

Dear Norman;

I am sorry you were not at the convention of the Yeshiva Alumni. Had you been there, you would not have sent this article to me, and both, you and I, would have been happier.

To begin with, I cannot accept ~~the~~ Halachah. The interpretation of the Talmudic source in Succah is, to say the least, loose. The jump, "as in the Temple so in the synagogue," is even more so. The sanctity of the Temple is completely different from that of the synagogue; and so are the practical circumstances and considerations

The phrase "but whatever the source of the Halachah", indicates ~~indicates~~ an appreciation, conscious or subconscious, of the difficulty and weakness of the <sup>original</sup> exposition. What follows as support of the approach, is not any more convincing. That we do not find segregation in the synagogue historically, does not create Halacha.

Soloveitchik's letter is an adroitly phrased comment. He does not mention Halachah. He stresses the principle of 'anti-Christianization! ' Praying without a hat, to which he compares the problem, is not a basic Halachah. Were it not a serious problem, I would have been amused by his comparison with the organ. Note that he does not speak of playing the organ on the Sabbath or a holiday. He only speaks of "installing an organ".

All those impressive names that uphold the principle of segregation deserve and have my full respect. But we must remember that they also <sup>for</sup> such things as a Bimah <sup>100%</sup> in the center of the synagogue, and other similar matters on the basis of Halachah.....The tragedy of orthodoxy has been and is, that we raise details to principles, and forget to fight for real principles. We make "causes celebres" which we are bound to lose, fight for them in a manner to make loss sure and swift. This encourages the masses to line up in opposition. People do not like a sure loser.



What Conservative Judaism thinks of the matter, is, of course, irrelevant. The Conservative Movement is an administrative conglomerate without guiding principle. A movement that can contain men who are, outwardly at least, as observant as orthodox rabbis ought to be, and others who desecrate the Sabbath publicly, cannot have normative ideology. I would not trouble them in a question of principle. Ad hominem your arguments may serve.

Let me say that I hold no brief for mixed pews. I have given up my measure of attractive offers in mixed pew synagogues in my days. Halachah or no Halachah, there is sufficient tradition to make ~~seg-~~ desegregation unpalatable. It can be opposed on the basis of morality, and, as you call it, Taamay Hamitzvot. I object to the making of it a "cause celebre", to the issuance of proclamations and prohibitions.

I object especially to the classification of Synagogue and ~~synagogue~~ synagogue, Rabbi and rabbi, etc., which the "cause celebre" has created. This will drive more synagogues and rabbis (and they are valuable even if decapitalized) away, than we can afford to lose. What is more, no Synagogue that accepts money from those who desecrate the Sabbath, elects them to office, glorifies their Jewishness, as these Synagogues do, can morally place itself on a pedestal of clouds by holding on to a moot problem. Nor can Rabbis and Roshay Yeshivah claim exemption.

I want to add what may be directly irrelevant but is generally pertinent. While those who need a "cause celebre" around which to be famous, or to divert attention from other matters, could not possibly be other than orthodox rabbis, those who have decided, after careful consideration, to accept pulpits in mixed pew synagogues, could very easily, with greater gain and comfort, have been reform rabbis.



That they are not, speaks very highly for their devotion to tradition.

.I, for one, ask respect for them.

I. ask respect for their daily, steady, non-political, constructive effort.

I ask respect for them, because they demean rhemselves with all kinds of little things and litale people, which are below the dignity of the "great."

I ask respect for their devotion to a cause which so many well advertised leaders on special pedestals do so much to harm, ~~wh~~ while they, without the noise of publicity, try to build.

And, I demand greater consideration than that shown by t the Rosh Yeshivah described in your addendum. No decent men would advise his students to accept a position and then come out against them. The least he could do is keep his peace; if he could find ~~pe~~ peace. *O, where are the ethics of our fathers?*

Such action is in keeping with the present picture, a painful and disheartening picture of incoherent attitudes and irresponsible leadership; but *I would like to* hope the younger men, who know the situation, will not let themselves become tools in the hands of disruptive forces.

*For*

*W*