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11th February 1935

Herrn Prof. Dr Karl Barth,

Dear Professor Barth.

I believe that you have had a letter from Professor H. R. Mackintosh inviting you to contribute to a volume on the subject of Revelation.

The plan originated in a suggestion made by the International Missionary Council. We are planning to hold a meeting of our Council in 1938 in the Far East which will be attended by a considerable number of leaders of the younger Churches in Asia. We asked ourselves the question whether the other ecumenical movements could render help to the younger Churches in Asia and with this end in view we made an approach to the Faith and Order Movement.

I very greatly desire that your message should reach and influence Christian thought throughout the world and in particular bring help to the younger Churches, and I believe that the proposed volume will contribute to this end.

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I have been told that you are not attracted by the idea of a symposium. I entirely share your feeling and have often said that there is hardly any volume of this nature on my shelves to which I ever want to refer again. In this case, however, since we can see no other means of achieving our ends I cherish the hope that if our aim is to respond in a real way to real needs the attempt to do this may not be open in the same degree to the objections which are valid against efforts that have been made in the past.

Everywhere throughout the world the Christian Church is engaged in a desperate struggle with the secularized thought and society of our time, however different the forms which the struggle may assume in different countries. In this struggle, our eyes are being increasingly opened to the fact that Christians are not in agreement among themselves on a number of vital questions. The only road that will lead us out of this weakness of the Church would seem to be that the existing differences should be honestly and openly stated, in the hope that this statement may lead to a clearer understanding of Christian truth. Magna est veritas.

While we desire that those who are not in agreement should state their differences with complete frankness the debate/

debate does not take place in the quiet waters of academic calm but has to be conducted, so to speak, in the trenches. It may please God to use for His glory and for the greater effectiveness of the witness of the Church a sincere attempt of this kind to promote mutual understanding in a full awareness of the earnestness of the situation.

We need your help and I plead with you to give it.

We shall be approaching you later for your help in connection with the plans of the Universal Christian Council which is concerned with the issues involved in the relations between the Church, the state and the community. These have not only engaged your serious attention but have called forth your active participation and faithful witness for which a great multitude outside Germany have been profoundly grateful. There is a service, I believe, which you can render in these questions to the whole Christian Church throughout the world.

I hope very much that circumstances will prove kind and allow our paths to cross again in the not-too-distant future. It would be a great pleasure to me if we could meet again and even more if we could welcome you once more in our home.

I am,

Yours very sincerely,

*J. H. Deeken*