

book of the month

Sponsored by the Christian Literature Commission

DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES

Sermons and Prayers

by Karl Barth

Selected and reviewed by George A. Jacobs, pastor of First Christian Church, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Certainly this must be Dr. Barth at his best! This is truly "thus saith the Lord." Eighteen brief chapters with but one purpose in mind—to glorify God through men humbly surrendered to Jesus Christ. Many of the sermons were preached in a Swiss prison in Basel and it is with these men and women in mind that he speaks in simple language the unsearchable truth of salvation through our Lord.

John Marsh, principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, writes the preface. He states, "If I were asked to put into one sentence the basic principle that underlies all Barth's theology I think I would say that it is directed, all the way through, to but one end—to leave completely undistorted and uncompromised the great, wonderful and mysterious fact that God has spoken to us in his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." This is certainly a simplification of most of Dr. Barth's writings. In reading *Deliverance to the Captives* we are not aware of his many difficult theological expressions. We only feel his intense love for God because of his redeeming grace in Jesus Christ.

In a time when many "popular" subjects are being discussed in our pulpits, to see a man of Dr. Barth's stature take scripture and allow God to interpret it through him is refreshing. We may not all agree with all he says, but there is never a question as to his basic dependence upon the Bible. The Christmas and Easter discourses were especially good, as was the one "Saved by Grace."

Returning again and again to his favorite emphasis, "the transcendence of God, the vanity of reason, the sinfulness and helplessness of man, the sole sufficiency of God's good grace" (Dr. Marsh's preface),

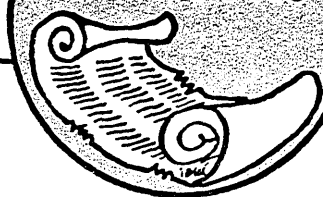
we can almost feel him reaching into the hearts of his listeners—and ours—persuading acceptance of that grace.

Each sermon is preceded and followed by a very helpful and suggestive prayer—another pattern that preachers everywhere could well emulate. His illustrative material was mostly his own, which makes it fresh and to the point. Truly this little book of 160 pages will give much help and inspiration to any who feels that preaching "bogs down" now and then to lecturing or just talking.

Here is a man who has something to say, not only to inmates of a prison, or to himself (as all good preachers should), but to all men "as dying sinners and yet as men redeemed from death by the gracious act of God." It is the gospel of Jesus Christ for deliverance to all of us captives.

Deliverance to the Captives by Karl Barth is published by Harper and Brothers and priced at \$3.00. Order from the Christian Board of Publication, P. O. Box 179, St. Louis 66, Mo.

BOOKS



What You Read''

Influential Family

Lorenzo and Florence. By Warman Welliver. Clio Press. 88 pages. \$1.25 (Paper).

Anyone interested in history must deal with the Medici family and in particular with Lorenzo. The impact of Florentine culture on the 15th and 16th centuries is perhaps without parallel in any age. The Medici family, with its vast influence, which was not purely altruistic, had a vital effect upon the world of its day. Art, literature, thought, and the Church came under its sway. The family's interest ranged from support of Michaelangelo to the establishment of one of its members in the papacy. It is to be remembered that Savonarola was involved with the Medici family in Florence.

This book is well written and serves to give a quick view of this important family, its city, and its influence. The volume has all the strengths and faults of a hurried coverage of so intense an era in human history. Nonetheless, it is worth being read by those who are interested in a glimpse of so vital an age of human endeavor.

—KENNETH A. KUNTZ

Unusually Good

The Christian Family Baby Book.

Well Communicated

Christianity and Political Responsibility. By Alden D. Kelley. The Westminster Press. 239 pages. \$5.

Some churches tend to shun 20th century issues, including politics, the author contends.

He is Alden D. Kelley, Professor of Christian Apologetics and Ethics at Bexley Hall, Kenyon College, Ohio, and former president of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary.

Dr. Kelley stresses the "increasing impotence of the churches in those countries where Christianity has existed for centuries. Perhaps it is the discovery of this fact which among other things has led to the abatement of the antireligious campaign in Russia and its satellite peoples! Despite Marx, there is not actually a great deal to fear from religion and the churches."

Dr. Kelley thinks it unfortunate that church members engage in little conversation about the interrelations of religion and politics. One reason for this lack of debate, he suggests, is the "communication fatigue," which has resulted from the bombardment of images and words from the mass media.

This book is part of the Westminster studies in Christian communications. Usually books by communicators on communications do not communicate well. But Dr. Kelley is an exception. His work is crisp, compelling, communicative.

The author describes how the communication of faith may be used to transform culture. The work is written from the perspective of one who feels that the Christian must join in the rough-and-tumble of political action even if he finds himself working with others who do not share his faith.

Dr. Kelley has come up with a provocative book on the relationship of Christianity to culture, communication, communion and politics. His suggestions can bring the church into creative dialogue with public affairs officials. This book represents a skillful blending of knowledge of historic political philosophies with current realities.

—JAMES W. CARTY JR.

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Notices of the publication and receipt of books are printed as soon as possible.

Clippings of book reviews which we print are mailed at the end of the month in which they appear.

THE CHINESE GINGER JARS. By Myra Scovel.
Harper and Brothers, 189 pages. \$3.75.

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