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LUND

*Third World Conference
on Faith and Order
August 15-28, 1952*

FINAL REPORT

I. A WORD TO THE CHURCHES

- 1 We have been sent to Lund by our Churches to study together what measure of unity in matters of faith, church order, and worship exists among our Churches and how we may move toward the fuller unity God wills for us. We give thanks to the Lord of the Church for what He has wrought among us in and through our fellowship of conversation and prayer and for evidences that in several parts of the world Churches are drawing closer together. We have made many discoveries about one another's Churches and our perplexity in the face of unresolved differences has been surpassed by our gratitude for the manifold grace of God which we see at work in the life of the Churches all over the world.
- 2 We have seen clearly that we can make no real advance toward unity if we only compare our several conceptions of the nature of the Church and the traditions in which they are embodied. But once again it has been proved true that as we seek to draw closer to Christ we come closer to one another. We need, therefore, to penetrate behind our divisions to a deeper and richer understanding of the

mystery of the God-given union of Christ with His Church. We need increasingly to realise that the separate histories of our Churches find their full meaning only if seen in the perspective of God's dealings with His *whole* people.

3 We have now reached a crucial point in our ecumenical discussions. As we have come to know one another better our eyes have been opened to the depth and pain of our separations and also to our fundamental unity. The measure of unity which it has been given to the Churches to experience together must now find clearer manifestation. A faith in the one Church of Christ which is not implemented by *acts* of obedience is dead. There are truths about the nature of God and His Church which will remain for ever closed to us unless we act together in obedience to the unity which is already ours. We would, therefore, earnestly request our Churches to consider whether they are doing all they ought to do to manifest the oneness of the people of God. Should not our Churches ask themselves whether they are showing sufficient eagerness to enter into conversation with other Churches and whether they should not act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately? Should they not acknowledge the fact that they often allow themselves to be separated from each other by secular forces and influences instead of witnessing together to the sole Lordship of Christ who gathers His people out of all nations, races, and tongues?

4 Obedience to God demands also that the Churches seek unity in their mission to the world. We share the failure to convey the Christian message to the mass of mankind. But it is precisely to these masses that we have the obligation to preach the one Gospel, and to manifest the oneness of the Church.

5 The word penitence has been often on our lips here at Lund. Penitence involves willingness to endure judgment—the judgment of the Lord to whom has been given the power to sift mankind and to gather into one the scattered children of God. We await His final triumph at the end of history. But, in God's mercy, tokens of judgment which are also calls to a new and active obedience come to us in our day also, here and now. Surely we cannot any longer remain blind to the signs of our times and deaf to His Word.

6 The Lord says once again: "He that gathereth not with me, scattereth."