time in which “we shall be unable to save individual souls” if people found Christians “indifferent to the great moral and social questions of the age.”⁶ Christianity, specifically in its fundamentalist form, was necessarily social.

After exploring Brown’s rationale in both areas, the remainder of the chapter focuses on how his claims for the social implications of the faith translated into his approach to the political realm. Brown vehemently opposed elevating any specific political party or philosophy as the exclusively Christian means of organizing and addressing societal needs. Included within his central belief of the necessity of Christian involvement, the *Trumpet* editor pressed for the right of each Christian to retain the ability to follow their conscience on any issue. In doing so, this chapter indicates how a holiness leader complicates the prevailing conceptions of the political affiliation of evangelicals and fundamentalists in the first half of the twentieth century. Overall, as a holiness fundamentalist-evangelical, Brown imbricated soul-winning evangelism and social action and offered a social critique that transcended, or at least was not reliant upon, any one political ideology.

Evaluating Premillennialism: “Fear Merchants” and “Seekers After A Sign”

Despite the profound draw of ecclesiology on Brown’s spiritual and intellectual formation, eschatology was the subject of his first monograph, *The Hope of His Coming*

⁶ Percy, “Eighth Young People’s Convention,” 7.

(1927). In this work, Brown critiqued the biblical interpretation and theological concepts of premillennialism. Consistent with his evaluation of other Christian groups, Brown was not interested in ridiculing premillennialists. He relayed that he held in “warm regard” those whom he encountered in his earliest days of ministry that espoused premillennialism.⁷ Instead, the monograph demonstrated how premillennialism was “an innovation in Protestantism at large and in the holiness movement in particular.”⁸ Although premillennialism wooed many in the holiness movement around the turn of the twentieth century and after, the Church of God remained an amillennial stalwart.⁹ Brown followed his inclinations as a historical theologian and contended that the Arminian roots of holiness theology inherently clashed with the Calvinism of premillennialism.¹⁰ While challenging the Church of God’s apocalyptic ecclesiology, Brown retained a firm conviction that the millennium was a figurative reality.

Over two decades later, the Gospel Trumpet Company published another monograph by Brown on eschatology, *The Reign of Christ* (1948). This work treated

⁷ C.E. Brown, *The Hope of His Coming* (Anderson, IN: Gospel Trumpet Company, 1927), v.

⁸ *Ibid.*, vi.

⁹ For more on the emergence of premillennialism within the holiness movement, see Kenneth Orville Brown, “Leadership in the National Holiness Association with Special Reference to Eschatology, 1867-1919” (PhD diss., Drew University, 1988); Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers*, 25-30; Steven L. Ware, *Restorationism In The Holiness Movement in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005), 55-64. For more on the Church of God’s eschatology, see Ware, *Restorationism In The Holiness Movement*, 67-75.

¹⁰ Although “leading Calvinists” were not premillennialists, Brown thought that the doctrine of eternal security and outright opposition to entire sanctification were sufficient for holiness folk to distance themselves from premillennialism. Brown noted the lack of premillennialism at the beginning of the National Holiness Association. He then posited, “At the present time, outside of this reformation it seems to have captured the holiness movement completely, including the various holiness denominations which have been organized out of the holiness movement.” C.E. Brown, “Holiness and the Millennium,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 22, 1935, 4.

much of the same subject matter as his earlier book but brought to the fore an affirmative presentation of his eschatology. While premillennialism remained his primary adversary, Brown's central focus was not disproving that position but showing how "the reign of Christ is in the heart and will never be a carnal political kingdom on this earth."¹¹ In the wake of the rearrangement of some fundamentalists as neo-evangelicals, Brown depicted the millennium as "the most lively topic of discussion in zealous evangelical circles of America today."¹² Because eschatology was the source of much "vigor and enthusiasm" among certain groups that would likely become "pioneers of the entire future of American Christianity," Brown offered *The Reign of Christ* to reorient evangelicals' efforts toward responding to the work of Christ rather than predicting Christ's return.¹³

The typical *Trumpet* reader, however, may not have had the interest or means to obtain a copy of either book or to work through the more specialized content. In addition to his monographs, Brown used the *Trumpet* to make readers aware of the pitfalls of premillennialism. In the early days of his editorship, Brown focused on premillennialists' tendency to play upon and exacerbate the fears of the average person. To Brown, premillennialists' promotion of the need for salvation through dire warnings about the return of Christ guaranteed an adverse effect. He asserted, "when we terrify men with that threat [of Christ's coming] and then it fails to come to pass at the time predicted the result

¹¹ C.E. Brown, *The Reign of Christ*, vi.

¹² *Ibid.*, xii.

¹³ *Ibid.*, xii-xiii.

is to harden men in sin and cause them to scoff at our warnings.”¹⁴ Brown believed that the severity of these tactics was significant enough to characterize, throughout the 1930s, the approach as a “religion of alarm” and even a “religion of terrorism.”¹⁵ Proclamations about the return of Christ were more than words printed in periodicals when their influence reached into the daily lives of many individuals. During the Great Depression, Brown claimed firsthand knowledge of people who avoided planting crops and interrupted other workaday aspects of life because of the near hysteria surrounding Christ’s return.¹⁶ Leaving theology aside, Brown realized that the terror element of premillennialism was a lucrative operation. Adopting the approach of printing startling claims and heightening anticipation would increase circulation and profits. However, he persisted in his avoidance of fearmongering stating, “We are losing money in a nerve-racked age by not taking advantage of the popular excitement. We cannot join in this hue and cry because we know it is a false alarm.”¹⁷

Brown had an excellent repository in *The Hope of His Coming* to combat the perceived harmful method of premillennialists. However, during the 1930s, he was generally content to provide *Trumpet* readers with general observations drawn from his evaluation of the teaching and approach of premillennialism. Chief among the typical

¹⁴ C.E. Brown, “False Alarms,” 4.

¹⁵ C.E. Brown, “A Religion of Terrorism,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 21, 1935, 4; C.E. Brown, “The Religion of Alarm,” 4.

¹⁶ C.E. Brown, “A Religion of Terrorism,” 4.

¹⁷ C.E. Brown, “False Alarms,” 4.

talking points was the inability to know the date of Christ's return.¹⁸ The haste of premillennialists in capitalizing on supposed indications in the historical moment led, in Brown's view, to glaring oversights. While admitting that the biblical text generally pointed to war and calamity in the end times, Brown highlighted the pervasiveness of tragedy and destruction throughout the general trends and fluctuations of history. He concluded, "we positively deny that the Scriptures predict in any definite way that any specific deadly terror beyond the general course of history awaits us in the near future."¹⁹ The portents of Christ's return were seemingly a recurring feature of history.

In addition to imbuing their context with a certain degree of exceptionalism, premillennialists were also particularly resilient at locating new signs when old threats had passed away. Having already heard that World War I and then the Great Depression signaled the end, Brown noted in the late 1930s that "religious alarmists have begun to beat the drums of fear concerning communism in this country."²⁰ The ability to infuse current events with theological meaning was seemingly never-ending and also extended to global events. Continuing with the imagery of premillennialists striking the "drums of doom," Brown posited that the dictators of Germany, Russia, and Italy only added profit to the premillennialist spectacle of predicting the future.²¹ This tendency endured when,

¹⁸ C.E. Brown, "A Religion of Terrorism," 4.

¹⁹ C.E. Brown, "False Alarms," 4.

²⁰ C.E. Brown, "The Religion of Alarm," 4.

²¹ C.E. Brown, "The Drums of Doom—Or Hope," *Gospel Trumpet*, March 2, 1940, 1.

at the end of World War II, Brown contended that the “fear merchants” had turned to the rise of communism in Russia and Roman Catholicism as the new targets.²²

Through all the predictions and claims about signs of the end, what persisted for premillennialists was the weight placed upon Zionism, or the movement for the return of Jews to Israel.²³ Before offering the insights of a rabbi printed in the *Christian Century*, Brown declared that Zionism was “contrary to Scripture” and a “foe to the spiritual life of Christians” because it “focuses the attention upon material, temporal things when it is God’s will that the hopes should be placed upon the eternal things of the Spirit.”²⁴ Brown’s ecclesiology held no preferred status for the Jewish people. The innovation of premillennialism’s biblical interpretation and the extensiveness its reading of the times, no matter how ludicrous it seemed to Brown, ensured its ongoing relevance for Christian audiences. Copying the premillennialist approach of employing new methods when the old proved insufficient, Brown shifted his strategy in the second decade of his editorship.

Over the course of the 1940s, Brown moved on the offensive against premillennialism in his commentary on the nature and purpose of prophecy. He proposed that prophecy in the Old Testament served as a foretelling of Christ and that prophecy in the New Testament outlined the spiritual condition of the Church in response to the work

²² C.E. Brown, “No Tree Reaches Moon,” 1.

²³ For the understanding of premillennialists, specifically William E. Blackstone, on the role of Jews in the return of Christ, see Boyer, *When Time Shall Be*, 181-217; Sutton, *American Apocalypse*, 19-21, 301-303; Samuel Goldman, *God’s Country: Christian Zionism in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 87-96.

²⁴ C.E. Brown, “A Jew Writes About Palestine,” *Gospel Trumpet*, December 2, 1939, 1.

of Christ.²⁵ Noting his desire not to depict premillennialists as “fraudulent and unworthy men,” Brown nevertheless castigated their treatment of prophecy, which regarded the biblical text like “a dream book which tells us what nation will win what war and how the political history of the future will be developed.”²⁶ Brown commented on utilizing the Bible as a “dream book” on several occasions, particularly focusing on its seemingly unending repository of material for premillennialists. On one occasion, shortly after the cessation of World War II and in the same article that he debuted his “fear merchants” designation, Brown declared, “No doubt the premillennialists will let Hitler and Mussolini rest now just as they have allowed Napoleon to drop out of their attention for a long time.”²⁷ In the eyes of premillennialists, historical figures and developments lurked throughout the pages of Scripture, waiting for the right moment for discovery. Brown saw something, or someone, else pervading prophetic texts.

Rather than treating prophecy as “history written in advance,” Brown asserted that prophecy touched on “nothing beyond [Christ’s] incarnation.”²⁸ Prophecy pointed to the need and effect of Christ’s earthly ministry rather than to the signs of the end of the world. As an indication of the gospel of Christ, prophecy was not relegated to apostolic Christianity but was needed in every generation. For Brown, the modern-day prophet was not the one who spoke about “when the Jews are going to conquer Jerusalem” but “why

²⁵ C.E. Brown, “The British Israel Theory,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 15, 1942, 21.

²⁶ C.E. Brown, “True Spiritual Comfort,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 27, 1943, 1.

²⁷ C.E. Brown, “No Tree Reaches Moon,” 1.

²⁸ C.E. Brown, “The Purpose of Predictive Prophecy,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 17, 1948, 1.

your heart is hungering and how to find the peace which the world knows nothing about.”²⁹ Rejecting premillennialism’s premise about the signs of Christ’s return did not mean, however, that the *Trumpet* editor also departed from their belief in the Second Coming as a historical event. In the earliest days of the atomic age, Brown mirrored premillennialism’s expectancy of the imminence of Christ’s physical return when he stated that “the thunder of His coming chariot wheels can be heard in the terror and misery of our times.”³⁰ What was troublesome for Brown was not the premillennialists’ subject but how they arrived at, presented, and ultimately modified the message. Together, peddling in fear and misusing scripture were indications for Brown of a misguided conceptualization of the Christian faith. As such, premillennialism was anathema to fundamentalism.

As with holiness theology, Brown argued that fundamentalism was not intrinsically premillennialist. He contended that premillennialists manufactured the direct connection between their eschatology and fundamentalism and pointed to figures like J. Gresham Machen as evidence of a fundamentalist who opposed premillennialism.³¹ However, in his lecture on the Church of God’s relationship to fundamentalism, he used the two terms “fundamentalism” and “premillennialism” virtually interchangeably. The fundamentalism from which he sought to separate himself was thoroughly premillennialist. The variety of fundamentalism that embraced premillennialism also

²⁹ C.E. Brown, “Prophets and the Gift of Prophecy,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 24, 1949, 2.

³⁰ C.E. Brown, “Behold The Bridegroom Cometh,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 29, 1946, 1.

³¹ C.E. Brown, “Why I Am A Fundamentalist,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 7, 1945, 1-2.

offered troublesome propositions in other areas of the Christian faith. Brown warned about and critiqued premillennialism throughout his editorial career, but the lecture possessed a more personal feel in its evaluation of the movement's shortcomings. In his editorials, he charted his disagreement with premillennial fundamentalists' ideas and approaches, but, in the lecture, he speculated about the motivations behind those ideas and traced how those ideas translated into practice.

Brown argued that fundamentalists were "seekers after a sign," specifically that they were concerned with an assurance of salvation "to a degree beyond the witness of the Spirit."³² The pursuit of signs of an inward reality invested physical manifestations with an intrinsic value that suffocated or substituted for the individual's experience of Christ. Though not unique to fundamentalists, Brown submitted miracles, specifically divine healing, as the first illustration of the clamoring for signs. Perhaps the most offensive part of the schema to Brown was not even the motive but the profitability of manufacturing those signs. Miracles were a factual reality, though uncommon. After recounting a story relayed to him about his father's raising of a dead person at the campground in Anderson, Brown declared,

I could possibly believe that a poverty-stricken, shabby, old itinerant preacher could once in his lifetime raise the dead in deep obscurity and absolutely without price or gift—this I can believe. But that a flashily-dressed popular evangelist, in the presence of thousands, and at a price (even in gifts which make him soon a millionaire) that such a man can, like the ringmaster in a circus, make the dead pop out of their coffins, like lions leaping out of their cages—or that he can release the sick like that, this I must see. Indeed, I have seen them try.³³

³² C.E. Brown, "Relation to Fundamentalism and Liberalism," 10.

³³ *Ibid.*, 11.

Holiness and pentecostal groups affirmed divine healing, and the Church of God was no exception, even including in its publications testimonies of situations in which the dead were raised.³⁴ Brown's reaction was almost certainly aimed at the "atmosphere of supra-supernaturalism" of individuals like A.A. Allen and Franklin Hall whose teachings on raising the dead placed them on the fringe of the divine healing movement led by William Branham and Oral Roberts in the 1940s and 1950s.³⁵ After addressing the sensationalism in his context, Brown shifted to his final remarks on the matter. Believing that many people had falsely attested to healing because of their "inordinate hunger" for miracles, Brown concluded, "The advantages in money and prestige are enough to conceal these things from the eyes of the evangelist."³⁶ Religious leaders were as equally complicit as the layperson in the manufacturing and commercialization of the faith.

Brown's meandering through the history of divine healing in the Church of God forced him into brevity on the remaining signs that fundamentalists sought. He turned to the familiar theme of how fundamentalists treated prophecy in the biblical text. They operated a "paying business" because of their ability "to find cryptic utterances of

³⁴ On one occasion, the second *Trumpet* editor, E.E. Byrum, confirmed the validity of a report of an individual who was raised from the dead. Michael S. Stephens, *Who Healeth All Thy Diseases: Health, Healing, and Holiness in the Church of God Reformation Movement* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2008), 85n19. For a history of the subject in the broader holiness movement, see Nancy A. Hardesty, *Faith Cure: Divine Healing in the Holiness and Pentecostal Movements* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003).

³⁵ Kate Bowler, *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 42-55.

³⁶ C.E. Brown, "Relation to Fundamentalism and Liberalism," 14.

scripture [that] suddenly become relevant to the present situation.”³⁷ As an example, Brown reflected on the interpretation of the chariots mentioned in the second chapter of the book by the minor prophet, Nahum, in the Hebrew Bible.³⁸ In jest, he declared, “Nahum’s chariot jostling in the streets has been a good item in this business. First, the passage meant trains. Then it meant lighted bicycles. Next came Fords, [so] now it means automobiles. Good old chariots, they roll on forever!”³⁹ The ability to create connections between the biblical text and contemporary figures and developments bestowed premillennialists with novelty and ultimately the attention of people.

Moving beyond the proofs within the text, some fundamentalists pursued validation in the physical world. Fundamentalists seemingly believed that the pyramids of Egypt or finding Noah’s ark proved the Bible’s veracity.⁴⁰ The most glaring issue, for Brown, was not the searching for signs in the past and present but the audacity of claiming to know the future. He proposed, “Ever since the days of the First World War men have gained fame and money by appearing before great crowds and predicting the

³⁷ C.E. Brown, “Relation to Fundamentalism and Liberalism,” 14.

³⁸ Nearly a decade before the lecture, Brown responded in the *Trumpet* to a request of an explanation of Nahum 2:3-4. After noting that some had interpreted the chariots to mean automobiles, Brown professed, “I have never worried about believing that the Bible is true, therefore I do not have to twist the Scriptures like that in order to make them predict the wonders of modern science when the writers had no such idea whatever in mind.” C.E. Brown, “Questions and Answers,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 10, 1943, 20.

³⁹ C.E. Brown, “Relation to Fundamentalism and Liberalism,” 14-15.

⁴⁰ About archaeological discoveries, Brown commented, “I believe these findings have confirmed the correctness of biblical statements, and I rejoice therein. But I can find more corroboration of the Bible in my own life than in all the researches of Archaeology or the arguments of the philosophers.” C.E. Brown, “Relation to Fundamentalism and Liberalism,” 15.

course of future events by the prophecies.”⁴¹ Brown bypassed a thorough exploration of this point. He had dedicated much of his editorial career to that task. Instead, he opted to finish with the idea that he had repeated in the *Trumpet*: prophecy points to Christ and the spiritual history of the Church.⁴² Having illustrated his point, or perhaps run short on time, Brown summarized his understanding of the improper approach to miracles, the biblical text, and prophecy. “This straining of signs,” Brown concluded, “is definitely not a result of faith, but of lack thereof.”⁴³ The Christian life was fundamentally experiential, and the individual’s desire for external validation of their salvation was indicative of another perceived deficiency of some fundamentalist Christians. Inciting fear through the misuse of prophetic texts and locating certainty of salvation in external realities denigrated, for Brown, the role of an experience with Christ and restricted Christianity’s scope to the individual.

Evangelical Social Teaching

In Brown’s view, the predominant forms of evangelical Christianity offered a significantly imbalanced conception of the Christian faith. These Christians excelled at pressing the need for the conversion of the individual but had a particularly strong record at neglecting the social implications of that experience. Theological liberals were amongst those who frequently drew Brown’s attention to this imbalance. Social gospelers

⁴¹ C.E. Brown, “Relation to Fundamentalism and Liberalism,” 15.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 16.

accused evangelicals of being too focused on the individual to assess or much less offer solutions to broader social ills.⁴⁴ Even evangelical Christians' description of the individual's plight skewed toward intellectual certainty rather than informed action. Brown was generally unable to defend against the modernist critique that evangelicals were only interested in "dry doctrinal discussion."⁴⁵ Hammering out and contending for the specifics of human nature and the change effected by the redemptive work of Christ allegedly blinded some evangelicals to how doctrinal instruction translated into practice. Although departing from modernists on many points, Brown regarded their perceptions about evangelicals as generally accurate. Evangelical Christians acted in ways that reified the notion that their sole focus was the salvation of souls. When theological liberals highlighted this tendency, some evangelicals, according to Brown, retreated into and further fortified themselves in the argument that Christianity's sole concern was the suffering of the soul and not the body.⁴⁶ The persistence of evangelicals on this point suggested to Brown that they were confused about or lacking in any notion of the social consequences of Christianity.⁴⁷ For Brown, this position was incomplete.

Brown was highly sympathetic with the evangelical focus on the conversion of individuals. On one occasion, he referred to the individual's salvation as "the greatest of

⁴⁴ C.E. Brown, "Broken Idols," *Gospel Trumpet*, May 20, 1926, 1.

⁴⁵ C.E. Brown, "The Root of Social Reform," *Gospel Trumpet*, September 25, 1943, 1.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ C.E. Brown, "A New Field for Faith," *Gospel Trumpet*, September 10, 1932, 2; C.E. Brown, "Social Christianity," *Gospel Trumpet*, August 3, 1935, 4.

all reforms.”⁴⁸ Conversion, however, was not the apex or final goal but merely the start of the Christian life. As with his understanding of doctrine, the social implications of the faith rested upon a firm conviction of the atonement of Christ for the sins of the individual.⁴⁹ Concern for the maladies of society was therefore not optional for Christians, whatever their theological persuasion. “All Christ’s people,” asserted Brown, “must be grieved with the prevalence of shocking immorality, social injustice, and all those kinds of social evil which perplex the hearts of all men of good will.”⁵⁰ The only acceptable conceptualization of Christian evangelism was first to agitate for the salvation of individuals and then press for the improvement of society. Measured against this standard, although gesturing toward the social significance of Christianity, the approach of theological liberals was hollow.

Theological liberalism swung in the opposite direction of evangelicalism and overemphasized the social teachings of Christianity. If theological liberals described the need for individual salvation, Brown believed that they skirted around, if not outright neglected, the issue of inbred sin and never located the problem beyond the relations established between humanity.⁵¹ In this way, liberals elevated the trappings of social Christianity, what Brown referred to as the “by-products of the Christian mission,” as the

⁴⁸ C.E. Brown, “The Greatest Reform,” *Gospel Trumpet*, December 4, 1930, 3.

⁴⁹ C.E. Brown, “Social Gospel and Sin,” 4.

⁵⁰ C.E. Brown, “Root of Social Reform,” 1.

⁵¹ C.E. Brown, “Is Human Nature Perfectible?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 13, 1934, 4; C.E. Brown, “Working for Permanent Peace,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 22, 1945, 1.

core element of the Christian faith.⁵² The gospel, in their arrangement, was social reform that left the individual's inner disposition unchanged. Because this form of Christianity rested on an insufficient foundation, Brown described it as “degenerate” and “ineffectual.”⁵³ He repeatedly claimed that any reform efforts that neglected the issue of sinfulness and the redemption offered in Christ were short-lived.⁵⁴ Perhaps Brown's sharpest point of departure with liberals came not from theological convictions but their fundamental goal for the reform of society. The kingdom of God was not brought about through the restructuring of society.⁵⁵ Improving society to usher in the kingdom of God was nonsensical to Brown because the kingdom of God was already present within the believer.⁵⁶ The mandate for Christians to love their neighbor was not about encapsulating values within a political state but instead describing the type of community that the Church aspired to be, namely the Church found in ancient Christianity.

The familiar emphasis on apostolic Christianity emerged in Brown's understanding of the Church's reform impulse. To circumvent direct involvement with the political state, Christians in the apostolic period created a parallel structure in which they cared for the downtrodden and destitute, or, as Brown described it, they

⁵² C.E. Brown, “The Heart of Our Gospel,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 6, 1946, 1.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ C.E. Brown, “We Have Reached the Goal of Our Dreams—But,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 27, 1932, 3-4; C.E. Brown, “Changeless Levels of Life,” 1-2.

⁵⁵ C.E. Brown, “The Church and Political Reform,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 16, 1946, 1.

⁵⁶ C.E. Brown, “Social Christianity,” 4; C.E. Brown, “Is The Kingdom of God Political?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 11, 1936, 4.

“Christianized the social order.”⁵⁷ In this way, Brown desired reform that emerged outward from the actions and directives of the local Christian community, not from a political system. While meeting the needs of individuals was important, the proclamation of sinfulness and salvation remained central. He contended that the Church had “no higher responsibility and no greater duty than *to be the church* and preach the doctrine of redemption and holiness in the world.”⁵⁸ Being the Church meant, for Brown, “urging and practicing the ideas of brotherly love, good will, and mutual helpfulness.”⁵⁹ The impulses for reform that welled up within local congregations had implications for the broader political order, most directly through the formation of individuals who participated in society. Brown thought that Christians in the Church possessed dual citizenship in the kingdom of God and the political state.⁶⁰ The Church existed as “a quickener of the consciences of all its members and adherents in all matters of social justice” and as “a constant generator of passion for social righteousness.”⁶¹ The Church witnessed to the need for salvation, created mechanisms to alleviate social maladies, and engaged the principles and practices of the dominant society. The Church was compelled to witness to the kingdom’s existing presence within and beyond political borders.

⁵⁷ C.E. Brown, “New Field for Faith,” 2.

⁵⁸ C.E. Brown, “Church and Political Reform,” 1; *italics in original*.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ C.E. Brown, “Is Kingdom of God Political?,” 4.

⁶¹ C.E. Brown, “First Things First,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 12, 1944, 1.

Evangelical Christians were obligated to realize the social implications of Christianity beyond the Church. Participation in broader society meant involvement in politics. While no political disposition articulated the view of the kingdom of God, those in the Church held theological beliefs that deeply informed their political convictions. Brown believed that individuals should retain the freedom to choose the most appropriate manifestation of their principles.⁶² In this way, promoting the *Trumpet* as strictly a theological journal was not an eschewal of social reform. As Brown noted,

The Gospel Trumpet is not a political paper. We are not Communist nor Socialist, nor do we stand for any political party, but we do believe that in these days of starvation among the poor and extravagance among the rich the church of Jesus Christ cannot afford to be silent upon these great questions of social justice.⁶³

At least ideally, the periodical's rationale was a gesture toward the Church's inability to dictate a specific plan for the organization of society.⁶⁴ To advocate a specific political platform would only introduce what Brown regarded as the great nemesis of God's Church: division. The unity of the Church on the "unfailing interest in the promotion of the eternal message of the gospel of Christ" superseded political party or convictions about society and economics.⁶⁵ Salvation preceded social reform, and Christianity provided the only authentic and lasting improvement.

⁶² C.E. Brown, "Keep Church Out of Politics," 2; C.E. Brown, "Working For Permanent Peace," 1.

⁶³ C.E. Brown, "Christian Way with Social Problems," 4.

⁶⁴ C.E. Brown, "Is Kingdom of God Political?," 4.

⁶⁵ C.E. Brown, "Keep Church Out of Politics," 2.

Brown's view on the appropriate sequence of salvation and social reform extended into an exclusivist argument for Christianity's connection to the progress of society. Employing the imagery of the locomotive of "Christianity" and the passenger car of "social progress," Brown wrote, "whatever traveling the car of social progress has done for the last two thousand years was not under its own steam but was due to the power furnished by Christianity."⁶⁶ In addition to providing the proper direction and energy for social progress, Christianity alone also ensured lasting and complete change. Brown depicted the faith as reinvigorating the insipid, fading efforts of secular reform and even posited that comprehensive reform came only with Christian involvement.⁶⁷ Despite the importance of the Christian witness, all forms of Christianity were not equal in their ability to ferment change. Brown reflected, "Conservatives or evangelicals...are the only ones who have ever been able to generate the moral and spiritual power which is necessary for genuine social reform."⁶⁸ In this way, Brown simultaneously claimed the movement was a faithful manifestation of evangelical teaching and positioned those in the broader evangelical tradition to respond to the crises that emerged during his editorship. Because evangelical Christians were the "legally acknowledged stockholders in the corporation of the United States," Brown and his theological sympathizers faced a situation in which the Church "should lend all its support and influence toward the creation of Christian ideals of cooperation, equality, and brotherhood in the social

⁶⁶ C.E. Brown, "Somebody Threw the Switch," *Gospel Trumpet*, August 19, 1933, 16.

⁶⁷ C.E. Brown, "We Reached Goal—But," 3-4; C.E. Brown, "Ointment for the World's Wounds," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 6, 1943, 1.

⁶⁸ C.E. Brown, "Root of Social Reform," 1.

organism of modern society.”⁶⁹ Although there was not a political or economic theory that encapsulated Christian teaching, Brown charged evangelical Christians with saturating their society with the values of their religion.

The Church of God’s Political Makeup and C.E. Brown’s Political Convictions

With economic recession and geopolitical tensions erupting in war, the problems during Brown’s editorship were momentous, and the editor used the *Trumpet* to outline how the Church of God should respond. Commenting directly on the mechanics of an event or the implications of a given idea in the political realm forced Brown to walk a fine line. The editorial policy confined Brown to theology, with no politics allowed. However, his theology pressed him into engagement within the realm of society and politics. Typically, Brown wrote on how Christians ought to respond in a concrete situation. Although he thought the Christian faith provided specific parameters within which the Christian should work, Brown’s most profound concern was not necessarily prescribing *what* a person should believe but urging *that* they respond from a theologically informed position.

He saw the Church losing its influence in society if believers acted otherwise. In his view, that possibility had already become a reality in Europe, in which the actions of church officials led reform leaders to disregard the Church as “a vital organ for the promotion of social justice.”⁷⁰ Rather than positioning the Church as one of many

⁶⁹ C.E. Brown, “Social Christianity,” 4.

⁷⁰ C.E. Brown, “Why The Church Should Speak,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 5, 1931, 4.

institutions engaged in social change, Brown thought the Church, particularly when organically united, would return to the apostolic standard of social relief. This project, however, was intimately tied up with the nation and with the forces perceived to be in opposition to the values of the United States. In the first few months of his editorship, Brown optimistically proclaimed, “[The unity of the Church] is surely coming. Get ready for it. And when that comes we can hope to work out in this country a social democracy as well as a political one—a land / ‘Whose alabaster cities shine / Undimmed by human tears.’”⁷¹

Trumpet readers were not confined to a specific political platform. However, holiness groups like the Church of God enjoyed near unanimous agreement on specific socio-political issues. One such area during the beginning of Brown’s editorship was Prohibition. He was an unequivocal supporter of Prohibition and, when writing to local legislators against the repeal of laws in Indiana, emphasized his position as a religious figure and his ability to speak to the sympathies of thousands in the Church of God.⁷² To one subscriber concerned with the periodical’s stance on the issue, Brown claimed that at least ninety percent of the Church of God’s constituency supported Prohibition and that remarks in the *Trumpet* were in line with the “traditional policies” of the periodical over

⁷¹ C.E. Brown, “The Way Out,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 5, 1931, 4.

⁷² C.E. Brown to Hon. John S. Aldridge, July 20, 1932, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN; C.E. Brown to Hon. William H. Black, July 20, 1932, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

the prior half-century.⁷³ Despite near unanimous agreement on some issues, this holiness group exhibited a broad spectrum of socio-political commitments.

In response to letters that asked for insight on specific plans and programs to alleviate the Great Depression, such as the Townsend Plan, Brown publicly declared that there were diverse opinions among the *Trumpet* staff on these and numerous other issues.⁷⁴ That diversity reflected, in Brown's view, the composition of the broader Church of God. He depicted the movement's variety to one inquirer only days before Franklin D. Roosevelt won the 1932 presidential election. Without indicating his sources, Brown divulged that the Church of God was relatively divided between Republicans and Democrats, that some of the Anderson leaders were Democrats, and that the movement even had "quite a few Socialists thrown in for good measure."⁷⁵ The aim of the *Trumpet*, however, prohibited Brown from explicitly identifying his political party in the periodical. Nevertheless, there are indications that Brown was not a part of the Anderson leaders that voted Democrat.

In an address to the Church of God's General Ministerial Assembly in the mid-1930s, he confessed to voting for the Republican presidential candidate, Herbert Hoover.⁷⁶ He also was sympathetic to the reform standards of the Progressive Era in the

⁷³ C.E. Brown to Mrs. Frank Boulineau, November 3, 1932, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

⁷⁴ C.E. Brown, "Keep Church Out of Politics," 2.

⁷⁵ Brown to Boulineau, November 3, 1932, Brown Papers.

⁷⁶ C.E. Brown, "The Spiritual Aspects of the New Deal," [1934?], Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN, 1.

model of the Republican senator, turned Progressive Party presidential nominee, Robert M. La Follette.⁷⁷ Brown declared that he felt “sympathetic” towards La Follette’s periodical, *The Progressive*, and that he had a “feeling of agreement” with much of its content.⁷⁸ Just as he did when supporting fundamentalists, however, Brown attempted to balance his general gesture of affinity by declaring that he was not in complete agreement with everything that La Follette’s paper had printed in its history.⁷⁹ Because Brown never moved beyond vague agreement, the careful reader had a sense of how Brown may have voted but could not hold him answerable on any specific issue or candidate.

Brown’s treatment of political and economic systems also demonstrates this tactic of plausible deniability. Brown regarded, for reasons not offered, socialism as unconvincing but was also adamantly disinterested in quashing a *Trumpet* reader’s support for a socialist candidate.⁸⁰ The socialists that rounded out the Church of God politically were not a hidden threat undermining the movement, at least in Brown’s view.

One *Trumpet* reader from Alberta sent Brown materials on a newly formed Canadian

⁷⁷ For more on La Follette’s life and career, see Bernard A. Weisberger, *The La Follettes of Wisconsin: Love and Politics in Progressive America* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1994); Nancy C. Unger, *Fighting Bob La Follette: The Righteous Reformer* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

⁷⁸ C.E. Brown, “The Burden of Publishing Gospel Literature,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 15, 1947, 1. A former editor of *The Progressive* identified the following as recurring themes during the periodical’s first century of existence: 1) Combating corporate power; 2) Championing civil liberties; 3) Rallying for women’s rights and civil rights and human rights and labor rights; 4) Opposing war and empire; 5) Preserving our environment; 6) Defending a truly independent media; 7) Reforming criminal justice; 8) Building a sturdy safety net for all Americans; 9) Democratizing our democracy. For more on these themes and the history of *The Progressive*, see Matthew Rothschild, *Democracy In Print, The Best of The Progressive Magazine, 1909-2009* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 3-6.

⁷⁹ C.E. Brown, “Burden of Publishing Literature,” 1.

⁸⁰ C.E. Brown to Mrs. H.B. Koehler, October 5, 1932, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

political party called the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF). The CCF, which was formed in Calgary in 1932 and drafted its political program at a convention in Regina in 1933, was the culmination of the agitation of democratic socialists in Western Canada in response to the economic pressures of the Great Depression.⁸¹ Within a couple of years from its formation, however, the party purged any references to socialism and operated with a program that combined agrarian radicalism and social reform.⁸² Brown received the letter about the CCF before the shift from explicit references to socialism and yet responded that the party's program looked "very good."⁸³ The nature of the specific content that Brown examined is unknown, but the material that he viewed approvingly was sufficiently lacking in the socialism that he detested. He reiterated that the *Trumpet* was unable to involve itself in politics and avowed, "People may be democrats, republicans, liberals, conservatives, socialists, C.C.F., or whatever they may wish to be politically without any interference from the Gospel Trumpet and without any encouragement from us."⁸⁴ Readers enjoyed freedom of conscience, but they were also compelled to act on their convictions regarding the pressing issues of their time. Issues that the progressive Republican editor commented on routinely.

⁸¹ For more on the formation of the CCF and the contours of its guiding program, referred to as the Regina Manifesto, see Ivan Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada: A Study of the CCF-NDP in Federal and Provincial Politics* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), 55-59.

⁸² Seymour M. Lipset, *Agrarian Socialism: The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan, A Study in Political Sociology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950), 127-134.

⁸³ C.E. Brown to Mr. George R. Hamilton, October 26, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

⁸⁴ Brown to Hamilton, October 26, 1933, Brown Papers.

Conclusion

An integral component of C.E. Brown's adamant embrace of the descriptors of "fundamentalist" and "evangelical" was critiquing arrangements that claimed those same outlooks. For Brown, premillennialism and an exclusionary focus on the individual's salvation were the two key distortions of those dispositions. Instead of wholly disregarding the return of Christ or downplaying the importance of conversion, Brown thought that predominant approaches to each topic needed adjustment. An obsession with knowing the events that precipitated Christ's return or having assurance about one's salvation overshadowed and suffocated the experiential foundation of the Christian life. Conversion incorporated the Christian into the Church, and the gospel of Christ tasked the Church with pervading society with present restoration while living with a future hope of Christ's return. Above all, Brown claimed that fundamentalists and evangelicals were exceedingly concerned with the otherworldly aspects to the detriment of their duty in the present world. Unlike some fundamentalists during the 1930s and 1940s, Brown was not sequestered from the wider culture, or frenetically preaching about pending doom, but instead required Christians to rally support for the improvement of society.

The dual concerns of evangelism and education, often conceived through conversion and social action, bolstered Brown's approach to Christianity. Even after he stepped out of the *Trumpet* editor's office, Brown was still communicating these points to the *Trumpet* audience he had led and helped sustain for over two decades. Whether this socially-engaged spirit had taken root or would persist in the movement, Brown still declared, "Unless the active faith of the believer lifts itself up to follow the risen Christ

through all the historic ways of his working with the men of today, the pilgrimage will fail.”⁸⁵ For a holiness leader who adamantly claimed and pursued an evangelical and fundamentalist orientation, Christianity was inextricably individual and social. The pursuit of symmetry on both facets required Brown to write about the state of souls and the state of the world.

⁸⁵ C.E. Brown, “Storm Over Palestine,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 28, 1953, 8.

CHAPTER FIVE
FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: OFFERING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL
COMMENTARY

Although C.E. Brown presented the *Trumpet* as a strictly theological periodical, subscribers read about pressing socio-political topics, from wealth inequality and the overreaching imperialism of the United States to the merits of democracy and a mixed assessment of communism, over the course of the 1930s to the 1950s. Three significant historical events formed the general framework of Brown's commentary on the issues of the day. First, Brown assumed the editor's desk only months after the start of a devastating economic crisis in the United States, the Great Depression. This disaster, along with the subsequent relief efforts in the New Deal, generated a focused interest in topics that Brown first broached in the 1920s, namely the implications of Christian theology for the working class and growing wealth inequality. Second, in the years preceding World War II, Brown moved his gaze to the evil of war and, before the United States' entry in the war, the promotion of pacifism. His foray into pacifism was short-lived as patriotism subsumed pacifism after the United States' entrance into the war. Finally, the conclusion of Brown's editorship occurred in the earliest years of the Cold War. During this period, Brown broached a subject that he had written about throughout his editorship but invested it with a renewed sense of urgency: communism. Brown was concerned by, but not consumed with, communism, however, and provided *Trumpet* readers with insights on other aspects of life in the atomic age.

This chapter explores the internal mechanics of Brown's thinking on these specific events and other issues. Overall, although readers picked up a theological journal that boasted a "theology only" policy, they also encountered descriptions of the critical matters of their time. Regardless of the topic, the general function of Brown's commentary on current events was not to develop a well-rounded, informed base of subscribers. He had no aspirations for the *Trumpet* to serve as a general news outlet. As the last chapter showed, Brown called evangelical Christians to a full-orbed faith that contributed to the kingdom of God through individual conversion and the necessary corollary of social reform. In covering and reflecting upon world events, Brown claimed that everyday issues were inherently theological and offered initial forays into how he, as a holiness fundamentalist, thought theology intersected with the needs of the world. As always, the presentation of a faithful Christian witness that Brown offered in the *Trumpet* occurred in a specific context, the United States. This chapter argues that Brown's coverage of current events pushes against a simple explanation of evangelicals' unquestioning affinity for the United States. Brown celebrated democracy but critiqued the nation's capitalistic injustice and imperialistic overreach. While some evangelicals saw the nation as advancing Christianity throughout the world, Brown's example indicates a more complex arrangement of the faith evangelicals and fundamentalists placed in their country.

Pervasive Social Ills

Before proceeding through the framework that generally guided Brown's work, it is important to note that he often deviated from economic downturn and global conflict to respond to a myriad of issues. Some of his editorials offered assessments that are generally unsurprising for a holiness leader. Brown referred to Prohibition as the "greatest social gain since the abolition of slavery."¹ A decade after the repeal of Prohibition, in the periodical's 1943 "Temperance Issue," he described liquor as a "massive cancer which...is eating away the honor and glory of our national life."² Spirits were not the only harmful product that the American people consumed. The motion picture, for its idolization of suggestive and deviant behavior and misrepresentation of American life, also came under Brown's gaze as "the greatest enemy of the American nation and people" and "the enemy of the Protestant church and of evangelical religion."³ Holiness theology in the mid-twentieth century contained a healthy dose of the prohibitive language inherited from previous generations.

On other issues plaguing the nation, Brown was notably silent. His contributions to the *Trumpet* rarely examined race in-depth, and the articles that took the topic as its primary subject reflected the prevailing sentiments of a racially segregated era. In an entry before he was the editor, Brown identified "racial antipathies" as one of the "numerous ancient and sometimes instinctive prejudices which the truth of the gospel

¹ C.E. Brown, "Mr. Rockefeller Writes To Me," *Gospel Trumpet*, July 2, 1932, 4.

² C.E. Brown, "A Dangerous Threat To Freedom," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 16, 1943, 1-2.

³ C.E. Brown, "I Accuse," *Gospel Trumpet*, August 7, 1948, 1.

must purge from our minds and hearts if the Spirit of God is to gain increasing control of all the power and faculties of our being.”⁴ Holiness theology extended beyond confining or prohibiting certain aspects of social life to involve social relations. In this article on racial hatred, Brown offered the standard disclaimer about the periodical’s position as a religious journal restricting his treatment of the issue. What he could comment upon, however, was the unity of humanity. He asserted that humans “surely choke the fountains of the grace of God in our souls if we come to look upon Chinamen and Negroes, Japanese and Hindus, Indians and Turks as a different kind of beings [sic] from ourselves.”⁵ Although conflating race and nationality, Brown nevertheless believed that a common sense of humanity imbued autonomy to different groupings of humans. Indicating an awareness of racial tension in his context, Brown described the “arrogance with which many white men have carried themselves in the lands of the colored races.”⁶ Yet, despite the arrogance of some whites, white Christianity retained a certain prestige and purity.

Only months before his castigation of racial antipathy, Brown wrote an article, employing agrarian imagery, that described the current generation’s reaping the benefits of the work of previous generations without laboring themselves. After examining government, culture, and religion, Brown’s pen rested on the most pressing problem. “The descendants of the original founders of this nation,” Brown proposed, “are wasting

⁴ C.E. Brown, “The Revolt of an Apostle,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 21, 1927, 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

the priceless heritage of evangelical Christian civilization which made this country great.”⁷ As the 1920s roared, Brown feared that the country’s moral downturn, as found in licentiousness, alcohol consumption, and religious indifference, was “blotting out Protestant civilization in America by destroying the race of men who founded and maintained it.”⁸ This “deliberate persistent race suicide” was, Brown declared, “the greatest tragedy in human history,” only after the crucifixion of Christ.⁹

Integration with non-whites further contributed, in Brown’s view, to the destruction of white Christianity. In 1933, a concerned *Trumpet* reader in Michigan asked for Brown’s insight on the Church of God’s view on race. She inquired about whether attending a multiracial congregation with a black pastor would affect a white person’s relationship with the Ministerial Board.¹⁰ After leading with comments on spiritual equality, Brown’s response declared that interracial worship was not necessary, effectively hindered the efforts of the gospel and, most damningly in Brown’s eyes, encouraged interracial marriage, which would “destroy our own race, which is a gift from

⁷ C.E. Brown, “Harvest Without Toil,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 6, 1927, 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.* Brown’s use of the phrase “race suicide” in the wake of the Immigration Act of 1924, which restricted immigrants from Asia, is significant. Mirroring the language of eugenics, Edward A. Ross first coined the phrase in the early 1900s as a descriptor for the process by which Asian immigrants would reproduce at a higher rate and ultimately overtake white Americans. Although Brown was addressing a question about an interracial congregation of whites and blacks, his use of the phrase clearly denotes conceptions of racial purity and superiority. For more on religious support of eugenics, see Christine Rosen, *Preaching Eugenics: Religious Leaders and the American Eugenics Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). For more on Ross and “race suicide,” see Laura L. Lovett, *Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism, Reproduction, and the Family in the United States, 1890-1938* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

¹⁰ Grace A. Barker to C.E. Brown, June 27, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

providence and should not be held lightly.”¹¹ Spiritual equality and social separation was the standard espoused in at least one holiness group in the decades leading up to the Civil Rights Movement.¹²

Despite all the dangers that racial prejudice presented, when Brown wielded the editorial pen, he never again explicitly addressed the topic beyond the need for unity in spiritual fellowship. Brown noted the pervasiveness of “social and race divisions” and the prevalence of racial slurs but concluded, “Perhaps it may be impossible to fill up the gaps and bridge the chasms that separate the social groups of America and of the world, but we can send the roots of our spiritual fellowship down deeper than any of these chasms into the boundless ocean of the corporate life of the body of Christ.”¹³ There was a sharp division, in Brown’s thinking, between the physical and the spiritual and between ideology and practice. Brown demonstrated this separation when he declared that the area of his childhood home, which had supported the Union cause in the Civil War, was not “imbued with the sentiments of Negro hatred or ill will.”¹⁴ He continued, without

¹¹ C.E. Brown to Grace A. Barker, July 10, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

¹² Racial unity is often presented as a defining feature of holiness and pentecostal denominations, at least during the earliest years of their existence. The Church of God is included in that presentation, especially as scholars have argued that a crucial leader of the 1906 Azusa Street Revival, William J. Seymour, derived his emphasis on interracial unity from the movement’s radical ecclesiology. Others, however, have rejected the view that even the earliest Church of God leaders desired interracial unity. Brown illustrates the public promotion of unity that private racist views unchanged. For opposing takes on the early years of the Church of God, see Joseph L. Thomas, *Perfect Harmony: Interracial Churches in Early Holiness-Pentecostalism, 1880-1909* (Lexington, KY: Emeth Press, 2014); Rufus L. Burrow, *Making Good The Claim: Holiness and Visible Unity in the Church of God Reformation Movement* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2016).

¹³ C.E. Brown, “Let Us Go Deeper,” 2.

¹⁴ C.E. Brown, “Story of My Life,” 2.

explanation or exploration of the blatant contradiction, “Nevertheless, there was an unwritten law in our community that no one should allow Negroes to come in.”¹⁵ The assumptions of Brown’s community bled into his writing; gestures toward spiritual union minimized the need to challenge racial disparity.

For Brown, the bid for racial equality in spiritual terms was only a thin veneer covering racist beliefs. The notable exceptions in the *Trumpet* of individuals who sought to fill the gaps and bridge the chasms would reach middle age during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s.¹⁶ When Brown listed “racial hate and prejudice” as a critical area for the intellectual labor of the Church of God faithful in the 1953 lecture, it was explicitly a challenge to a rising generation but, given his history, an implicit confession of the need to break the error and silence that marked his editorship.

The New Deal: The “Work of Humanity” during the Great Depression

When Brown started as the *Trumpet* editor in 1930, he immediately faced the ongoing reverberations of the historical moment that shaped the first decade of his editorship. The Great Depression raised questions about the nature of God and God’s

¹⁵ C.E. Brown, “Story of My Life,” 2.

¹⁶ Young people at the 1932 Anderson camp meeting adopted resolutions on Prohibition, race relations, war, citizenship, and economic life. One section declared that “certain races, because of their color or nationality are subject to great abuses, such as lynching, etc., on the mere suspicion of crime” and that “some of the courts of our land show partiality because of race differences.” The gathering of young people resolved to “investigate the race problem” and to “break down the wall of race prejudice which may exist in our respective communities.” Later that year, at the International Young People’s convention, Adam W. Miller, who was a rising pastor, academic, and eventual dean of the Anderson School of Theology in the 1950s and 1960s, proclaimed to the young people in attendance that the “race problem” was a “product of economic, industrial, cultural, psychological, and religious forces.” See “Resolutions Adopted by the Young People Assembled at the Anderson Camp Meeting,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 9, 1932, 10-11; L. Helen Percy, “Eighth International Young People’s Convention,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 19, 1932, 7.

relationship to the world for many Christians. Rather than seeing the inscrutable activity of God in the economic downturn, Brown contended that humans alone manufactured the situation.¹⁷ Because depression damaged the country in a fashion similar to war, Brown affirmed that God was not the author of the economic recession but could nevertheless bring good forth from the situation.¹⁸ Chief among the beneficial outcomes of the depression was the possibility of spiritual revival.¹⁹ Renewed interest in God was not a guarantee, however, and the Church played a particular task in influencing and encouraging society toward God.

Within a couple of months of starting his new position, Brown claimed that the Church should undertake a multifaceted response to the economic crisis of the Great Depression. Against the “hopeless pessimists” in the Church who relentlessly preached conversion stood the optimists who were “playing politics and trying to bring in the kingdom of God by legislation.”²⁰ To Brown, the dichotomy was reductive and ultimately unsatisfactory. He believed that, within the Church, calls for the improvement of society should accompany the cries for the salvation of souls. To circumscribe the responsibility of the Church to only one of those spheres was, in Brown’s view, “to doubt the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”²¹ Part of the task before the Church of God was restoring the Church

¹⁷ C.E. Brown, “Is the Depression a Blessing?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 20, 1932, 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁹ C.E. Brown, “Adversity and Spiritual Revival,” 3.

²⁰ C.E. Brown, “The Church and Labor,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 28, 1930, 3.

²¹ C.E. Brown, “Labor and the Church,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 26, 1926, 3.

through the development of organic union among Christians without institutional structures but also reorienting Christians to God's emphasis on both the individual and social ramifications of the faith. This insight was not supernaturally bestowed upon the *Trumpet* editor but emerged from the example that Christ offered. "Christianity is not social science," declared Brown, but "social life in fellowship with Christ."²² Rather than providing specific schematics, Christianity suggested a general outline and approach. The foundation found in Christ's teaching was "a doctrine of brotherhood which makes it inconsistent for thousands to batten in selfish luxury while millions starve in a rich and fruitful land."²³ The Church was engaged in a task that was individual and communal, theological and social.

Even before the catastrophic economic downturn, Brown suggested that the "foremost moral question of the age" was "the problem of the application of the principles of the doctrine of Christ to the relations between employer and employee."²⁴ He focused on this topic, in part, because of the general silence of the Church, or at least of evangelicals. The opening section of this piece featured a broadside against evangelical Christians who, despite their ability to speak against individual sin, neglected to decry meager wages or the appalling work conditions facing laborers.²⁵ Indicating the socio-economic standing of many in the movement, Brown argued that the vast majority

²² C.E. Brown, "Labor and the Church," 3.

²³ C.E. Brown, "The Christ of the Common Life," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 5, 1931, 4.

²⁴ C.E. Brown, "Labor and the Church," 3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

of the Church, potentially as high as ninety-five percent, belonged to the working class, and thus the silence of the Church came from the “practical absurdity” of preaching against the “crimes of capital when perhaps there is not a capitalist within reach anywhere.”²⁶ The alleged absence of capitalists from the Church did not excuse the Church’s silence. Theology was necessarily political. About the proper disposition of the *Trumpet* and the Church, Brown surmised,

But what has a religious paper to do with all this? Should we not confine ourselves to religious questions and let the politicians discuss the matter of food? Too long has Protestant Christianity soothed its conscience in that way. Not thus did Christ speak when the multitudes hungered around him. ...Is it not strange that we can see the propriety of teaching healing because Christ healed, but cannot see the intimate relation of bread to religion?²⁷

The period of silence was over, and Brown pushed the *Trumpet* into action.

In the realm of economics, Brown positioned the Church as an advocate of the working class. In some of his *Trumpet* editorials on the subject, particularly when delineating the government’s responsibility, Brown offered a disclaimer that he was neither a socialist nor a communist.²⁸ Some subscribers may have questioned this upon reading his commentary. He supported labor unions, provided that their conduct was nonviolent, writing that unions were an outlet for Christians to help the working class “in

²⁶ C.E. Brown, “Labor and the Church,” 3.

²⁷ C.E. Brown, “Starving America,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 5, 1931, 3.

²⁸ C.E. Brown, “The Way Out,” 4; C.E. Brown, “Now the Poor Must Help the Poor,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 31, 1931, 4.

times when wealth is seeking to dominate the nation.”²⁹ The unequal distribution of wealth was foremost among the problems plaguing the United States, and Brown had no shortage of remedies for the situation. “Nine-tenths of the wealth is owned by one-tenth of the people,” Brown posited, and the “fair and obvious thing to do” was to tax the wealthy to supply those who lacked the necessities of food and clothing.³⁰ Along with the redistribution of wealth, Brown envisioned other means for government involvement. He no longer dismissed, as he had done earlier in life, the plight of the unemployed as the consequence of the individual’s apathy but looked toward a structural resolution when he implored Christians “to vote and work for sickness, unemployment, and old-age benefits to be paid by the state.”³¹ Modeling the charity of apostolic Christianity was compatible with, if not manifested in, pressing for social and political change. Soon, however, general calls for legislative activity transitioned into a defense of the government programs and reforms that emerged during the New Deal.

Brown unequivocally supported the policies and projects of the New Deal enacted under President Franklin D. Roosevelt.³² Eschewing party affiliation, Brown saw the New Deal as the best available means to stimulate the recovery of the United States. He

²⁹ C.E. Brown to Mrs. Leroy Fahler, November 10, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

³⁰ C.E. Brown, “Now the Poor Must,” 4.

³¹ C.E. Brown, “The Church and the Unemployed,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 28, 1930, 3-4.

³² On this point, Brown was standing in stark contrast with other fundamentalist leaders. Matthew Avery Sutton argued that the foundation of fundamentalist political engagement began during the Roosevelt presidency when “white conservative Christians began to view their president and his administration not as God’s emissaries on earth but as tools of the devil.” Matthew Avery Sutton, “Was FDR the Antichrist? The Birth of Fundamentalist Antiliberalism in a Global Age,” *The Journal of American History* 98, no. 4 (March 2012), 1052.

alleged that the clear majority, again invoking the statistic of ninety-five percent, of the American people supported the efforts of economic recovery and that the “Gospel Trumpet Company and the Boards” were “going along heartily with the new program.”³³ Brown’s intuition about popular support, at least within the periodical’s sphere of influence, was faulty. A significant contingent of the *Trumpet* faithful held deep reservations about the programs and opposed the New Deal not for political or economic reasons but because of theology.

The locus of most readers’ angst was the National Recovery Administration (NRA), specifically its blue eagle logo.³⁴ Their concern, which Brown characterized as “a state of anxiety bordering on panic,” was not about an explicit NRA practice or policy but about the possibility that the logo was the mark of the beast, or the sign identifying the forces opposing Christ in the end times.³⁵ Brown thoroughly rejected this notion in the *Trumpet* and his editorial correspondence. The NRA’s blue eagle logo was not indicative of “a secret order nor anything of the kind,” Brown told one correspondent, and the agency was “simply a plan of the government to increase the number of employees and thus benefit the poor people.”³⁶ It was, as Brown indicated, a plan that the *Gospel*

³³ C.E. Brown, “People Will Gladly Pay More,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 2, 1933, 2.

³⁴ The NRA was a New Deal agency that sought to improve working conditions and compensation for laborers, among its primary advancements was strengthening the power of labor unions. The blue eagle logo, emblazoned with the motto “We Do Our Part,” effectively functioned as a barometer of public support of the NRA. See Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt: The Coming of the New Deal, 1933-1935* (New York: Mariner Books, 2003), 107-118, 136-137.

³⁵ C.E. Brown, “The Mark of the Beast,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 2, 1933, 3.

³⁶ C.E. Brown to Mr. Frank Brown, October 21, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

Trumpet supported, with the NRA's logo first appearing in the periodical's September 23, 1933 issue and remaining until the NRA's dissolution in mid-1935. According to some Church of God faithful, the mark of the beast had cunningly infiltrated the holiness periodical. Brown countered that this thinking about the NRA was erroneous because the presence of the mark of the beast predated the New Deal. Many Church of God writings, including Brown's recent monograph, *A New Approach* (1931), established that sectarianism was the mark of the beast.³⁷ He stood firmly in his conviction that there was no specific eschatological significance to be found in the parsing the political events of the day. To all *Trumpet* subscribers, Brown urged support for the government's efforts to help the poor.³⁸ This clarification did not soothe the consciences of many of his readers.

Letters about the danger of the NRA continued to flood the editorial office, and the frenzy surrounding the issue suggested to Brown that some were on the border of insanity.³⁹ Setting theology aside, one reader presented Brown with economic justifications for opposing the NRA. The immediacy of the issue required a public response in the *Trumpet*. Brown provided the standard guidelines for considering the issue. He reaffirmed the necessity of charity and openness on matters that were non-essential to salvation and claimed that his commentary on the issue was not to stoke

³⁷ Drawing on the notion that the bodies of those who opposed Christ displayed the mark of the beast, Brown proposed, "Sectarianism says that no man can buy and sell—preach the gospel—unless he has the mark of sectarianism in his right hand and in his forehead. That is, he must have the right hand of fellowship from a sectarian institution, and he must practice the work of division. He must also have the doctrines and creeds of sectarianism in his head, and he must believe the doctrines of men which are the roots of division. Unless he does this he cannot preach, perform marriages, administer the ordinances, nor otherwise function as a minister of the gospel—with their consent." C.E. Brown, "Mark of the Beast," 3.

³⁸ C.E. Brown, "Mark of the Beast," 3.

³⁹ C.E. Brown, "The NRA and the Church," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 14, 1933, 2.

political fires in a religious periodical but because readers had repeatedly raised concerns about it.⁴⁰ Brown had no qualms about exploring the economic implications of his theological convictions. “At a time when ten million workers are out of work and millions are living in semi-starvation,” the editor declared, “God’s children cannot be indifferent to any effort which may help them.”⁴¹ Brown was not beholden to the specific programs and policies, per se. He believed that “any one of the great economic systems would work with fair success if operated honestly and with a reasonable degree of cooperation.”⁴² Any attempt to improve the status and wellbeing of God’s creation merited, in Brown’s view, an honest assessment. Christians should support plans, like the NRA specifically and the New Deal generally, that had a decent chance at garnering extensive cooperation and that, even with certain defects, moved closer to the realization of “a Christian ideal of social life in America.”⁴³ That ideal required Christians to stand with the poor and working class and ultimately to support the New Deal.

Before Brown broached any of these topics in the *Trumpet*, he laid out his conception of the implications of the Christian faith when responding to one of the earliest letters of concern about the NRA. Brown declared, “The big capitalists would work poor people ten and twelve hours a day and hold half the people out of work if they

⁴⁰ C.E. Brown, “NRA and the Church,” 2.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

could have their way.”⁴⁴ After a general review of the aims of the New Deal, Brown concluded,

In the interest of the poor unemployed millions of this country who have had starvation and suffering for the last four years we ought all of us to work with all our might for the advancement of the NRA. It is the work of humanity. Let the sectarian preachers fight it if they want to. We ought to stand up for it with all our might, for those big millionaires won't do anything for the common people unless they are compelled to do so by the strong hand of the law.⁴⁵

The flurry of letters and editorials on the New Deal, or even about labor and capital, effectively ceased by early 1934. To some extent, increased responsibilities and geopolitical tensions drew Brown's gaze elsewhere. However, his fervor for the topic persisted as he gave one final plea during the annual meeting of Church of God ministers at that year's camp meeting in Anderson.

In June 1934, following an earlier talk on the “Mystical Approach to God,” Brown rose before the GMA to give an address entitled “The Spiritual Aspects of the New Deal.” He opened with the assertion that a “very prevalent view in evangelical Christianity” held that his talk should move quickly to its conclusion because any discussion of the New Deal's spiritual aspects was impossible.⁴⁶ To this sentiment, Brown retorted, “To the instructed Christian of our day there is no subject involving the question of social justice which can be said to have no spiritual aspects.”⁴⁷ At a later

⁴⁴ C.E. Brown to Mrs. Winfield Hoard, August 17, 1933, Charles Ewing Brown Papers, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ C.E. Brown, “Spiritual Aspects of New Deal,” 1.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

point, Brown returned to this idea to emphasize the increasing awareness within Christianity of the imbrication of belief and action, of the Church and the world. Brown declared many Christians were learning that they “cannot divorce the spirit of Christ from the problems of the modern world and shut it within the four walls of a church or the two covers of a book.”⁴⁸ The experience with Christ moved Christians into action. Much of the presentation rehashed other themes in Brown’s editorials. Prominent among them was that the ideals of Christianity should infuse and rework socio-economic relations. “Over against the iron laws of the old economic theories of Adam Smith,” Brown postulated, “we would put the eternal law of love enunciated by the New Adam.”⁴⁹ In a move that likely shocked, if not repulsed, a significant contingent of his audience, Brown offered Church of God ministers the insights of a Christian mired in denominationalism. Only a few years after the GMA had selected Brown as a compromise, because of an impasse concerning Christian unity, Brown looked to the work of an ecumenically minded individual for an example of the guiding principles of the law of love. Brown daringly ventured,

Probably most of us can agree with [E.] Stanley Jones when he says: “In Jesus’ conception of the Kingdom of God on earth we find a program that demands not merely social amelioration, but social reconstruction. It demands the changing of the whole basis of life from selfish competition to unselfish cooperation, from exploitation of people to the expression of people, from a shamble to a brotherhood.”⁵⁰

⁴⁸ C.E. Brown, “Spiritual Aspects of New Deal,” 10.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 12. E. Stanley Jones was a Methodist missionary and ecumenical advocate who is best known for his work in India, particularly his *The Christ of the Indian Road* (1925) and his founding of the Sat Tal Ashram. Although Brown attributed it to Jones, the quotation was produced by an interdenominational group of prominent missionaries and published in the mission periodical of the

Cooperation, equality, and brotherhood were not unique to Brown, but he introduced them to a religious body that had operated in a highly cloistered manner. The Christian faith involved laboring for the salvation of souls and the betterment of the world. In Brown's view, the New Deal strove for the latter and deserved the support of Christians.

World War II: Patriotism over Pacifism

During the second half of the 1930s, Brown's attention shifted away from the economic situation plaguing the United States and toward the threat of war on the geopolitical stage. In comparison to the urgency and tone with which he wrote on the plight of labor and the support of the New Deal, Brown's commentary on peace and war was noticeably limited and subdued. The weight of new institutional responsibilities undoubtedly competed for Brown's attention. In the mid-1930s, Brown became the president of the Missionary Board and joined the Church of God Executive Council, the Gospel Trumpet Company Board of Directors, and the Anderson College faculty. Although Brown was dividing his time among new endeavors, the *Trumpet* still offered sentiments for peace. However, the periodical was a far cry from broadcasting full-throated support for pacifism. The intermingling of the calls for peace and for patriotism was a continuation of the movement's inconsistent stance.

Reformed Church in the United States. This quote indicates that, upon beginning as president of the Missionary Board, Brown was apparently well read not only in leading theologians like Jones but was also following the trends and developments in the mission work of groups that were theologically far from the Church of God. For more on E. Stanley Jones, see Stephen A. Graham, *Ordinary Man, Extraordinary Mission: The Life and Work of E. Stanley Jones* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005). For the full text from which Brown selected the quote, see E. Stanley Jones et al., "A Challenge to Clergy and Laity," *The Outlook of Missions* 26, no. 2 (February 1934): 35.

In World War I, the simultaneous support of conscientious objectors and allowance of participation in, and ultimately backing of, the war displayed the Church of God's inconsistency on pacifism.⁵¹ Pacifism was the exception, rather than the rule, for the Church of God and was not a core theological conviction. One historian characterized the Church of God as a group that possessed "the head for pacifism but not the character, or heart."⁵² Some leading figures promoted pacifism, but holiness and unity were the fundamental, animating points for the Church of God. Sensing the possibility of war, Brown gestured toward the movement's historical "doctrine of non-resistance" but was generally more interested in avoiding the financial cost of war for the United States than in the elimination of war.⁵³ Although Brown believed that the Church of God was a staunch defender of pacifism, the movement's inconsistency in World War I recurred in World War II.

Early in the 1930s, the movement's official statements and leading figures articulated strong affirmations for pacifism. In 1932, echoing the sentiments of the 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact, the GMA adopted the following resolution: "War is unchristian, futile and suicidal, and we renounce completely the whole war system. We will never again sanction or participate in any war. ... We will not give our financial or moral support to any war. We will seek security and justice by pacific means."⁵⁴ Later that same

⁵¹ Merle D. Sturge, "The Demise [?] of a Peace Church: The Church of God (Anderson), Pacifism and Civil Religion," *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* 65, no. 2 (April 1991): 136-137.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 140.

⁵³ C.E. Brown, "If War Comes," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 15, 1938, 2.

⁵⁴ "Resolutions Adopted by General Ministerial Assembly," 8.

year, Adam Miller, while exploring the “race problem” and its relationship to peace, asserted, “Christianity and militarism are irreconcilable.”⁵⁵ Impulses for pacifism were present, at least at the level of leadership, within the Church of God and in its periodical.⁵⁶

In the early to mid-1930s, the *Trumpet* included calls in opposition to war, but none were penned by Brown. A feature of the *Trumpet* found during the first five years of Brown’s editorship was a recurring series of news briefs by *Trumpet* writers on current events that appeared under headings such as “The Bible and the Newspaper” and “The Bible and Our Times.” In the mid-1930s, one installment commented on the military actions of France and Germany and exhorted *Trumpet* readers, “If ever there was a time to think and pray for peace, it is *now!*”⁵⁷ Brown also marshaled voices beyond the Church of God to speak for peace on behalf of the *Trumpet*. Brown included a statement issued at the annual meeting of Quakers that mandated, “The relationship of nation to nation, of race to race, of class to class must be based on this divine law of love if peace and progress are to be achieved.”⁵⁸ Showing a penchant for the communicative ability of images in his opposition to theological liberalism, Brown also moved beyond words to include cartoons in opposition to war. In the late 1930s, the *Trumpet* featured several

⁵⁵ Percy, “Eighth Young People’s Convention,” 7.

⁵⁶ This impulse for peace was not unique to the Church of God. Many within mainline Protestantism, as evidenced in the views of C.C. Morrison and the *Christian Century*, were ardent pacifists, at least until the time of World War II and the critique of Reinhold Niebuhr known as Christian realism. Coffman, *The Christian Century*, 81-83, 129-132.

⁵⁷ Frederick A. Schminke, “World News: Europe Prepares for War,” *Gospel Trumpet*, December 22, 1934, 2; *italics in original*.

⁵⁸ “Peace and the Present Crisis,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 12, 1935, 5.

illustrations from the National Conference of Jews and Christians (NCJC).⁵⁹ Some of these depictions suggested that the death of war was an attainable outcome of “combined efforts of intelligent men” and that the United States’ foreign financial interests would inevitably drag the country into war in the pursuit of money.⁶⁰ Though short on words and explicit theological influence, these illustrations communicated that war should be avoided and eliminated at all costs. By the end of the 1930s, Brown started to engage the subject.

The *Trumpet* promoted pacifism when Europe erupted in war, and Brown’s direct involvement became more apparent. Within a couple of months of the war’s beginning, Brown decided to replace his editorial column with a call to fasting and prayer for the complete and final cessation of war.⁶¹ However, even in that request, his hesitation about sending American soldiers to fight a foreign war and his fears of losing democracy and religious freedom overshadowed the appeals to peace’s foundation in the Bible and the will of God.⁶² Although he expressed the need for peace, Brown also lacked, in this article and others, an explicit and robust theological foundation for pacifism. Despite this

⁵⁹ The National Conference of Jews and Christians, which became the National Conference of Christians and Jews and then the National Conference for Community and Justice, was an outgrowth of the broader “goodwill movement” of the 1920s that sought to address sociopolitical issues. The NCJC specifically sought “to encourage interreligious discussions and to combat prejudice.” For more on the NCJC, see Benny Kraut, “A Wary Collaboration: Jews, Catholics, and the Protestant Goodwill Movement,” in *Between The Times: The Travail of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900-1960*, ed. William R. Hutchison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁶⁰ “A Grave We’d Like To Decorate,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 11, 1937, 16; “Something To Beware Of,” *Gospel Trumpet*, December 4, 1937, 16.

⁶¹ C.E. Brown, “A Day of Fasting and Prayer for Peace,” *Gospel Trumpet*, October 14, 1939, 2.

⁶² *Ibid.*

deficiency, the pacifistic impulse was present throughout his movement. Claiming that thousands of Church of God young people wanted to register as conscientious objectors, Brown modified and included the statement of the Northern Baptist Convention's Committee on Social Service in the periodical for young people to indicate their desire for the Gospel Trumpet Company to record them as conscientious objectors.⁶³ A few months later, in an article to guide young people in parsing the options found in government forms on military service, Val Clear announced his opposition to war "in any of its forms."⁶⁴ The formal articulation of pacifism was present in the movement, even in Brown's work to some extent, but the idea seemingly held less sway outside of the institutional circles of power and influence in Anderson. Some of those same influential figures, including Brown, presented a mixed message to *Trumpet* readers as the war persisted.

As was the case with World War I, the involvement of the United States in World War II overpowered and ultimately eliminated fledgling convictions about pacifism. Those in the Church of God who agitated for pacifism within the movement must have felt dismayed when Brown's editorial, "We Salute The Flag," appeared two weeks after the inclusion of the Northern Baptist Convention's statement on conscientious objection. Rather than offering balance through an opposing perspective, this entry effectively marked the point at which Brown swung from reticent support of pacifism to full bore patriotism, if not religious nationalism. Responding to the critique of patriotism as

⁶³ C.E. Brown, "Registration as a Conscientious Objector," *Gospel Trumpet*, June 15, 1940, 17.

⁶⁴ Val Clear, "I Registered, But—," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 16, 1940, 15.

inciting narrowness and prejudice, Brown asserted that “love of and loyalty to our country” was “a very substantial part of our religious duty.”⁶⁵ On another occasion, Brown presented patriotism as a “perfectly consistent phase of Christian living,” on par with prayer and reading the Bible.⁶⁶ Not only did the country merit the love of its Christian citizens, but so did the potential future that the country offered. At this point, Brown moved from a sense of appreciation for one’s country into blatant exceptionalism. The United States was “the immortal dream of mankind realized on the grandest scale that history has ever known.”⁶⁷ Even before the United States entered the war, the idea of the United States as a project which Christians had advanced and must continue to do so was incipient within Brown’s work. Those who desired to abstain from supporting the nation’s efforts in war were implicitly deprecated.

Reminiscent of the Church of God’s inconsistency in World War I, the language of the *Trumpet* shifted decidedly to backing the war. Brown encouraged the Church of God congregations to check on the spiritual status of their sons in the service by writing them frequently and including recent sermons and other religious literature with their letters.⁶⁸ Supporting pacifism was no longer pragmatic given the United States’

⁶⁵ C.E. Brown, “We Salute The Flag,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 29, 1940, 1.

⁶⁶ C.E. Brown, “Religion and Patriotism,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 3, 1943, 1.

⁶⁷ Building up to this claim, Brown waxed poetic, “O America, how we love you! You are the flower of mankind’s striving and struggling upward through the long dark centuries of the past. You are the glorious sun-crowned mountaintop dimly glimpsed by the vision of philosophers, poets, martyrs, and lovers of mankind since the time when men began to dream of freedom and justice. You are the end of age-old prejudices, the end of slavery and caste, the end of aristocracy and the divine right of kings, the end of religious persecution.” C.E. Brown, “We Salute The Flag,” 1.

⁶⁸ C.E. Brown, “A Tide in the Affairs of Men,” *Gospel Trumpet*, March 6, 1943, 6.

involvement in war, and Brown supplanted pacifism with patriotism. After the war's end, Brown's reversal on pacifism was evident. Stressing his theological belief as a fundamentalist in human depravity, Brown proposed that abolishing war was practically impossible; temporary agreements among nations could only postpone war for a limited, albeit potentially extended, duration.⁶⁹ The sole option for the elimination of war was the creation of "one massive all-powerful superstate to rule all nations."⁷⁰ The editor was as equally unenthusiastic about a federation of nations as he was about a federated church. Brown would not consider that course of action because it would force him to do the unthinkable: to sacrifice the United States and democracy.

Democracy was on Brown's mind from the beginning of his editorship and even before. In his earliest years as editor, Brown's writing argued for a deep connection between Christianity and democracy.⁷¹ By no means did Christianity create democracy, rather Christianity actualized democracy in its maximal form. True democracy rested upon the equality of all humanity "before God in spiritual dignity and responsibility."⁷² Brown was not merely interested in explaining a political system but instead argued for the mutually reinforcing relationship between democracy and Christianity in the United States. The trappings of democracy in the United States, such as individual freedom and

⁶⁹ C.E. Brown, "Working for Permanent Peace," 1.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ For example, Brown suggested that "democracy grows out of Christianity" and that "Christianity is the only philosophy of life that can serve as a permanent basis for democracy." C.E. Brown, "He Traveled Far," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 11, 1933, 2

⁷² C.E. Brown, "The Democracy of the Gospel," *Gospel Trumpet*, February 13, 1932, 3.

free government, resulted from the “strength of the Christian ideal in our national life.”⁷³ Christianity not only fortified the United States but played an irreplaceable role in the country’s foundation. The substance of the “fundamental state papers” of the United States depended greatly upon “the theology and practice of the radical Christian groups who first sought this land as a refuge from the persecution of official church and the dictatorial state governments of Europe.”⁷⁴ The role of European political philosophy was not entirely dismissed but relegated to secondary status.⁷⁵ Above all, it was the restorationist impulse that drove those early Euro-Christian settlers who pursued freedom to worship in the “fellowship of holy, democratic Christianity.”⁷⁶

However, as much of Brown’s commentary during the Great Depression indicated, the way of life within a democratic nation was not above reproach, whether it claimed a Christian foundation or otherwise, and modifications were sometimes desperately needed. In his talk to the GMA on the New Deal, Brown warned, “There is a serious danger that the masses disinherited by the injustice of our industrial age will junk democracy, for they believe that economic justice is impossible under a democratic form of government.”⁷⁷ The religious ideals of Christianity not only bolstered the foundation of the United States but also supplied the tools for the nation’s improvement.

⁷³ C.E. Brown, “How Firm Is Our Foundation?,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 25, 1930, 3.

⁷⁴ C.E. Brown, “America’s Crown and Glory,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 5, 1941, 1.

⁷⁵ C.E. Brown, “Land That I Love,” *Gospel Trumpet*, June 30, 1945, 1.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷⁷ C.E. Brown, “Spiritual Aspects of New Deal,” 9.

For all the pitfalls amidst the possibilities that democracy provided the United States, Brown retained, at least before the 1940s, that the Christian's devotion to the kingdom of God superseded nation. To illustrate this to *Trumpet* readers, on one occasion Brown departed from theological claims and biblical texts and entered another domain. Through the verses of poets, Brown exposed the simultaneous permanence and arbitrariness of social borders, whether it be an individual's home, town, or country.⁷⁸ Against entrenchment within specific boundaries, Brown petitioned *Trumpet* readers to look beyond "State and section" to expand their "idea of home" to the entire earth.⁷⁹ When supplied with theological language, Brown was advocating evangelism. He claimed as much when he urged readers toward a program of outreach on behalf of the kingdom of God. Dubbing his program "Christian imperialism," Brown challenged readers to fervently advance the gospel "to take this country for Jesus Christ" and to spread the kingdom of God throughout the world.⁸⁰ By appropriating the language of empire and conquest, Brown positioned the United States as one of many countries for Christianity to overcome rather than as the guarantor of victory for Christianity. When the clouds of war swept over Europe, however, the citizens of the kingdom of God were called to act as citizens of the United States.

During World War II, Brown published editorials on patriotism and the defense of democracy that were relatively infrequent, usually appearing annually around the Fourth

⁷⁸ C.E. Brown, "Making Home Larger," *Gospel Trumpet*, October 24, 1931, 3.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁸⁰ C.E. Brown, "Christian Imperialism," *Gospel Trumpet*, April 1, 1933, 2-3.

of July, but nonetheless weighty. In these articles, Brown redoubled his discourse on the infusion of religion in the founding of the United States and beyond. Radical evangelicals founded the nation, and revivalism was responsible for “just about everything which is glorious and distinctive in American history.”⁸¹ Amid the peril and destruction of war, the solution for ensuring the future of the country came from its past. “Democracy is coming back,” Brown broadcasted in the weeks after the Allied invasion of Normandy, and a “revival of holiness” was the only guarantor of democracy’s survival.⁸² However, revival and, by extension, democracy was neither spontaneous nor a given. Brown called *Trumpet* readers to mirror the religious zeal of the radical Christians of colonial America. The sole result of inaction was the fading of the “world’s greatest democracy” into obscurity.⁸³ An integral aspect of Christians’ efforts at renewing the faith was to search out and defeat any threat to religion, during the war and after.

Evaluating Communism

Following World War II, Brown’s writing exhibited a heightened sense of urgency about what he regarded as the chief threat to democracy and Christianity: communism. This fearful expectancy was a new development in the trajectory of Brown’s thought. Across all his *Trumpet* articles and booklets, Brown always described communism as one of Christianity’s many competitors for the hearts and minds of

⁸¹ C.E. Brown, “America’s Crown and Glory,” 1.

⁸² C.E. Brown, “Why Holiness Is Hated,” 2.

⁸³ C.E. Brown, “Land That I Love,” 2.

people. In his early writings, the danger came not from the ideology in its entirety, but from some of its elements that were utterly incompatible with Christianity. In its socioeconomic outlook, communism was not condemned but enjoyed overlap with the social implications of Christianity. Also, during the pre-World War II phase, Christians in the United States, who were located securely in their seemingly impregnable fortress of democracy, were generally distant observers of the developments of communism abroad. It was only in the final years of Brown's editorship that he adopted a position of fervent opposition and saw communism as the preeminent threat to the United States. Competition and difference escalated into a crisis.

Over the decades before World War II, Brown exhibited caution toward communism and indicated its points of divergence from Christianity. One of his most significant works, which was also one of his earliest, was not an article or a monograph, but a booklet, *Reds and Religion* (1920).⁸⁴ Instead of a specific exposé on communism, Brown investigated groups, such as the Bolsheviks and the Industrial Workers of the World, and ideologies like socialism and anarchism under the designation of "Reds," or those who sought to overturn, rather than amend, social structures through revolution.⁸⁵ After his description of each group, however, "socialism" was the catch-all label used for those who supported revolution and also opposed Christianity. Hints of sensationalism

⁸⁴ The *Trumpet* advertised this booklet with much more combative language than Brown displayed in his work. The advertisement, which overlaid a foreboding handprint on a richly ornate church building, contended that the safety of democracy required "keeping the 'Red' on the run" and that the Church must protect their pulpits from "rationalism and 'Red' propaganda." "The Mark of the 'Red': Keep it off the Church!," *Gospel Trumpet*, September 23, 1920, 34.

⁸⁵ C.E. Brown, *Reds and Religion* (Anderson, IN: Gospel Trumpet Company, [1920?]), 3-4.

are interspersed throughout, such as when he asked rhetorically if instances of social unrest throughout the world were “the cyclone of hell, precipitating ruin and anarchy before the oncoming night of barbarism?”⁸⁶ However, Brown’s primary aim was didactic, specifically to outline the history of groups pursuing social overthrow, how those groups evaluated Christianity, and how Christianity regarded them. The themes established in this work presaged Brown’s later editorials on communism.

Indicating that the target audience extended beyond the *Trumpet* faithful, although it also refreshed Christians on their faith’s social implications, Brown’s *Reds and Religion* attempted to dispel misconceptions about Christianity. He wrote against the notion that the Church was a “chloroform society” that blanketed the masses with a message of contentment that demurred social progress.⁸⁷ To this charge Brown responded, “as long as there are brazen injustices and glaring social wrongs, Christianity has a challenge,” specifically to work toward the eradication of social ills, even if the task proved impossible.⁸⁸ Brown’s defense of the Church, however, slipped into a celebratory romanticizing of the faith. Christianity bestowed the Western world with democracy, hospitals, schools, science, and the free press, while missionaries of the faith abroad had “leavened the vicious social life of heathen lands” with the gospel.⁸⁹ Instead of calling Christians to account for instances in which the faith perpetuated injustice, Brown pegged

⁸⁶ C.E. Brown, *Reds and Religion*, 3.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 23-26.

all abuses on “the defects of human nature itself.”⁹⁰ Along with its historical contributions, Christianity was also agitating for reform in labor and economics in Brown’s present day. Showing his proclivity to reach beyond the Church of God, Brown offered the “Social Creed of the Churches” (1908) in direct refutation of claims about Christianity’s apathy to the aims of the unrest that industrialism spurred.⁹¹ Having answered his socialist critics, but likely engendering new opponents within the movement for pointing to a creed produced in denominationalism, Brown turned the spotlight to the shortcomings of his accusers.

In comparison to his defense of Christianity’s relevance on social issues, Brown’s remarks about Christianity’s opponents were brief. The cornerstone of his argument against socialism was the prevalence of atheism and its open hostility to Christianity. He employed the work of Walter Rauschenbusch and especially John Spargo, among others, to demonstrate secular socialism’s aversion to religion from its foundation in the work of Karl Marx to the present.⁹² Irreligion was not socialism’s only impediment, but this direct opposition to the Christian faith demanded Brown’s full attention.⁹³ In this final section on Christianity’s rejection of the Reds, however, Brown’s agenda was broader than

⁹⁰ C.E. Brown, *Reds and Religion*, 24.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 31-33. For more on the origin of the social creed in the Methodist Federation for Social Service and the Federal Council of Churches’ adoption and modification of the creed, see Christopher H. Evans, *The Social Gospel in American Religion: A History* (New York: NYU Press, 2017), 88-90, 108-110.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 40-43. For more on Walter Rauschenbusch, the prominent Baptist minister and a key leader in the Social Gospel movement, see Christopher H. Evans, *The Kingdom is Always but Coming: A Life of Walter Rauschenbusch* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2004). For more on John Spargo, a prominent figure in the Socialist Party of America, see Markku Ruotsila, *John Spargo and American Socialism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 46.

critique. Brown possessed significant affinity for socialism that utilized and embraced religion. Despite the possibility of being branded “a friend of capitalism” for his critique of socialism, Brown affirmed that he had “no charge against believers in collective ownership.”⁹⁴ He expressed this sentiment again at the close of the booklet when he proclaimed,

I believe that under socialism, if Christian principles were applied, mankind would have an earthly paradise. But I do not share the socialist view that socialism will change human nature nor that economic freedom would raise the moral standard of society. ...Now, as ever, the hope of the world lies in Jesus Christ and in the practise [sic] of his precepts concerning love and good-will among men.⁹⁵

The challenge for the Church, then, was not barring socialists from congregations but espousing socialism rooted in, or emerging from, Christianity.

Many of the themes established in Brown’s booklet reappeared throughout his *Trumpet* articles in the 1920s and 1930s. However, Brown generally employed “communism” in place of militantly anti-religious socialists and expunged “socialism” from his analysis entirely. Atheism was roundly rejected, often with indications of its direct connection to evil supernatural forces.⁹⁶ The communist presence in the Soviet Union highlighted the tenuousness of the connection between the endorsement of radical economic reform and the support of Christianity.⁹⁷ Because of communism’s antagonism

⁹⁴ C.E. Brown, *Reds and Religion*, 40.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁹⁶ C.E. Brown, “Satan’s Substitute for Conversion,” *Gospel Trumpet*, May 26, 1927, 3; C.E. Brown, “The Hope of a Perfected World,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 2, 1928, 3-4.

⁹⁷ C.E. Brown, “The Bible and Our Times: The Modern War Against God,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 1, 1931, 7; C.E. Brown, “National Religious Collapse,” *Gospel Trumpet*, February 8, 1936, 4.

toward religion, Brown firmly positioned himself in opposition to it, branding it as “the most powerful foe of the Christian church.”⁹⁸ For all the continuity with his later articles, there was one glaring element of discontinuity from his 1920 booklet. His explicit espousal of Christian socialism disappeared. Divergence on the cure to the problem overrode his agreement with socialists or communists on the issue itself. Despite the deep divide between Christianity and prevalent forms of communism and fascism, Brown thought that these ideologies offered a lesson for the *Trumpet*, at least in one respect. He admired the intensity with which they distributed their literature and instilled knowledge of their ideas.⁹⁹ From the 1920s to the mid-1930s, Brown’s critique of capitalism, defense of the working class, and general support of the New Deal positioned him as sympathetic to socio-economic reform, without the burden of explaining or defending points of compatibility between socialism and Christianity to *Trumpet* readers.

Throughout the 1930s, communism remained quite distant from the United States. Following his comments on premillennialists’ raising the “drums of fear,” Brown avowed, “Personally, I am opposed to communism and I am also opposed to Fascism. I believe in capitalism and in private property. I believe in freedom of religion and freedom of speech. I believe in the Constitution and government of the United States just as it is.”¹⁰⁰ However, concerning the imminence of communism’s threat, Brown stated that these sacred principles of American life were not “in any more danger now than they

⁹⁸ Percy, “Eighth Young People’s Convention,” 7.

⁹⁹ C.E. Brown, “The Wisdom of Mussolini,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 11, 1933, 2; C.E. Brown, “Developing A Christian Mentality,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 9, 1940, 1.

¹⁰⁰ C.E. Brown, “Religion of Alarm,” 4.

have been for the last forty years.”¹⁰¹ Communism was a problem found in the Soviet Union and Europe, not the United States. Even when Brown visited the South in the early 1930s, he saw the possibility of communism making inroads during the Great Depression, but, in his mind, the historical ideals of the region guaranteed that American resolve would win out.¹⁰² Even if communism was encroaching upon American soil, the competition skewed in favor of the United States.

The tenor of Brown’s remarks shifted noticeably, yet not immediately, in the years after World War II. In the first issue printed after the formal surrender of Japan, Brown treated communism as a minimal threat far on the horizon. To assuage the fears of *Trumpet* readers that premillennialists generated, Brown proclaimed that Catholicism and communism were “mortal enemies” and that both parties produced propaganda to sway the average American into a fear of the other.¹⁰³ At that time, evangelical Christians had no cause for concern about communism. “I honestly believe that the vast majority of communistically inclined persons in the United States have no serious intentions of interfering with the work of evangelical churches,” declared Brown.¹⁰⁴ There were still no thorough-going communists in the United States, at least in Brown’s mind, but their

¹⁰¹ C.E. Brown, “Religion of Alarm,” 4.

¹⁰² Brown’s racism saturated this conclusion. The room in which Brown stayed had a picture of a Confederate Army officer. Displaying Lost Cause sentiments, Brown concluded, “[The officer’s picture] stands watch over me nightly while I sleep. Out of his eyes there shine the courage, the daring, the chivalry, the poetry, and the generosity which was the flaming soul of the old South. This soldier has long passed on, but the fire of his spirit and the grandeur of his ideals still persist in the South which he loved. The workers here have these, and they are invincible.” C.E. Brown, “Southern Notes,” *Gospel Trumpet*, September 3, 1931, 3-4.

¹⁰³ C.E. Brown, “No Tree Reaches Moon,” 1.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

sympathizers were not an immediate threat. If anything, because of their influence and aspirations politically, Catholics posed the most pressing concern in the mid-1940s.¹⁰⁵ Between the end of World War II and the conclusion of his editorship, however, Brown reversed his position on the threat of communism.

In the late 1940s, communism was increasingly troubling to *Trumpet* readers, and Brown addressed their concern in a slightly atypical way. Upon receiving a letter from a reader who inquired about communism, instead of responding in the “Questions and Answers” feature, Brown dedicated an entire editorial to his response. The reader was particularly interested in knowing whether communism was a fulfillment of the beast in Revelation 13 and what assurances Christians in the United States has for protection if Christians in Russia and Germany were suffering.¹⁰⁶ Brown declined to respond, at least in the periodical, to the question about the Bible and communism. He had already indicated in the early 1930s that apocalyptic texts were not intended to point to specific political figures or trends. The response given on this occasion reveals a weakening of the exceptionalism of the United States in his mind. After reviewing the destruction of World War II, Brown offered that he could not provide any assurance that the United States would not meet the same fate as Christians in other countries.¹⁰⁷ Brown was not placing his hope in the United States. The United States was as culpable as any nation in the horrors of the war, and, as a result, Brown claimed, “I do not think we have any special

¹⁰⁵ C.E. Brown, “Future of Protestantism in America,” 1-2.

¹⁰⁶ C.E. Brown, “Our Hope of the Future,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 17, 1948, 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

claim upon the mercy of God as a nation” before concluding, “I do not see where we can promise ourselves that we shall not have our cities bombed and our people starved as has happened to others.”¹⁰⁸ Although silent on communism, Brown’s words communicated loudly that the United States was neither blameless nor an impenetrable bastion of democracy.

The situation around communism was becoming so dire at the mid-century mark that Brown amended the policy of the *Trumpet*. The position of communism in Russia and China in the early 1950s pressed Brown to admit on two occasions that he was modifying, even if as an exception, the editorial policy of non-involvement on political issues. Historically, the periodical claimed to avoid political commentary but regularly skirted around the restriction by offering theological insights and reflections on pressing current events. In his most verbose explanation, Brown justified the policy change by stating that communism was ultimately a “philosophical and religious question” and that “even as a form of politics, communism is so contrary to the Constitution of the United States and so inimical to the Christian religion that we are justified in discussing it from this standpoint also.”¹⁰⁹ On seemingly all fronts, he felt that a Christian periodical must respond.

Above all else, Brown was compelled to act because of the devious and sinister nature of communism. From a religious standpoint, Brown described communism as one

¹⁰⁸ He preceded these remarks by stating, “There are still some who put their trust in the might and strength of the sword of America. Others put their trust in the billions of American money. I count myself among the most patriotic of America, but Americans and the world have learned that nobody wins a war. War is unmitigated tragedy.” C.E. Brown, “Our Hope of Future,” 2.

¹⁰⁹ C.E. Brown, “Peril of Last Times,” 1.

of many “imitations of the spirit and teaching of true Christianity” and, as such, likened it to the “beard and features of Jesus on the face of Satan.”¹¹⁰ Although it shared many of the same social goals of Christianity, communism was not a feasible option to enact on the broad scale of economics or government.¹¹¹ Returning to his oft-repeated position, Brown believed that human depravity ensured that communism, while under the guise of helping the average citizen, would always tend toward totalitarianism and thus ultimately quash individual freedom.¹¹² This tendency was not particular to communism, however. Brown ventured again into the realm of politics to briefly explore the potential for the exploitation of power in a democratic government. Corruption and bribery were forms of misuse of power, and the government’s abuse through the suppression of individual freedom, specifically the freedom of religion, allowed for the overrun of the Church.¹¹³ Christians were required to speak out against the “tendency toward dictatorship...at work in our own country.”¹¹⁴ Although a seemingly attractive and responsible option, Christianity and communism were incompatible.

In the years after he stepped down as editor, Brown’s writings further reinforced the stark dichotomy between Christianity and communism. His tenure was concluding as McCarthyism intensified all suspicions of communism, and he believed that the United

¹¹⁰ C.E. Brown, “Peril of Last Times,” 1.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 2.

¹¹³ C.E. Brown, “Where Religion Interferes,” 1.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

States was on the precipice of a turning point in history.¹¹⁵ In the opening paragraphs of an article in 1953, Brown drew a comparison between his context and Charles Martel's momentous defeat of Muslim armies at the Battle of Tours.¹¹⁶ The implication was obvious: the defense of the free world required quashing the invasion of communism. "The primary danger in the Christian lands of Western Europe and America," charged Brown, "is simply the existence of millions of fifth columnists who sincerely but ignorantly believe in communism."¹¹⁷ Growing public sentiment for communism forced people to choose between "the powerhouse of New Testament blood atonement Christianity" and "the fiery powerhouse of communism," and, according to Brown, the deadline to make that choice was rapidly approaching.¹¹⁸ From the 1920s to the 1950s, Brown changed his outlook on communism, which moved from an antagonistic competitor to a foreign threat to an imminent crisis. Although Brown identified a problem for the broader Church of God and pointed to doctrinal instruction as at least a partial solution, the responsibility for the guiding the *Trumpet* ultimately fell to the Cold War-era *Trumpet* editorial staff.

¹¹⁵ For more on the contributions of Senator Joseph McCarthy, the House Committee on Un-American Activities, and more about the fear of communism in the United States, known as the "Second Red Scare," which aroused fears and suspicions of communist sympathies in higher education and the film industry, see Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 165-205.

¹¹⁶ C.E. Brown, "The Beginning of an Age," *Gospel Trumpet*, January 3, 1953, 5.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. Here Brown is using the language of McCarthyism that believed communism was actively dismantling a nation from within. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote, "As a social faith, lacking obvious national implications, Communism can rally its fifth columns in any corner of the world where injustice and poverty give it a foothold." Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1949), 97.

¹¹⁸ C.E. Brown, "Beginning of an Age," 6.

Sketching the Role of Christians and the United States in the Atomic Age

As the Church of God found its way in the post-World War II era, communism was increasingly positioned as the preeminent threat to the United States. Even during the 1940s, concerns circulated about socialist or communist sympathies on the Anderson College campus, and the FBI identified the college's academic dean, Russell Olt, as a key leader of socialists in Anderson because of Olt's support of labor unions.¹¹⁹ At least during his editorship, Brown had not descended into hysteria about communism that was found in his later comments about fifth columnists. The consuming purpose of Brown's articles was not seeking out anything that hinted of communist sympathy. He outlined the doctrinal fundamentals of the Church of God and promoted the necessity of sanctification and unity as much as he wrote against the dangerous threats of Catholicism or communism. He was also quite busy in writing endeavors beyond the pages of the *Trumpet*. Between 1945 and 1951, Brown authored six monographs, including his monumental works on the history of early Christianity, *The Apostolic Church* (1947), and on the Church of God, *When The Trumpet Sounded* (1951). Amid a prolific writing period, Brown still devoted space in the *Trumpet*, though limited in comparison to his earlier coverage of other topics, to matters of national and international interest aside from communism. For example, Brown reflected on the global implications of the atomic bomb, urged for the United States' involvement in war relief efforts, and decried the country's participation in the Middle East. The editor regressed from his wartime stance of near blind loyalty to the United States to a distanced position of critique.

¹¹⁹ Strege, *The Desk As Altar*, 113-115.

Brown's editorials failed to observe the end of the war in the European or Pacific theaters.¹²⁰ The *Trumpet* was unreservedly not a news outlet, but there was still no celebration issued for the role of democracy or the United States in the victory of the war. Shortly after the cessation of the war, however, Brown commented on the devastation and destruction that occurred in the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The atomic bomb bequeathed the much-desired resolution to a long and wearying war. Reflecting on the relief that the atomic bomb offered the American public, Brown remarked, "What a thrill that sent through many of our people!"¹²¹ The thrill was fleeting, however, as the prospect of other countries attaining nuclear capabilities and the subsequent possibility of widespread, instant destruction precipitated uncertainty and fear.¹²² The world exited the Second World War in a vastly different state than it had entered.

The atomic bomb revealed the power and ingenuity of humanity but also served as the premiere manifestation of the conditions of a world, with "its pride, its murderous hate, and its wild cries of vengeance," under God's judgment.¹²³ Despite the immense power of the atomic bomb, Brown regarded it as ultimately inert. As the mid-century mark approached, the editor surveyed humanity's past and future prospects and declared, "Honestly I think Christian people are going to have to get the atom bomb out of their

¹²⁰ On occasion, Brown ruminated on the theological implications of wartime developments. One column began with the "atrocities of torture and murder" in concentration camps and pivoted to consider the tendency of totalitarian regimes to oppress freedom, how beliefs inform one's actions, and the impossibility of theological liberalism's optimism about human nature. C.E. Brown, "The Lesson of the Atrocity Pictures," *Gospel Trumpet*, May 26, 1945, 1-2.

¹²¹ C.E. Brown, "God's Judgment on a Lost World," *Gospel Trumpet*, November 17, 1945, 1.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 2.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

thinking.”¹²⁴ With supreme confidence, Brown professed that, “God will never let man end the race of mankind” and that, given sufficient space, he could “demonstrate scientifically that the atom bomb can never destroy the human race.”¹²⁵ Although these sentiments were conducive to a naïve resignation about real geopolitical threats, Brown was attempting to exhort Christians not to become paralyzed with fear. The atomic bomb intensified the reality of humanity’s mortality, but faith in the promise of eternal life in Christ reassured Christians of their hope for the future in the face of all evil.¹²⁶ At this time, the nuclear arms race was still in its infancy, and the eventual magnitude and intensity of the situation may have pressed Brown to modify his thinking. However, as with communism, Brown offered initial soundings on a subject that matured after his editorial duties ceased. At the beginning of the atomic age, Brown not only called Christians to remember the promises of their faith but also stirred them into action.

Brown’s major project after the end of World War II was exhorting *Trumpet* readers to press the United States to assist in the wartime relief efforts in Europe. The enactment of Christian ideals meant overcoming the desire for vengeance and ministering to the basic needs of all humans. Initially, the continuation of a legal state of war limited organizations to administer relief only to non-Germans whom the conflict displaced to Germany.¹²⁷ Calling the conditions of Germans “a burden on the conscience of every

¹²⁴ C.E. Brown, “We Face The Eternal Future,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 1, 1949, 1.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ C.E. Brown, “Living in the Love of God,” *Gospel Trumpet*, January 5, 1946, 1.

American citizen,” Brown encouraged *Trumpet* readers to oppose the prolific calls for revenge against the German people by writing their congressmen to initiate relief to the starving masses.¹²⁸ Christians were required to pressure their government to uplift humanity. Ultimately, the country’s failure to provide relief would result in “a judgment of God upon America of such terrible force as our nation has never known before.”¹²⁹

The situation, however, remained unchanged over a year after Brown’s initial remarks on the subject, so he penned another article in which he responded to popular arguments of those who opposed humanitarian aid. For Brown, offering relief was not an implicit defense of Hitler or the Holocaust, and Americans were putting themselves in a precarious situation of defending the perpetuation of the tragedy of the starvation of nearly twenty-five million people.¹³⁰ Brown witnessed the tragedy firsthand only a few months after the printing of the article in 1947. The Church of God Missionary Board approved to send its president to various camp meetings in Europe to reestablish contact with areas of the work disrupted by the war.¹³¹ When Brown submitted a report of his trip to the *Trumpet* audience in late 1947, the U.S. government had overturned the policy that he opposed, but witnessing the living conditions of the Church of God faithful in Germany only invigorated Brown's zeal for aid. He applauded the government’s decision to reverse its policy but lamented its delay and the resulting consequences of inaction,

¹²⁸ C.E. Brown, “Living in the Love,” 1-2.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹³⁰ C.E. Brown, “Keeping Conscience Clean,” *Gospel Trumpet*, April 12, 1947, 1-2.

¹³¹ Minutes of the Missionary Board Annual Meeting, June 11, 1947, Papers of the Church of God Missionary Board, Church of God Archives, Anderson, IN.

including creating a fertile ground for communism in Europe.¹³² Although the government had corrected its glaring error, the work of the Church of God had only begun. After relaying the cost of black-market goods, Brown urged readers to give generously to the Missionary Board for the support of the German congregations.¹³³ With the situation resolved, at least at the level of governmental policy, Brown shifted his gaze further east to the United States' involvement in Palestine.

Brown issued a theological critique of some of the underlying impetuses for the formation of the State of Israel in 1948. He opposed arguments for the special relationship of the Jewish people with God and for their irreplaceable role in the future and indicated the vacuity of those claims by describing them as an “imitation of daylight.”¹³⁴ They were an imposition of human aspirations upon God's truth. Brown's ecclesiological position held that the kingdom of God included but extended beyond the Jewish people, and his eschatological work demonstrated that Christ's return was not contingent upon any political development. Having previously exposed the theological miscues of premillennialism, Brown named what he saw happening in Palestine. He proclaimed that God had not orchestrated the return of the Jewish people to Palestine and that the entire matter was “simply a carnal ambition” akin to those “aggressive ambitions of other nations to capture the soil of other nations and establish political states according

¹³² C.E. Brown, “Home Again,” *Gospel Trumpet*, November 8, 1947, 1.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹³⁴ C.E. Brown, “Where The Lights Cross,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 3, 1948, 1.

to their own desires.”¹³⁵ To those who argued that prior occupation granted entitlement to the land, Brown retorted that their logic also permitted Native Americans to take over the entirety of the United States, but that prospect was unthinkable, at least to the *Trumpet* editor.¹³⁶ Poor theology sanctioned an inexcusable land grab.

Opposition to the political state of Israel was not, in Brown’s view, a manifestation of anti-Semitism. In the late 1930s, he rejected any personal connection to anti-Semitism and drew on the periodical’s history of opposing the Ku Klux Klan as evidence of institutional resistance to the discrimination of and violence against the Jewish people.¹³⁷ A couple years later Brown maintained that anti-Semitism was a “mental disease” that “spreads in its worst forms in times of ignorance and darkness” and further avowed that this disease “should have no place and no encouragement among Christian people.”¹³⁸ Brown displayed what he regarded as the appropriate disposition toward the Jewish people when he stopped in New York while traveling to survey the Church of God’s status in post-World War II Europe. Brown commented on the prevalence of Jewish people around the Church of God’s missionary home and, after a series of exchanges, commented that his Jewish friends had “many admirable qualities” and a “keen sense of justice.”¹³⁹ He decided to attend a service at a local synagogue and,

¹³⁵ C.E. Brown, “Where The Lights Cross,” 1.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

¹³⁷ C.E. Brown, “Jew Writes About Palestine,” 1.

¹³⁸ C.E. Brown, “The Place of the Jew in Prophecy,” *Gospel Trumpet*, July 19, 1941, 1.

¹³⁹ C.E. Brown, “Evangelizing Along The Way,” *Gospel Trumpet*, August 2, 1947, 2.

at the conclusion, exchanged pleasantries with the rabbi. After communicating to *Trumpet* readers that the rabbi was honored by his attendance from the distant, even foreign, land of Indiana, Brown reflected, “How long, O Lord, how long until I shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the brotherhood and peace of that far country which seems so near tonight as I write in this Babylon of the modern world.”¹⁴⁰

His opposition to Zionism was not merely a matter of Christian theology but also the outworking of his exposure to the reflections of Jewish leaders. Brown relayed the insights of a Jewish rabbi who opposed Zionism from the oft-quoted *Christian Century* and proclaimed that “the responsibility of helping to shape the policy of Jewish world-thought and progress” lay well beyond a holiness leader.¹⁴¹ Brown opposed what he perceived to be the violation of human rights in Palestine and especially the theological justification for the perpetuation of injustice. However, above all, Brown objected to the theological backing of the commodification of foreign affairs within the United States.

Having addressed the immediate situation in the Middle East, Brown shifted his focus to the United States’ role in the matter. Drawing again on the *Christian Century*, Brown presented the political ramifications of the formation of Israel in the United States for the *Trumpet* faithful. The population of Jews in New York, Brown contended, was significant enough to swing elections that offering Zionist sentiments was a politically savvy move.¹⁴² The United States was more than an innocent bystander whose political

¹⁴⁰ C.E. Brown, “Evangelizing Along The Way,” 2.

¹⁴¹ C.E. Brown, “Jew Writes About Palestine,” 1.

¹⁴² C.E. Brown, “Where The Lights Cross,” 2.

parties tailored their platforms to curry favor. The nation was also actively involved in encouraging the process. Although it was a “well-known fact,” Brown still thought *Trumpet* readers should know that the passing of the United Nations proposal to parcel out Palestinian land occurred, in no small part, because American officials pressured, if not domineered, smaller countries.¹⁴³ Taken together, theological errors and the maneuverings of the American empire contributed to the possibility of a war, which had the potential to escalate to World War III pending Russian involvement.¹⁴⁴

By the end of his editorship, Brown was loosely enforcing the *Trumpet*'s “only theology, no politics” editorial policy. In his 1948 article on Palestine, which was one of his most overtly political editorials, Brown briefly explored a theological topic but quickly moved to a discussion of politics. This violation of the periodical's purpose must have agitated at least some in the Church of God because, despite the situation's severity, Brown never returned to the subject of the state of Israel in the remaining three years of his editorship. Perhaps *Trumpet* readers found the threat of communism and Catholicism more pressing, or maybe Brown saw they were less divisive. Whatever the case, after he vacated the office of *Trumpet* editor, Brown broke his silence and returned to the subject one final time.

Two days after Brown's lectures on ecumenical Christianity and fundamentalism and liberalism, the *Trumpet* published an article about his recent globetrotting expedition, which featured a stop in the Middle East. Much of the report focused on his encounters

¹⁴³ C.E. Brown, “Where The Lights Cross,” 2.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

with Church of God leaders along the way and his flight over the Sea of Galilee with fellow minister, C.E. Byers. As Brown and Byers strained to soak in the view of the Sea of Galilee on their awe-inducing and seemingly ethereal plane ride, Brown exclaimed, “the four Gospels suddenly came alive.”¹⁴⁵ The conditions that Brown witnessed after the plane landed only strengthened the positions that he espoused in the 1948 article. The premillennialists’ theological argument had grown rather stale to Brown. Their “joyous epic” about the parceling of land in Palestine was, according to Brown, a result of “consulting emotion and using casuistry...to persuade themselves that this act of bad faith was pleasing to God and a part of the necessary preparation for the millennium.”¹⁴⁶ This dismissal was the extent to which Brown addressed theology.

In Arab refugee camps, Brown witnessed firsthand the consequences of the formation of Israel. He concluded that the American government supported the “armed robbery of the Arabs’ lands by the Israelis” and committed “a tragic injury...to America and to world peace.”¹⁴⁷ The misery of the camps served as a breeding ground for communism, and United States citizens in the region bore the brunt of the animosity about their country’s effort in displacing Palestinians.¹⁴⁸ Of particular concern for Brown were those citizens who operated in the region for prolonged periods: missionaries. Because anti-American sentiment added barriers and danger to mission work, Brown

¹⁴⁵ C.E. Brown, “Storm Over Palestine,” 8.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

wondered in disbelief how a “sincere Christian” could support Zionism.¹⁴⁹ This situation was not a temporary setback. The repercussions of the formation of Israel were deeply felt with no end in sight. In contrast to his idyllic arrival in Jerusalem, Brown claimed that, during his return flight, he endured nightmarish turbulence in a storm and, with a wily twist, suggested that the “political storm over Palestine will not end so quickly nor so safely.”¹⁵⁰ As with communism, addressing the effects of the actions in the Middle East and guiding the Church of God through the duration of the situation fell to another generation. In 1953, Brown turned seventy years old and was undoubtedly experiencing the effects of his waning influence in the Church of God. He relinquished his post as *Trumpet* editor and as president of the Missionary Board in 1951 and concluded his final term on both the Church of God Executive Council and Gospel Trumpet Company Board of Directors in 1952. Although he wrote for the *Trumpet* throughout the 1950s, mostly in the form of inspirational material and book reviews, Brown used one of his final substantial articles to show that the overreach of the United States was antithetical to the Church and the standards of the kingdom of God.

Conclusion

Brown’s *Trumpet* contributions, which stretched over two decades, exemplify his deep conviction that the Christian life was inevitably social. As such, theology extended beyond the Church into the issues within society. A variety of national and international

¹⁴⁹ C.E. Brown, “Storm Over Palestine,” 8.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

events captured Brown's attention, and, over the duration of his editorship, Brown modified his views, for example in his evaluation of communism, and even navigated tension, such as the possibilities and shortcomings of democracy. His social location in the United States profoundly impacted him, but Brown often exposed and criticized the abuses of the country that he loved. In fact, the general trajectory of Brown's analysis of current issues reveals increasing distance between Christianity and the United States and thus reversed the approach of many of his fellow evangelicals. He welcomed governmental efforts during the Great Depression to effect change in society when several evangelicals feared the overreach of the state. By the end of his editorship, as many called for the United States and democracy as guarantors against communism, Brown was questioning the United States' special status, specifically as the democratic country showed signs of departing from its supposed Christian foundation. He looked for a resurgence of democracy that followed a revival of holiness, but Christianity's essential foe was communism. The United States was a viable medium to advance Christianity's cause, but Brown never claimed that it was *the* encapsulation of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God was found among Christians who had experienced Christ and were called to live out the social implications of their faith in a manner that reflected the beliefs and actions of apostolic Christianity.

CONCLUSION

THE CONTRIBUTION OF C.E. BROWN TO THE THIRD FORCE IN

CHRISTENDOM

Charles Ewing Brown was a former boy-preacher from rural southern Illinois who garnered significant authority in the Church of God and shouldered multiple responsibilities during his sixty-five years of active ministry. Mostly self-educated, Brown occupied numerous influential positions in the movement and authored monographs and *Gospel Trumpet* editorials that addressed a wide array of topics. Within the Church of God, few individuals matched the breadth and depth of Brown's institutional reach from the 1920s through the 1950s. He was by no means the entirety of what the Church of God offered in its second and third generations of leadership, but the emphases of his approach indelibly marked the movement. Unquestionably a central figure within the movement, Brown's significance also extended beyond the Church of God. He was a prominent holiness leader during a time that historians have generally presented as a period of defeat and reconfiguration for evangelicals and fundamentalists. Rather than merely functioning as an alternative to those groups, Brown positioned himself and the broader movement as recovering emphases and restoring beliefs that his evangelical and fundamentalist contemporaries lacked. The Church of God offered new insights on how the ideals of ancient Christianity informed the present.

Brown's claim was more than self-aggrandizement, however, given that prominent figures beyond the movement also counted the Church of God as part of a

thriving and powerful force. Henry Van Dusen's description of the "Third Force" in the 1958 *Life* article indicated that the Church of God, in connection with other holiness and pentecostal bodies, held the attention of figures in mainline Protestantism. However, Brown had already vacated the editor's desk by the time of that article, and the revival of religion after World War II was in full swing. Was Van Dusen observing the ongoing consequences of developments during Brown's editorship or something else, something more recent?

Van Dusen's 1958 pronouncement about the Third Force was a relatively late installment in the history of mainline Protestantism's efforts to understand those groups whose ascendancy occurred throughout the first half of the twentieth century. In 1944, Charles Braden, a professor at Northwestern University and a minister in the Methodist Church, authored a series of articles in the *Christian Century* on the growth of fringe groups in the United States, ranging from New Thought and Jehovah's Witnesses to the Assemblies of God and the Church of the Nazarene. Drawing on H. Richard Niebuhr's *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, Braden characterized the Church of God and other holiness and pentecostal groups as "Churches of the Dispossessed" because of their appeal to the socially dislocated and as "emotional cults" because of their active, engaging, and cathartic worship style.¹ The groups on the fringe attracted followers on the margins of society whose needs were unaddressed in established churches. The purpose of Braden's survey of the supposed outer reaches of American Christianity was to indicate what actions *Christian Century* readers needed to take. By exposing the appeal

¹ Charles Braden, "Churches of the Dispossessed," 108-110.

of the peripheral denominations, Braden concluded with supreme confidence that the “regular” churches could simply address their ministerial oversight and therefore “remove the reason for [the] existence of most of these marginal groups.”² Adorning the Protestant mainline with clout and respectability, Braden treated upstart groups as direct, but easily extinguishable, competition.

As those groups continued to grow, mainline confidence found in the *Century* faded. In 1955, after returning from a three-month vacation in the Caribbean, Van Dusen penned an article in the *Century* that tempered the belittling tone found in Braden’s assessment a decade earlier. This article advanced a theologically grounded appeal that was absent from the detailed survey and statistics published a few years later in *Life*. Van Dusen claimed that the upstart sects, which people in his camp had labeled “disdainfully, disparagingly, comfortably, condescendingly,” were at the core of “original Christianity.”³ Instead of adapting mainline Protestantism’s practices and message to eliminate these groups, Van Dusen concluded, in an ecumenical spirit, that the goal was “to come to know, to come to understand, to come to respect and to love these fellow Christians” and, above all, “to seek to draw them into the larger community of Christ’s followers.”⁴ Mainline Protestantism remained, at least in the minds of its supporters, the center around which all others revolved. Only three years after his *Christian Century* article, Van Dusen

² Charles Braden, “The Witness of Jehovah’s Witnesses,” *Christian Century*, February 2, 1944, 140.

³ Henry Van Dusen, “Caribbean Holiday,” 947.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 948.

abandoned his position on incorporating Third Force groups and concluded that the Third Force was striking out a new trajectory in Christianity throughout the world.

The general thrust of Brown's writing ultimately rendered Van Dusen's congenial sentiment ineffectual. Brown reflected the broader Church of God's disinterest in participating within humanly organized, settled denominations; instead, the movement sought to abolish denominationalism. The movement that Brown led challenged the status quo as it sought, through the leadership of the Holy Spirit, to elevate the disruptive experience that Christ wrought in the life of a sinner and to pursue the ramifications of theology for the entire world. Brown professed that his understanding of the Christian life, rooted in holiness theology, was inescapably evangelical and fundamentalist. The parameters and implications of these labels placed Brown, not on the fringe, but at the heart of Christianity.

Comparing C.E. Brown to His Contemporaries

As Brown promoted an evangelical and fundamentalist form of the faith, a plethora of individuals and denominations in the early twentieth century also contended for their claim on those same labels. Over the last half-century, historians have explored the composition of evangelicalism and fundamentalism and interpreted these traditions' contributions to American Christianity. The standard narrative holds that the broader tradition of evangelicalism reached back to the Protestant Reformation, developed

through a multiplicity of sources, and manifested in diverse ways.⁵ In comparison, fundamentalism was a relatively late phenomenon, with its emergence dated at some point in the nineteenth or early twentieth century and with different unifying impulses offered as its foundation. One of the classic works on fundamentalism proposed millenarianism as the animating concern of a fundamentalist movement that reached back to the early nineteenth century but peaked in the controversy of the 1920s.⁶ Another approach positioned fundamentalists as evangelical Protestants who viewed the inroads of modernism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with great hostility.⁷ In either configuration, the stance that fundamentalists held was not irenic but polemical.

The standard historiographical framework crafted over the last several decades has argued that, after their defeat in the 1920s, fundamentalists turned inward, developed networks and agencies devoted to their cause, and reengaged the broader society in the mid to late 1940s.⁸ The emergence of these revitalized evangelicals—so-called neo-evangelicals—eventually led to the formation in the 1970s of a powerful, socially conservative political coalition, often referred to as the Religious Right, which allegedly rallied around the issue of abortion.⁹ Several recent works have resisted the narrative of

⁵ As described in the introduction, the designation of evangelical has fallen on individuals from theologically conservative Presbyterians to pentecostals. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 14-22.

⁶ Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism*.

⁷ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*.

⁸ For one of the foundational works on this approach, see Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*.

⁹ For histories that cover the prehistory of the Religious Right and its symbiotic relationship with the Republican Party, see Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Frances FitzGerald, *The Evangelicals: The Struggle to Shape America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017). For the argument about the “abortion myth,” see Randall

that framework and argued for the persistent engagement of evangelicals and fundamentalists throughout the 1930s and 1940s.¹⁰ These works, which generally engage the theological or socio-political conservatism of evangelicals, have overrepresented fundamentalists and evangelicals located in denominations that originated before the mid-nineteenth century, to the neglect of holiness and pentecostal groups. In response to these studies, this study offers the question: How do the beliefs and practices of leaders like C.E. Brown challenge the prevailing historiographical interpretations of evangelicalism and fundamentalism?

The spirit of Brown's corpus tended toward fundamentalism as an anti-modernist endeavor. He was thoroughly unsympathetic to the premillennialism and dispensationalism that reigned among many of his fundamentalist counterparts. He fervently opposed modernism, at least in its theological manifestations, but departed from many anti-modernists in his indifference toward the external, scientific veracity of the biblical text or doctrine.¹¹ Brown was not alone in this position as other holiness leaders, like the Church of the Nazarene theologian and educator H. Orton Wiley, also argued for the dissonance between inerrancy and Wesleyan theology.¹² Modernism's greatest fault,

Balmer, *Thy Kingdom Come: How the Religious Right Distorts the Faith and Threatens America* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 1-34.

¹⁰ For an example that resuscitates and extends Ernest Sandeen's eschatological focus, see Sutton, *American Apocalypse*.

¹¹ For a discussion of the doctrine of biblical inerrancy, see Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 56-57.

¹² Worthen, *Apostles of Reason*, 39-42.

in Brown's view, was its dismissal of the need for a conversion experience, or perhaps more accurately its identification of social structures as the primary domain of salvation.

Importantly, however, Brown's fundamentalism involved more than the rejection of the advances of specific ideas as it emphasized the need for holiness and unity in the Church. Fundamentalism embodied an affirmation about what the Church should be at least as much as, if not more than, it offered prohibitions about what the Church should avoid. It is without question that, across all the frameworks employed for fundamentalism, the first few decades of the early twentieth century was a time of tremendous importance for evangelical and fundamentalist Christianity. During this period, the Church of God grew, and Brown significantly shaped the movement. Comparing C.E. Brown to his contemporaries in areas from the beliefs and practices of the Christian life to socio-political commitments indicates the gradations within evangelicalism and fundamentalism in the early to mid-twentieth century.

On Faith and Missions

Brown's historical approach to the Christian faith tempered the exclusivist tendency within the Church of God to strongly differentiate its teaching and practice from all others. Although Brown thought the movement had something unique to offer to the religious landscape, he also showed how the Church of God drew on many rich currents in American Christianity. One historian outlined the traditions that coalesced in the holiness movement as a blend of Pietism, American revivalism, and Wesleyan

perfectionism.¹³ Brown's writings pulled on foundational beliefs within each of those traditions as well as from the restorationist impulse that emerged at the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹⁴ Given the confluence of these traditions in the Church of God, Brown's understanding of the Christian faith unsurprisingly centered on a conversion experience that shaped the life of an individual and prescribed a collective vision for the life of the Church.

Brown's conceptualization of conversion differed, in a subtle yet significant way, from the emphases found in the formulation of many other fundamentalists. Particularly for those in a Calvinist framework, the primary concern of "preserving the belief system" resulted in a union of piety and intellect that tended toward a strong emphasis on orthodoxy.¹⁵ For example, J. Gresham Machen understood faith as "primarily the intellectual comprehension of a message about Christ."¹⁶ For C.E. Brown, faith was about embodying the example of the earliest individuals whose lives were affected by the gospel and bringing that standard into fruition in the present. Fidelity to the teaching and practice of the gospel in the Christian life required continual pursuit and, as such, skeptically viewed any claims of secure possession. The conversion experience initiated a

¹³ Dieter, *Holiness Revival of Nineteenth Century*, 2-8.

¹⁴ For a brief review of nineteenth-century restorationism, see Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, 167-170. For the role of primitivism in the Church of God, see Susie C. Stanley, "'Bumping' into Modernity: Primitive/Modern Tensions in the Wesleyan/Holiness Movement," in *The Primitive Church in the Modern World*, ed. Richard T. Hughes (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 125-128.

¹⁵ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 45-46.

¹⁶ Hart, *Defending the Faith*, 111.

transformation that ultimately led Christians to spread their faith in all contexts, domestic and foreign.

C.E. Brown's childhood and adolescence occurred roughly around the same time that Christians exerted supreme confidence in the potential achievements of missionary endeavors. Brown accepted his first pastorate only a couple of years after the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh—the instantiation of the Protestant ecumenical movement and the “high point of western missionary optimism about the conversion of the world” to the Christian faith.¹⁷ Rather than a one-way transmission of the faith from North American and European countries to the remainder of the world, the meeting in Edinburgh signaled the rise of mission efforts in a “multi-cultural, multi-directional network.”¹⁸ Amidst the renewed interest of world evangelization, missionaries also increasingly adopted “evangelical” as a descriptive label for their work.¹⁹ This move was not only a claim about the centrality of sharing the gospel in the Christian life but also involved convictions about the process and goal of mission efforts.

During the late nineteenth century, certain evangelicals in the United States formed “faith missions”—missionary enterprises that were independent from denominational control and relied wholly upon God for financial support, and premillennialist convictions spurred many of those same evangelicals to disseminate the

¹⁷ Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became A World Religion* (Malden, MA: Wiley and Blackwell, 2009), 53-54.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁹ Andrew F. Walls, “The American Dimension in the Missionary Movement,” in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 7-8.

gospel throughout the world.²⁰ To be an evangelical was to spread the gospel quickly and to faraway places. By the 1920s and 1930s, explicitly fundamentalist institutions proclaimed themselves the defenders of the previous generation's rallying cry of "evangelization of the world in this generation" and rejected ecumenical Christianity's holistic approach to mission work.²¹ Fundamentalists operated with the singular intent of evangelizing non-Christians.²² The imminence of Christ's return effectively rendered the modifications and improvements that addressed long-term, systemic issues as meaningless. Despite fundamental differences over the scope and aim of mission efforts, Protestants possessed a grand vision for Christianity's influence throughout the world.

C.E. Brown was nurtured in and guided a revivalistic community of believers and was deeply sympathetic to Christian missions. His editorials in the *Gospel Trumpet*, however, only implicitly detailed his understanding of mission theory. The *Trumpet* was less a tool for evangelization, as it had been in earlier decades, and increasingly a means for outlining and shaping the identity of the Church of God. While other *Trumpet* features updated readers on Church of God missionaries, Brown's editorials noticeably favored the movement's status and progress in the United States. During Brown's *Trumpet* editorship and Missionary Board presidency, the Gospel Trumpet Company published

²⁰ Dana L. Robert, "'The Crisis of Missions': Premillennial Mission Theory and the Origins of Independent Evangelical Missions," in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 29-46.

²¹ Joel A. Carpenter, "Propagating the Faith Once Delivered: The Fundamentalist Missionary Enterprise, 1920-1945," in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 94-96.

²² *Ibid.*, 131-132.

nascent attempts at periodicals devoted to mission efforts, *Friends of Missions* and *Missionary Outlook*, that ran concurrently for a decade. This move further reified the divide between home and foreign missions. Like his contemporaries, Brown saw a need for mission work throughout the world.

Brown departed from many of his contemporaries because he rejected premillennialism and believed that the aim of mission work was not maximizing the number of souls saved before Christ's return. His desire to uphold both the personal ramifications of evangelism and the social implications of Christian growth only furthered that fissure. The most fundamental difference, however, was that Brown expanded the scope of mission work to an area that other Christians took for granted. The missionary task involved saving lost individuals but also healing the body of Christ, which had fractured into disparate and competing institutions. Mission efforts in foreign lands were encouraged, but Brown believed that a broken Church was unable to operate at full capacity or encapsulate the fullness of the Christian faith. Evangelicalism and fundamentalism, in Brown's view, elicited the need for conversion in non-Christians and an ecclesiological conversion among Christians.

On Society and Politics

Evangelicals and fundamentalists devoted their attention to other matters beyond theological reflection and activism. Their religious convictions influenced their positions on a variety of socio-political issues. Instead of lobbying for strict adherence to a specific political ideology, Brown thought it was possible for any given cross-section of

Christians to represent a variety of socio-political commitments. With this position, Brown was not stressing conversion to the exclusion of the social dimensions of Christianity. It was not that matters of society and politics were inconsequential so long as one received salvation. Instead, he believed that theology was necessarily social and that the values of the kingdom of God informed and challenged the individual's political convictions. The task before all Christians was to employ the mandates of faith in addressing the problems of their day. There was not a one-to-one correspondence between the kingdom of God and any political party or nation. Overall, the range and nature of Brown's commentary on socio-political issues contribute to the growing literature on evangelicals and social engagement in the interwar and World War II periods.

Democracy, the United States, and Communism

At times Brown's work, specifically on democracy and his later material on communism, resembled the standard fare of evangelicals. Although prominent in the rise of the Religious Right in the 1970s, intertwining Christianity and democracy and appealing to the Christian origins of the United States has enjoyed a long history in American life.²³ Not only evangelicals and fundamentalists but a broad cross-section of American Christians engaged in this project in opposition to a host of threats.²⁴

²³ For a comprehensive overview of the historical developments that coalesced in the Religious Right generally and the Moral Majority specifically, see Williams, *God's Own Party*, especially 159-185.

²⁴ For a history of the coexisting projects in the 1970s and 1980s of, on the one hand, "left-leaning" academics and politicians described the "civil religion" of the United States and, on the other, the politically conservative reaction of the Religious Right in its rejection of materialism, see Matthew

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, “Christian republicanism” linked ideas about individual freedom and behavior that coalesced in the United States in a decidedly Christian framework.²⁵ By the time of Brown’s editorship, world events introduced a global dimension to this idea. The “cultural crises of two world wars and the Cold War” fortified existing claims in Christian republicanism with increased importance given to whiteness and Western civilization.²⁶ Brown’s claims about race suicide and the heritage of democracy in the Protestant Reformation closely followed this trajectory. By the mid-twentieth century, the common enemy of Western civilization was communism.

Shortly after Brown’s editorship concluded, the United States underwent an unprecedented period of religious growth, and its citizens thought the country was extremely religious, both in the present and in its historical imagination. The addition of “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance and the adoption of “In God We Trust” as the United States’ official motto were symbolic of the heightened claims in the mid-1950s for the nation’s religious identity.²⁷ Historians have depicted this revitalized focus on Christianity as either a response to the federal government’s growing power during the New Deal and infringement upon free enterprise or as an outgrowth of the Cold War

Bowman, *Christian: The Politics of a Word in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 186-215.

²⁵ For the origins of Christian republicanism in revivalism from the colonial period to the early nineteenth century, see Mark A. Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 54-92.

²⁶ Bowman, *Christian: The Politics*, 5.

²⁷ Kevin M. Kruse, *One Nation Under God: How Corporate America Invented Christian America* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 95-125.

“spiritual-industrial complex” that sought to defeat atheistic communism.²⁸ For Brown, Christianity was not a defender of capitalism but an opponent of communism.

Voices throughout Christianity in the middle decades of the twentieth century vehemently rejected communism. Embracing the program of Christian republicanism, the pentecostal evangelist and media personality Aimee Semple McPherson pitted the United States, as the embodiment of Christian ideals, against communism beginning in the 1930s.²⁹ In the early 1940s, preachers like Carl McIntire and organizations from the Church League of America to the National Association of Evangelicals feverishly searched for any hints of potential inroads of communism in the United States.³⁰ The prominent evangelist Billy Graham, among others, joined and amplified the attack in the 1950s through the promotion of “Christian Americanism.”³¹ Where Brown departed from many of his fundamentalist and evangelical contemporaries was the manner of his opposition to communism.

Brown rejected communism as a secular ideology and viewed it skeptically as early as the 1920s but never matched the intensity and hysteria of his counterparts until the beginning of the 1950s. When he finally decided to amend the editorial policy and

²⁸ For the conflation of Christianity, capitalism, and freedom, see Kruse, *One Nation Under God*. For more on the “spiritual-industrial complex” in the Cold War era, see Jonathan P. Herzog, *The Spiritual-Industrial Complex: America’s Religious Battle Against Communism in the Early Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3-11.

²⁹ Matthew Avery Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 236-39, 241-48.

³⁰ Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 18-20; Markku Ruotsila, *Fighting Fundamentalism: Carl McIntire and the Politicization of American Fundamentalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 113-125.

³¹ Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 21-28.

address the issue openly, he framed the situation slightly differently from other Christian leaders. He espoused the merits of democracy and the United States throughout his career, but his advocacy for the religious duty of supporting the nation ended with the cessation of World War II. During the Cold War era, unlike several within the evangelical and fundamentalist ranks, Brown never assumed that the United States consistently or fully embodied Christian values. He never attempted to bifurcate Christianity from either democracy or the United States entirely but also revived his belief that no nation could enclose the kingdom of God. The choice before *Trumpet* readers, and ostensibly the United States, was not between democracy and communism but between the two so-called powerhouses: Christianity and communism. The United States' specific actions, or lack thereof, confirmed for Brown that the United States' citizens and structures needed salvation as much as anything else in the world.

Capitalism, Labor, and the New Deal

In addition to the United States' status as a Christian nation, Brown also departed quite significantly from certain, seemingly foundational, tenets of evangelicals and fundamentalists on other points. Brown's convictions about the plight of the working class, his support of labor unions, and his restrained embrace of capitalism contradicted the approach of many of his contemporaries. The Great Depression and subsequent relief efforts proved enormously consequential for intra-Christian networks and the relationship

between Christianity and the federal government.³² Several hundred miles to the south of C.E. Brown's editorial desk in Indiana, the Delta region of Arkansas and Mississippi was teeming with diverse and evolving responses to the economic situation and proposals for relief.

By category, Brown aligned with the region's religious outsiders, the holiness and pentecostal denominations, more than with the materially wealthy and socially powerful Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and others who comprised the so-called "Protestant establishment."³³ Establishment leaders generally benefitted from the perpetuation of the system in which they possessed cultural capital. For this reason, they pursued reform that adjusted rather than dramatically altered the existing structures and, toward that end, heavily emphasized amending the actions of individuals within the system.³⁴ Populating the outer edges of the religious landscape were groups like Catholics, African-Americans, and radical Christians sympathetic to socialism, who derived negligible benefit from the establishment and focused on a thorough reworking, if not abandonment, of the existing socio-economic system.³⁵ Despite his supposed location on the periphery, Brown's support of the New Deal and his pursuit of revivals for

³² During the 1930s, the dramatic increase in relief needs overwhelmed Christianity's existing capacity for charitable relief and, consequently, Christian leaders transferred not only the responsibility for aid but also the corresponding moral authority to the federal government. The finality of this transference of power to the federal government led to coalitions that bridged the theological spectrum in opposition to the growing presence of the political state. See Alison Collis Greene, *No Depression in Heaven: The Great Depression, the New Deal, and the Transformation of Religion in the Delta* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 2-7, 182-193.

³³ Greene, *No Depression in Heaven*, 5-7, 48.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 51-57.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 57-60.

the dual purpose of eliciting individual salvation and correcting social injustice placed him in league with establishment leaders.³⁶ His exposure to the work of mainline Christians during and after his correspondence courses as a pastor undoubtedly played a vital role in his exposure to and acceptance of their approach.

Sympathy to certain aspects of the mainline's work did not affect his position, or that of the holiness movement, in the religious landscape. Although holiness groups occupied the periphery, Brown's most frequent opponent on the issue of the Great Depression and the New Deal was another occupant on the religious fringe. Brown refused to view the Great Depression as anything but the work of humanity or to interpret political developments eschatologically. With this move, Brown distinguished himself from the premillennialist-ascribing fundamentalists on the periphery, though he rarely named specific premillennialist interlocutors, opting to use the broader tradition as a foil to his fundamentalism.³⁷ Not only his repudiation of these points but also his decision to print the National Recovery Administration's logo in the *Trumpet* placed him in direct opposition to many of his fundamentalist contemporaries in the South.³⁸ Brown was not alone in his discord with fundamentalists as premillennialists like Aimee Semple McPherson also supported the NRA.³⁹ Despite Brown's desire for distance, premillennialists retained some influence on the Church of God faithful given readers'

³⁶ Greene, *No Depression in Heaven*, 48, 102-104.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 60-65.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 113-117.

³⁹ Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson*, 214-15.

repeated concerns about the NRA and the periodical's display of the so-called "mark of the beast," the blue eagle logo. Brown's teaching placed the Church of God in an intermediate position between the so-called establishment and the periphery.

Brown's support of the New Deal and his willingness to consider economic alternatives to capitalism put him in the minority among evangelical leaders. Geographically closer to Brown than the Mississippi Delta, evangelical businessmen in the Midwest, like R.G. LeTourneau, intertwined Christian principles and entrepreneurial endeavors and effectively functioned like clergy in the realms of finance and management.⁴⁰ Over their careers, and especially during the 1930s and 1940s, these businessmen forged "close and enduring ties" between "corporate capitalism and evangelical Christianity."⁴¹ LeTourneau vehemently opposed the New Deal and viewed Christianity and patriotism as "unquestionably...synonymous with capitalism."⁴² The close identification between religion and the free market meant that LeTourneau brought God into the factory. His version of "welfare capitalism," in which the employer provided welfare services to their employees to negate the need for an external labor union, featured not only voluntary religious services during work shifts but also issued a company magazine, *NOW*, which intertwined evangelical Christianity and conservative politics.⁴³

⁴⁰ Sarah Ruth Hammond, *God's Businessmen: Entrepreneurial Evangelicals in Depression and War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 3-12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 29.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 29-30, 32-37.

The oil magnate, J. Howard Pew, continued and magnified the tightly bound relationship between evangelicalism, capitalism, and political conservatism into the post-World War II period. It was Pew's money, after all, that funded the dreams of the renowned evangelist, Billy Graham, for the publication of the theologically and politically conservative magazine known as *Christianity Today*.⁴⁴ Evangelicalism, at least in the hands of businessmen, involved and supported specific economic and political systems. LeTourneau, Pew, and other businessmen laid the foundation for the "conflation of faith, freedom, and free enterprise" dubbed "Christian libertarianism" that deeply informed the trajectory of faith and politics in the latter half of the twentieth century.⁴⁵ The evangelicalism that Brown advocated sharply deviated from that path.

Brown avoided and outright condemned the approach of many of his evangelical counterparts. The *Trumpet* editor wanted readers to follow their conscience on politics, and the Church of God periodical was resolutely opposed to elevating any party line. The progressive outlook of Brown's early socio-economic thought most closely echoed those on the religious periphery. He usually sought to amend the system, but at times toyed with constructing a new system. Even his address to the General Ministerial Assembly in 1934 possessed the spirit of those earlier works, even if it neglected specific terminology about socialism. From the early 1920s to the mid-1930s, Brown held in tension the seemingly contradictory positions that the current structures should be improved and abandoned. The former reflected his belief that Christians should hold in high regard the

⁴⁴ Hammond, *God's Businessmen*, 106-108, 176-178.

⁴⁵ Kruse, *One Nation Under God*, xiv-xv, 36-39.

implications of their faith for non-spiritual matters. The latter, however, reinforced his belief that no economic system or political ideology encapsulated the kingdom of God. In his later life, particularly by his hyper-patriotic phase during World War II, Brown abandoned any critique of capitalism in his *Trumpet* articles but also never acted as its ardent supporter. Perhaps some in the Church of God ranks were following the program of Christian libertarianism, but Brown was not.

Israel

Brown also parted with many of his evangelical and fundamentalist contemporaries on the nature and purpose of prophecy and, by extension, departed with many on the status of the Jewish people generally and the formation of Israel specifically. An interest in Zionism predated Brown's tenure as editor by decades. John Nelson Darby was a significant influence in American Christianity's interest on the subject, and his teaching, known as dispensationalism, divided history into certain periods and emphasized the importance of the return of Jewish people to Jerusalem as an indication of the arrival of a new era.⁴⁶ Perhaps no figure had a more significant impact on the Zionism's traction in the United States than William E. Blackstone, who petitioned President Benjamin Harrison in 1891 to consider returning Palestine to Jewish control.⁴⁷ Sympathy for a Jewish nation-state was ultimately a transatlantic affair by nature, as the

⁴⁶ For a brief introduction to the global dimensions of the intellectual and institutional heritage of dispensational premillennialism, see Melanie McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders: A Global History of American Evangelicals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 71-74.

⁴⁷ Paul Charles Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism, 1891-1948* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998), 59-74.

British government codified, in its 1917 Balfour Declaration, several decades of geopolitical and religious interest in a Jewish state in Palestine.⁴⁸ When Brown offered his stance in the *Trumpet* after 1948, he spoke on an important theological and socio-political topic with a long history in American Christianity.

Brown rejected the formation of Israel because he believed that its supporters misappropriated the biblical text and that the action was carried out in a way that perpetuated injustice on Palestinians. He did not indicate to *Trumpet* readers that he was necessarily wholly opposed to the idea of a political state, only that he firmly rejected the two missteps. Nevertheless, in opposing the creation of the state of Israel, Brown diverged from many evangelicals and fundamentalists. Brown's refutation of prophecy as predicting future world events clashed with individuals like Aimee Semple McPherson whose interpretations, which at times exhibited deeply anti-Semitic sentiments, supported the return of Jews to Palestine.⁴⁹ Brown's position also ran contrary to prominent figures, like Reinhold Niebuhr, whose rationale for the support of Israel differed significantly from dispensationalism and placed him in the minority of mainline Protestantism, which generally cooled in its support of the issue by the early 1950s.⁵⁰ In the decades after Brown's editorship, evangelical support of Israel increased significantly.⁵¹ Though

⁴⁸ Donald M. Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism: Lord Shaftesbury and Evangelical Support for a Jewish Homeland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁴⁹ Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson*, 248-251.

⁵⁰ Merkle, *Politics of Christian Zionism*, 114-116, 134-140.

⁵¹ Timothy P. Weber, *On the Road to Armageddon: How Evangelicals Became Israel's Best Friend* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 155-186, 213-248.

Brown's intellectual presence in the Church of God was limited to the earliest stages of Israeli-Palestinian conflict, his initial soundings on the issue diverged from a close relationship between evangelicalism and Israel. Whether on matters of faith and practice or socio-political issues, Brown demonstrates the diversity of concerns and rationale operating within evangelicalism and fundamentalism. For Brown, those dispositions were fundamentally experiential, in both a past conversion and in the corporate life of the body of Christ.

The Impact of C.E. Brown

C.E Brown is an example of an evangelical and a fundamentalist who, during the early to mid-twentieth century, understood revivalism and social action to be mutually reinforcing, fundamental components of the Christian faith. Many have isolated this period as one in which evangelicals exhibited noticeable discontinuity with respect to social engagement.⁵² In the mid-nineteenth century, evangelical revivals spurred social reform efforts from temperance and poverty to abolition and more.⁵³ One of the preeminent scholars of American religion, Martin Marty, proposed that, at the end of Reconstruction, the so-called "Evangelical Empire" fractured over the appropriate focus for restoration into a "two-party system"—"private" Protestantism focused on the

⁵² The severity of evangelical discontinuity on this point merited the description of a "great reversal," after which evangelicals were said to have focused exclusively on conversion. See David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism and Social Concern* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1977).

⁵³ Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform*.

individual and “public” Protestantism on the social order.⁵⁴ These seemingly mutually exclusive positions neatly divided, at least in the historical accounts, conservative and liberal as well as fundamentalist and modernist in the early twentieth century.

Marty’s framework responded to the fact that the reform spirit of the nineteenth century was conspicuously absent among many evangelicals in first years of the twentieth century, particularly by World War I. The prevailing narrative posited that a “Great Reversal” occurred when the heirs of reform-minded evangelicals of the nineteenth century—those found in Marty’s private Protestantism—relinquished or at least drastically suppressed the social component of their ministerial efforts by the 1920s.⁵⁵ In 1947, Carl F.H. Henry called those who adhered to the label of fundamentalist to embrace and engage the social dimension of the Christian faith with his work, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*.⁵⁶ Henry’s agitation for social justice persisted with his participation alongside a host of evangelical figures in the drafting of the *Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern* (1973), which played a pivotal role in the foundation of progressive evangelicalism or the evangelical left.⁵⁷ Although the Religious Right was more culturally and politically powerful in the closing decades of the

⁵⁴ Martin E. Marty, *Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America* (New York: The Dial Press, 1970), 178-180.

⁵⁵ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 85-93.

⁵⁶ David R. Swartz, *Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 14-15, 20-22.

⁵⁷ For more on the origins of “progressive evangelicals” or the “evangelical left,” especially in the document *The Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern* (1973), see Swartz, *Moral Minority*; Brantley W. Gasaway, *Progressive Evangelicals and the Pursuit of Social Justice* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

twentieth century, Henry and others had restored the long-absent social consciousness of their evangelical forebears. That, at least, is the narrative that historians have told.

C.E. Brown's convergence and divergence with evangelicals and fundamentalists on a variety of topics raise the issue of classification. In presenting himself as an evangelical and a fundamentalist, Brown was not merely acquiescing to the prevalent forms of those traditions, though there was great danger of that happening in the minds of *Trumpet* readers. Instead, Brown was striking out a trajectory for how holiness theology formed and displayed an evangelical and fundamentalist spirit. His approach, which best aligns with the radical holiness tradition, sought to return the Church to its roots in apostolic Christianity and to draw upon an evangelical spirit of social engagement and a fundamentalist ethos of doctrinal exploration. The radical holiness movement was a vibrant and growing tradition that expanded as the fundamentalists in Baptist and Presbyterian circles retracted, or at least retreated. C.E. Brown partook in the radical holiness movement's animating ethos of innovation and its desire to reorder institutions, most notably the Church, but departed from the predominant premillennialism of others. He pressed for the primacy of a conversion experience that incorporated Christians in the unity of the body of Christ, while he also utilized the values of the kingdom of God to interrogate the institutions and structures that surrounded him.

In the supposed nadir of evangelical social teaching, Brown operated in a manner that demonstrated continuity—though not necessarily as a direct, causal link—between nineteenth-century evangelicals and the evangelical left of the 1970s. Brown represents one of many evangelical figures who explored the implications of theology for societal

problems in the interwar period.⁵⁸ Despite the sharp distinction in Marty's framework, recent scholarship has demonstrated that the split between public and private was also much less definite for other contemporaries of Brown. For instance, Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878-1969), the revered leader who rallied the ranks of modernists against the advance of fundamentalism in the early 1920s, had affinities for and reservations about both fundamentalism and modernism and, with his preferred designation of a "liberal evangelical," straddled the divide between the two camps.⁵⁹ This tendency worked in the opposite direction as well. Geographically and theologically closer to C.E. Brown was the Church of God (Cleveland) leader, A.J. Tomlinson (1865-1943). As a participant in the premillennialist faction of the radical holiness tradition, Tomlinson ostensibly belonged to the private Protestant and fundamentalist part of the divide, yet he largely affirmed the "cultural embrace of social modernization."⁶⁰ Unlike Fosdick in his urban pulpit, Tomlinson and others in the radical holiness tradition articulated their progressive embrace of modernity in a way that, from the viewpoint of refined culture, seemed like opposition to modernism.⁶¹ Taken together, these leaders demonstrate that public and private Protestantism were co-existent, mutually reinforcing, and shifting impulses in the Christian life.

⁵⁸ Geoffrey R. Treloar, *The Disruption of Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, McPherson and Hammond* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 252-277.

⁵⁹ Matthew Bowman, *The Urban Pulpit: New York City and the Fate of Liberal Evangelicalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2-9, 254-262.

⁶⁰ R.G. Robins, *A.J. Tomlinson: Plainfolk Modernist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 37-46.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 5-6, 27-36.

For many evangelicals, including Brown, what changed between roughly 1920 and 1940 was not their desire for or activity in social engagement but the fact that they “won no lasting reforms of moment and failed to reverse the disturbing cultural trends of the day.”⁶² Evangelicals were not inactive as much as they were ineffective. At least part of the ineffectiveness of Brown and the Church of God stemmed from the repeated rejection of explicitly embracing political topics in a theological journal and from a lack of concrete, practical actions. Even though social reform was not the domain of a specific political party, Brown distanced himself and the periodical from espousing any political commentary for fear of promoting a partisan agenda. This move was consistent with his theological convictions about the inability to relegate participation in God’s kingdom to any secular approach. However, the scope of Brown’s theologizing of political issues remained generally broad, and the depth of the application was thin. He emphasized the necessity of the social teaching of the gospel, provided relatively general theological insights on pressing matters of the day, but rarely left *Trumpet* readers with an actionable plan.

The attentive *Trumpet* reader knew that being an evangelical and a fundamentalist was central to the Christian life, or at least that it was to Brown. Once Brown retired from the *Trumpet* editorship the responsibility for charting the meaning and implications of those designations in a holiness framework fell to the next generation. Brown hoped that the Church of God faithful would move beyond their experience to explore the fullness and depth of the Christian life through doctrine. Rather than blindly perpetuating

⁶² Treloar, *Disruption of Evangelicalism*, 277.

previous Church of God teaching, including his own, Brown challenged the Church of God to be evangelical. That is, they were to extend the disruption and correction that the conversion experience effected in their life into the Church and the wider world. As the body of Christ grew and faced new challenges, they were not to idolize the response of previous generations but to respond in a manner that was faithful both to the fundamental teachings of apostolic Christianity and to the moving of God's Spirit in the present. They were not captive to any human belief or institution but only to God's Church.

Further Research

The reflections of mainline Protestants like Braden and Van Dusen reveal intra-Protestant relationships in the mid-twentieth century but also indicate a relatively understudied trajectory in the study of American Christianity. When fundamentalists of the Baptist and Presbyterian brand lost the cultural contest and retreated into isolation in the 1920s and 1930s, there was a slew of vibrant and growing groups in the Third Force that were already filling the cultural vacuum, at least on the margins. As holiness and pentecostal denominations operated on the fringes of society, there was no shortage of antagonism and competition between them.⁶³ However, Brown serves as an example that, at least by the 1930s, some degree of openness and cooperation existed between Third Force holiness and pentecostal groups, even amid significant theological difference.

Further exploration of the leading figures and networks among Third Force

⁶³ For a description of how that process occurred in the American South, see Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).

denominations would offer a nuanced view of the vitality of and movement within the religious landscape in the first half of the twentieth century. It is beyond the scope of this study to reflect upon the impact of the Third Force aside from the fact that mainline leaders regarded it, somewhat simultaneously, quizzically and competitively. Further studies that move from a select leader to the broader contours of Third Force groups would also aid in determining the operative understandings of evangelical and fundamentalist in that tradition.

Further, C.E. Brown demonstrates that, while a group of beleaguered fundamentalists reemerged as neo-evangelicals in the 1940s, some individuals and groups had never ceased claiming the labels of evangelical and fundamentalist. Leaders in other Third Force denominations may have rejected those labels, or at least departed from Brown's presentation of them. Nevertheless, Brown's example shows that the neo-evangelicals of the 1940s could not claim sole inheritance of the evangelical tradition. The aim of this study is not to present Brown as the example against which to measure others, but an evaluation of his work serves as an initial effort to chart the points of convergence and divergence across groups rooted in holiness theology. Recent work on the emergence of the radical holiness movement in the twentieth century has contributed to the scholarly conversation. The categorization of Brown as a radical holiness leader is fair given his sympathy toward the reform of socio-economic institutions. In some respects, Brown resides on the extreme edge of the radical holiness movement given that the institution which he sought to modify most was the church. Brown wanted to abolish the church, at least the church formed and perpetuated in what he understood as the

system of denominationalism. Brown's amillennial approach stands in stark contrast to general descriptions of the heavily premillennialist orientation of radical holiness leaders. Additional historical work is needed to nuance further the dichotomy of "traditional" and "radical" factions in the holiness movement, specifically the extent of commonalities, or lack thereof, that extend beyond institutional innovation. In what manner did the radical holiness movement develop and persist into the mid to late twentieth century?

Although pivotal for the Church of God and the holiness movement, C.E. Brown is but one leader within both of those religious bodies. The formal articulation of theology is fundamental to the development of holiness groups, and institutional leaders possessed considerable clout in setting the general parameters within a religious body. The study of Brown's life and thought indicates the need for additional research on other prominent holiness figures within and beyond the Church of God during the mid-twentieth century. Exploring how congregants in their everyday lives adopted and modified institutional parameters moves toward a more comprehensive view of the history of American Christianity. Producing intellectual histories from monographs and formal theology and social histories from the daily elements of faith will reveal the potency of holiness groups, particularly in the twentieth century. Of critical importance is augmenting denominational histories with studies that chart the influences at play across the broader holiness tradition.

Aside perhaps from Brown's longevity as editor, this study extends no evidence for how the Church of God pastors and congregations regarded Brown's intellectual contributions or the extent to which they translated his ideas into practice. More work is

needed to develop further how Church of God theology and practices manifested along the lines of geography, socioeconomic status, race, and gender in the mid-twentieth century. During Brown's editorship, the increase in membership alone, which closely correlates to the period of decline in fundamentalism, calls for further analysis of the geographic location, demographics, and endeavors of the Church of God. From the scope of the Third Force and the radical holiness movement to the Church of God, what this work indicates is that there are unexplored avenues within and beyond the standard narratives of evangelical Christianity in the first half of the twentieth century. Van Dusen was reluctant to dismiss the Third Force as a "temporary and passing phenomenon" and instead highlighted growing interest in the study of "the secrets of its mighty sweep."⁶⁴ One of the supposedly enigmatic components of the Third Force was the holiness fundamentalism of Charles Ewing Brown.

⁶⁴ Van Dusen, "Force's Lessons", 124.

APPENDIX A
THIRD FORCE STATISTICS

Group	Membership (United States)
Churches of Christ	1,700,000
Assemblies of God	482,352
Church of God in Christ	360,428
Seventh-day Adventists	283,140
Church of the Nazarene	281,646
Jehovah's Witnesses	226,797
Church of God (Cleveland, TN)	147,929
Church of God (Anderson, IN)	127,395
United Pentecostal Church	125,000
International Church of the Foursquare Gospel	110,568
Pentecostal Church of God of America	103,500
Christian and Missionary Alliance	83,778
Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God	75,000
The Church of God	70,941
Independent Fundamental Churches of America	65,000
Pentecostal Assemblies of the World	60,000
The Pentecostal Holiness Church	47,323

Source: Henry P. Van Dusen, "Force's Lessons for Others." *Life*, June 9, 1958, 124.

APPENDIX B
CHURCH OF GOD YEARBOOK DATA, 1923-1957

	Members	Members (+/-)	Sunday School Attendance	Sunday School (+/-)	Congregations (U.S. and Canada)	Congregations (+/-)
1923	29,542	--	43,702	--	1,045	--
1924	25,737	(12.99)	41,764	(4.43)	776	(25.74)
1925	26,937	4.66	49,363	18.2	685	(11.73)
1926	27,771	3.1	53,113	7.6	634	(7.45)
1927	30,052	8.21	57,438	8.14	677	6.78
1928	34,709	15.5	66,201	15.26	927	36.93
1929	31,737	(8.56)	62,221	(6.01)	664	(28.37)
1930	29,123	(8.24)	58,397	(6.15)	605	(8.89)
1931	31,781	9.13	62,554	7.12	907	49.92
1932	38,227	20.28	73,625	17.7	805	(11.25)
1933	49,836	30.37	81,140	10.21	1,136	41.12
1934	54,503	9.36	82,595	1.79	1,226	7.92
1935	59,799	9.72	86,900	5.21	1,352	10.28
1936	56,684	(5.21)	88,358	1.68	1,118	(17.31)
1937	57,048	0.64	92,767	4.99	1,224	9.48
1938	61,651	8.07	99,017	6.74	1,201	(1.88)
1939	66,177	7.34	111,422	12.53	1,218	1.42
1940	70,891	7.12	112,845	1.28	1,300	6.73
1941	74,497	5.09	125,416	11.14	1,428	9.85
1942	83,508	12.1	131,160	4.58	1,456	1.96
1943	84,978	1.76	131,942	0.6	1,447	(0.62)
1944	90,754	6.8	141,837	7.5	1,522	5.18
1945	89,663	(1.2)	143,600	1.24	1,616	6.18
1946	93,774	4.58	144,200	0.42	1,648	1.98
1947	96,949	3.39	153,054	6.14	1,841	11.71
1948	92,604	(4.48)	155,656	1.7	1,965	6.74
1949	96,736	4.46	166,795	7.16	1,892	(3.72)
1950	96,749	0.01	175,415	5.17	1,932	2.11
1951	97,358	0.63	180,959	3.16	1,964	1.66
1952	102,619	5.4	187,729	3.74	1,957	(0.36)
1953	113,285	10.39	193,951	3.31	2,038	4.14
1954	116,111	2.49	203,134	4.73	2,100	3.04
1955	121,655	4.77	216,032	6.35	2,141	1.95
1956	126,177	3.72	218,880	1.32	2,191	2.34
1957	130,231	3.21	220,098	0.56	2,242	2.33

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CURRICULUM VITAE





