

Given by retiring president William Margies at the first SPS banquet held at the airport Club Room in Des Moines, Iowa, November 6, 1971, 9:00 p.m.

THE EXPANDING HORIZONS OF PENTECOSTAL SCHOLARSHIP

Introduction

"Is That All There Is," a recent hit song by crooner Peggy Lee, expressed the very heart of the middle half of the twentieth century, for we have just come through the Age of Despair. The Pepsi ad reminds us that this has been an existentialist age, "You're in the Now generation." More recently, however, Mama Cass Elliott sang a new tune, "There's a New Day Coming and It's Coming Real Soon." She just may well be the prophetess of a new era, for indeed we stand in history at a time of the changing of the guard. If the Pepsi ad is a symbol of the old age that is passing, then the "happy face" is a symbol of the new. Found on lapels, tee-shirts, coffee jar lids, in magazines and on bill boards, this symbol tells us that there is a look to the future and away from the existentialist "now."

The Theology of Hope is replacing the Theology of Despair. Moltmann is replacing Bultmann as the dominant theologian. A new rationalism and humanism is replacing the current irrationalism. This may be illustrated by the shift in protest strategy. The New Left is not content to reduce the establishment to ashes. The New Left has a carefully planned strategy for replacing the existing social structure with a new totalitarianism, based on the belief that the hope of the future lies within man himself. By force man will recreate his future.

On the other end of the scale, however, those looking forward with hope to the future are the people whom the Spirit of God is touching today. It is not merely accidental that just this past June a conference on prophecy met

in Jerusalem, for those to whom Jesus Christ is a living reality are being moved by the Holy Spirit to welcome His second coming. He is the hope of the world! As we meditate together this evening on the significance of the modern Pentecostal movement, and our role as servants of God within it, let us bear in mind that the Holy Spirit is breathing upon the Church of Christ today in diverse places for more than casual reasons. Surely He is preparing His bride for the Coming Bridegroom. I wonder if His coming may not be almost upon us. This thought, as a preface to what we discuss here tonight, hopefully will lift our horizons to a sense of urgency, to a mission for the Kingdom of God, a mission that must transcend parochial interests.