



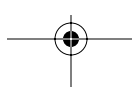
## Preface



If a man goes overseas for any length of time we would expect him to learn the language of the country to which he is going. More than this is needed, however, if he is really to communicate with the people among whom he is living. He must learn another language—that of the thought-forms of the people to whom he speaks. Only so will he have real communication with them and to them. So it is with the Christian church. Its responsibility is not only to hold to the basic, scriptural principles of the Christian faith, but to communicate these unchanging truths “into” the generation in which it is living.



Every generation of Christians has this problem of learning how to speak meaningfully to its own age. It





cannot be solved without an understanding of the changing existential situation which it faces. If we are to communicate the Christian faith effectively, therefore, we must know and understand the thought-forms of our own generation. These will differ slightly from place to place, and more so from nation to nation. Nevertheless there are characteristics of an age such as ours which are the same wherever we happen to be. It is these that I am especially considering in this book. And the object of this is far from being merely to satisfy intellectual curiosity. As we go along it will become clear how far-reaching are the practical consequences of a proper understanding of these movements of thought.



Some may be surprised that in analyzing the trends in modern thought I should begin with Aquinas and work my way forward from there. But I am convinced that our study must be concerned at one and the same time with both history and philosophy. If we are to understand present-day trends in thought we must see how the situation has come about historically and also look in some detail at the development of philosophic thought-forms. Only when this has been done are we ready to go on to the practical aspects of how to communicate unchanging truth in a changing world.

