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# The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

J. GRESHAM MACHEN • EDITOR 1936-1937

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## **Guardian News Commentator**



*God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.*

—Westminster Confession of Faith



**January 10, 1948**

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## Your FAMILY ALTAR

### Daily Bible Readings

#### Week of January 12 (continued)

Friday ..... *Ephesians 4:1-16*  
 Saturday ..... *Ephesians 5:1-13*  
 Sunday ..... *Ephesians 5:14-33*

#### Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. What is the result of abiding in Christ? Is this result possible in any other way?
2. Why does the world hate believers in Jesus Christ?
3. What figures does the Bible use to illustrate Christians' union with Christ?
4. Is there any way of knowing whether or not God dwells within us?

### Union with Christ

The world's history has been the record of the lives of great men and women. Now and then a Plato or a Lincoln appears on the world's stage and leaves an indelible impression of greatness in the minds of later generations. Among heathen peoples and among those blessed with God's revelation there have arisen brilliant personalities. The world cannot pass them by with indifference. Yet there has been only one person who has ever lived among men who demands more than plaudits. Jesus of Nazareth demands that men commit themselves to Him in personal trust and devotion.

But do not simply pay tribute to His teaching and example of sacrificial love. Do not merely extol His lowliness of mind. Do not applaud His contribution to "religion." That is not enough. That is "cold treatment" of Him. He who looks at the Christ from afar, even with great admiration for Him, fails to appreciate Christ's mission and importance to men. The Savior places Himself before men as that One to whom they must be related in mystical union before they can see God.

What is the necessity for this union? The answer comes from Jesus' lips. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" (John 15:4). Fruit-bearing, life which glorifies God, exists only where an individual is related to Christ by faith.

Turn then, oh world, from your hero worship, to Him whose person and work are effective unto spiritual life. For without Him ye can do nothing.

#### Week of January 19

Monday ..... *I Kings 3:1-14*  
 Tuesday ..... *I Kings 3:15-28*  
 Wednesday ..... *Isaiah 11:1-10*  
 Thursday ..... *Isaiah 11:11-16; 12*  
 Friday ..... *I Corinthians 2*  
 Saturday ..... *Hebrews 5*  
 Sunday ..... *Proverbs 3:13-26*

#### Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. What does Solomon ask of God when the Lord appears to him? What are his reasons for asking this?
2. Summarize the story which illustrates Solomon's wisdom.
3. About which person is Isaiah writing in the 11th chapter? How does this person judge?
4. To whom does strong meat belong? How does the writer of Proverbs describe wisdom?

### Spiritual Discernment

As all other Christian graces are gifts of God so is the gift of spiritual discernment. It is a gift for which we should daily pray, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law" (Psalm 119:18). "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:11). Daily searching of the Scriptures together with prayer for illumination strengthens spiritual understanding.

As the apprentice will make mis-

takes in his trade because of his inexperience, so will the young Christian be turned about with every wind of doctrine unless his feet are grounded firmly in the Word of God. How effectively Satan uses Scripture texts isolated from their contexts and hidden from the view of the rest of the Bible to turn aside the unlearned! But no one needs to be so unstable in his spiritual understanding. Only laziness and indifference to the means of grace will subject one to these influences of our Adversary.

Were we to study systematically God's Word using as our guide the doctrinal standards of the church, and praying for the Spirit's help, our effectiveness as witnesses would be measurably increased. Surely Jesus' promise that He would lead His church into truth has been fulfilled down through the centuries that have followed His ascension. Great men of God have labored illumined by His Spirit. Their labors have produced a great body of literature that reveals God's gift to them of spiritual discernment. We must never let that be lost. Cherish their labors in your search for insight into the meaning of the Bible.

It is the humble disciple that gains understanding of the Word and works of God. Simplicity of faith does not mean shallowness of thought on the Bible. It alone guarantees discrimination that produces a firm hope.

#### Week of January 26

Monday ..... *Matthew 11:1-15*  
 Tuesday ..... *Matthew 11:16-30*  
 Wednesday ..... *John 13:1-17*  
 Thursday ..... *I Peter 5*  
 Friday ..... *II Thessalonians 3*  
 Saturday ..... *Titus 2*

#### Some Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray for ministers and elders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches in their task of instructing Christian youth.
2. Pray for Westminster Seminary students starting the second semester this month.

—LEROY B. OLIVER

## The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

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## Taking Inventory

IT IS always timely for churches and individuals to take inventory of their spiritual state, perhaps especially so as a new year begins. The general monotony of our daily lives, the apparent sameness of our experiences, may dull our sensitivity to the actual changes in our existence. But the dawning of a new year arrests our attention upon the rush of time and the inevitable change, for good or ill, in our fortunes. Then, if ever, a reflective mood captures us.

The specific question raised here concerns the future of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Its outlook has not lacked for pessimistic appraisals. Its beginnings have been exceedingly small, its outward progress has appeared to be slow, and its impact upon the world and Christendom in general has seemed feeble. Even persons once included in its membership have challenged its right to existence. It has been characterized as schismatic and sectarian. It is not surprising that from time to time even ministers within its bounds should fall under the spell of such evaluations.

We do not share this basic pessimism. Many considerations indeed compel humility. None permits complacency. Our sins and shortcomings have been grievous. And there remains much ground to be possessed. Nevertheless the blessing of Almighty God upon it may and ought to be contemplated with profound gratitude. And we may look with confidence to the future in the assurance that, under the divine rule, the Church will fully justify its existence and contribute

significantly to the advance of the cause of the Christian faith.

There has been one root conviction at the basis of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. That is the conviction that, at all costs, the authority of Jesus Christ as Head and King of His Church must be maintained. Unwillingness to yield to ecclesiastical mandates contrary to the Word of Christ was the mainspring of its origin. Its short career has been marked by zeal to acknowledge that authority when considerations of tradition, convention and policy have subtly commended another course.

That root conviction concerning the authority of the King must remain the basic source of hope for the future, rather than such evidences of historic progress as may be assembled. Without that conviction a church ceases to be a true church. But a church established upon that foundation, and zealous for the honor of its Lord, is assured of the divine presence and blessing until the end of the age.

### Evidence of Progress

Nevertheless we are happy that some solid progress may be recorded. Exceptional evangelistic fervor has been a mark of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and a truly remarkable work of evangelism and the building of churches has been carried on. Fired by the divinely-given marching orders, and moved by the urgent needs of our day, the denomination has shown many evidences of working as a vigorous missionary society. The program of foreign missions has not been permitted to become a mere afterthought or a responsibility to be undertaken only when the home base has been firmly established. Originating in the midst of a great controversy concerning the conduct of foreign missions, the Church has kept vividly before it the goal of the vigorous prosecution of truly Biblical missions. In spite of the great financial demands for other aspects of its work, that vision has not become dim. The work in China, Korea, Japan and Eritrea has gone forward as rapidly as world-conditions and the Church's resources have permitted.

Remarkable progress in the sphere of Christian education may also be noted. Increasingly it has been realized that the surest way of advancing true evangelism is by enriching the life of the church through a comprehensive program of Christian training. The in-

timate relation between the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination and Westminster Theological Seminary has provided one proof of the high educational ideals of the Church. There has been zeal not to allow considerations of numerical expansion to lower the educational standards of its ministry. The maintenance of Westminster, though not officially under the Church, has been largely the result of the sacrifices of Orthodox Presbyterians who have believed that thorough grounding of candidates for the ministry provides one of the most effective ways of advancing the witness to the truth.

But Christian education has been recognized more and more widely as the goal for all. Without effective instruction of the youth it is being acknowledged, there is no good hope for sound growth in the future. And the evil consequences of the supposedly neutral education of the public schools have been increasingly seen. When Dr. Machen, in his last editorial in the *GUARDIAN*, asked, "Shall We Have Christian Schools?," he seemed to be pleading rather unrealistically for a system of instruction that would have to be postponed for years and years. Yet his question has been answered in the affirmative, not merely in the laying of plans, but also in the actual establishment of a number of Christian schools.

### Controversy

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has, it is true, had its fair share of controversy. Controversy lays bare sins and weaknesses which must be deplored and overcome. But controversy is also a necessary feature of the life of the Church of Christ as it wages battle for

### IN THIS ISSUE

The Rev. Edward Wybenga is pastor of the Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Hamill, S. D.

Miss Charlotte Milling is the teacher in the Christian School which opened this past fall in Kirkwood, Pa.

The Rev. Johannes G. Vos is pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Church at Clay Center, Kansas.

The Rev. Edward J. Young is professor of Old Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary.

the truth. Only a dead or moribund church will be without controversy in these days of unbelief and ungodliness, of doctrinal indifference and lukewarmness and compromise in Christian living. Hence even the disputes within the Church have not been without elements of encouragement.

While we deplore controversy conducted in bitterness and partisanship, and while we cannot claim that these evils have been avoided always in our own case, we have yet oftentimes been encouraged to believe that concern for the maintenance of the truth has been so paramount in the denomination as a whole that basic differences of viewpoint would gradually be overcome. It was thus that we evaluated editorially the last General Assembly. Though impatience was expressed on the part of some that certain practical measures were not undertaken, yet the dominant tone of the Assembly appeared to be that the truth should not be discounted for the sake of apparent outward progress. The Assembly spent many hours in evaluating doctrinal questions which were in dispute, and took measures whereby, with the utmost patience and care, opportunity would be provided for the resolution of the divergences.

Viewing the character and progress of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church as we do, we cannot disguise our disappointment at the circulation within the Church of a document entitled "A Testimony," prepared by eight ministers and seven elders. This document, which is printed in full in our news columns in this issue, presents four objectives. We have no basic disagreement with any one of these objectives. In fact we endorse them wholeheartedly, in so far as they call for urgent concern with the proclamation of the Reformed Faith, intensification of missionary endeavors, stress upon the need for consistent Christian living, and the exercise of Christian fellowship and cooperation wherever possible.

Unfortunately however these objectives are set in a context of appraisals of the Church, and of the positions of persons within the Church, which must be vigorously rejected. In general, the "Testimony" is characterized by a pessimistic and impatient evaluation of the state of the Church which we consider unwarranted. Moreover it contains various indictments which are unsubstantiated and according to our convictions contrary to fact.

### Sectarianism?

We do not propose to comment here on all aspects of this document. But we wish to state, in particular, that we regard the charge of "sectarianism" as most distressing and unfortunate. It involves serious charges against the Church and brethren within it. It implies that they are narrow and bigoted in their pursuit of the truth.

The charge that extra-constitutional standards have been imposed goes indeed beyond the opprobrium of sectarianism. To add to the standards is to be guilty of oppression and inquisition. It is both untimely and unfair to hurl such charges against the Church, especially in view of the evidences of high resolve to take as much time as is necessary to determine exactly what the Scriptures and the subordinate standards teach concerning the points at issue.

As a matter of fact, it has not been an effort towards narrowing the witness of the Church that has been the mainspring of the present controversy, but rather a concern lest certain doctrinal viewpoints should prevail which lose sight of the full, glorious breadth of the Christianity of the Bible. And we trust that the presbyteries and committees will never come to the point where they display less zeal than is now present to assure themselves of the qualifications of candidates for the ministry and missionary service.

### Cooperation

Nor do we greet with favor the allegations concerning the Church's supposed lack of appreciation for other Christians. We have never heard of any one who has maintained that "Arminian fundamentalism is a subtle foe of Christianity quite as dangerous as Modernism," or whose views even distantly approximated that position.

From the beginning, in truth, we have sought to foster *Presbyterianism*, the Presbyterianism, as we believe, of the Bible and of the historic creeds, not merely what might happen currently to go under the name of Presbyterianism. The differences between Presbyterianism and Arminian fundamentalism we have never been able to regard as trifling. And commitment to Presbyterianism imposes definite limitations upon the possibilities of fellowship and cooperation. We have not been able to go along with the throngs who capitalize on the unbelief and

doctrinal indifference of our day to deprecate denominationalism and to join in all kinds of union movements. Moreover we have been working on the principle that any type of cooperation which compromises our Presbyterianism forfeits our right to exist as a distinctly Presbyterian Church. The record is clear, however, that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has been conscientiously seeking to determine its responsibility in this sphere, and to lay bare its opportunity to work for the unity of the body of Christ.

We wish that the Church might indeed share the breadth of Dr. Machen's fellowship with other Christians, which expressed itself in warm appreciation of all who zealously contended for the truth and in informal associations with other evangelicals. But Dr. Machen resolutely avoided the pitfalls of promoting positive Christian action on the basis of brief evangelical creeds. His appreciation of militantly evangelical Lutherans and Arminians was not due to a minimizing of the differences between other evangelical positions and his own Presbyterianism. It was rather due to the fact that they shared with him, at least in a measure, his profound conviction that the very foundation of Christianity was to be found in a passion for the proclamation and defence of the truth of God regardless of consequences.

It was that conviction which gave birth to The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. That conviction still lives on. It needs to be nourished and cultivated. Then a prosperous future is assured.

N. B. S.

### Bruce Hunt on "Vacation"

A NOTE from the Rev. Bruce Hunt, Orthodox Presbyterian missionary in Korea, includes the following "I'm supposed to be on vacation, but I have to get exam papers in English, Church History, World History, Exodus, Minor Prophets, and Homiletics for 143 students corrected before the end of this month, when I start on a series of eight Bible Conferences of six days apiece, which will carry me up to the opening of Seminary again in March. We're having a long vacation due to the heating problem. We have no heat in the buildings . . ." Some vacation!

# Let Us Hold Fast Our Protestant Heritage

By EDWARD WYBENGA

ON OCTOBER 31, 1517, some four hundred and thirty years ago, Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses on the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg in Germany. In this document Luther took issue with the church's practice of selling indulgences—of offering release from the penalties of sin through the payment of various sums of money. The nefarious practice was fast filling the coffers of the church treasury. But Luther denounced it as corrupt. In its place he advocated the teaching of the Bible, that the removal of sin and its penalties comes only by the grace of God, and follows upon faith and true repentance.

Luther invited anyone who wished to dispute his contentions, to appear with him before a public meeting and there to debate the issues. Not one person took up the challenge!

Meanwhile the views set forth in the theses were published abroad. The minds of many were aroused. People for the first time became aware of the unbiblical practices of the Catholic Church. Thus began the struggle for freedom from the bondage of an ecclesiastical hierarchy, and from a religious dictatorship which bound men's consciences with an iron chain.

Today Protestantism is fast losing its hard-bought liberties. Why? Because Protestants have been falling asleep. They have become indifferent to the very truths which made Protestantism strong in the sixteenth century. Meanwhile Rome has worked day and night to regain lost ground, and to recover from the almost deadly wound inflicted upon her by the great Reformation.

Let us remember and rethink our protestant heritage. Let us awake out of our lethargy. Let us defend and preserve our precious liberties. There is yet time to do this, but not much time. Think not lightly of the prospect of a return to tyranny and slavery, such as arrogant men would inflict upon us.

What are some of the privileges and blessings that constitute our protestant

heritage? First of all there is the blessing of the *open Bible*. In John 8:32 we read, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Truth liberates. Error enslaves. Christ is the truth, even as He said: "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." The Bible is true. It is the very Word of God. But we cannot know the truth if

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**T**HE Protestant Reformation was neither unimportant, nor unfortunate. It reasserted in the church, truths of vital significance for Christian living. In this article by the pastor of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Hamill, S. D., we are reminded of some of these truths, and urged to keep them fresh in our thinking. Mr. Wybenga is no anti-Catholic propagandist, but he does call for a recognition of Scriptural truth, in a day when indifference to truth is plaguing our Protestant churches.

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the Bible is kept from us. A closed Bible means tyranny and sin and slavery. This is true, whether the Bible is kept from us by an ecclesiastical authority, or by our own sinful indifference to it. As long as the Bible remains open, is read and believed and practiced—as long as the Bible controls the church and the state, we need not fear the loss of our liberties. But when control over church or state is exercised without regard to the Word of God, then you have both tyranny and slavery. Then our bodies and souls, our present and our future, are at the mercy of sinful, erring, unscrupulous, bigoted, arrogant men.

It was Luther who, under God, gave back to the world the open Bible. Freedom of access to the truth of God, the Bible, is a most basic part of our protestant heritage. Rome had kept that Bible chained, but Luther broke the chain. Rome had kept her devotees in ignorance and fear, but the truth of

God's Word brought light and liberty. Protestants believe in the open Bible. When protestant missionaries enter a country, one of the first things they do is to translate the Bible into the language of the people. This is about the last thing that Rome would think of doing. The Reformation put the Bible back into the hands of the people.

A second element in our protestant heritage is the great doctrine of *Justification by Faith only*. In Romans 5 verse 1 we read, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Justification is a legal term. The sinner stands condemned before God because he has transgressed God's holy law. He is guilty. He deserves punishment. But now faith enters. He places his trust in Jesus Christ as Savior. He is declared righteous before the God he once offended. What has happened? Another has borne the penalty and thus removed the guilt from him. That other is Christ, the sinner's substitute, who died in the sinner's place. By faith united to Christ, the guilty person is now accounted righteous; his guilt is not reckoned to him but to Christ; and he is set free. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit. 3:5-7).

"Not what my hands have done  
Can save my guilty soul;  
Not what my toiling flesh has borne  
Can make my spirit whole.  
Not what I feel or do can give me  
peace with God;  
Not all my prayers and sighs and tears  
Can bear my awful load."

"The just shall live by faith"—that is the key that unlocks all the Scriptures. (Heb. 10:38).

Righteousness by faith alone is the

great truth that again came into its own at the time of the Reformation. As a monk Luther tried to bridge the gulf between his sinful self and a righteous God. He tried to satisfy God and gain peace of conscience by acts of penance and self-torture and humiliation, until at last his superiors in the monastery forbade him to go any further lest he lose his life. But Luther felt he must have peace with God, though he die in the attempt. Nevertheless, all was in vain. Luther found not the rest of soul for which he craved. Finally, while on a pilgrimage to Rome, he started climbing the so-called "holy staircase," on his knees, an act supposedly highly meritorious in gaining favor with God,—when suddenly the great Bible truth, "the just shall live by faith," struck him with decisive force. He saw the utter futility of all this work-righteousness in the sight of God. He stood upright; walked down the stairs he had attempted to scale on his knees; and never engaged in such folly again.

Justification by faith—salvation by grace only—this great truth will set men free from all vain attempts to gain favor with God through mere self-righteousness or acts of penance.

A third blessing that has come down to us through the protestant Reformation is the *Right of Private Judgment* as concerns the Scriptures. The decision of the church is not decisive. The Pope's word is not final. God's Word is decisive and final. And it is the duty and privilege of every human soul to turn to the Bible, to read it and study it, and to decide for himself what God has said, what God has commanded him to believe and do.

Luther claimed this right in his immortal answer before the Diet of Worms. Standing in the presence of Emperor Charles V, an avowed Roman Catholic; standing before church and civil dignitaries at a time when the cruel inquisition was in action, when it was considered all for the glory of the Virgin Mary and the Catholic religion to persecute dissenters—then and there the valiant Luther closed his memorable address with the words, "I can and will retract nothing, for it is neither safe nor expedient to act against conscience. Here I stand, I can do no otherwise; God help me. Amen."

We certainly need a return of such fire, such determination, such faith, in our easy-going, spineless, lackadaisical religious age.

A fourth element in our protestant heritage is the belief in the *Priesthood of All Believers*. All believers are priests by virtue of their union with Christ. The apostle Peter calls them, "a royal priesthood." Thank God we have free access to Him in prayer directly through Christ. We need not come through any earthly priest; we need no saint to pave the way for us. We may confess our sins directly to God, and receive forgiveness directly from Him without any human mediary. What a deliverance from soul-bondage to mere mortal, sinful men do we have here! Think of the degradation involved in exposing the secrets of your heart in the confessional. Think of subjecting the weal or woe of your soul to the verdict of erring, sinful men. From all this our Protestant heritage has freed us.

A fifth blessing that has come to the church as a fruit of the Reformation is an *Unmutilated Sacrament*. Concerning the institution of the Lord's Supper we read in Matthew 26:27-28, "And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Jesus said to His disciples, "Drink ye all of it." Rome says; "No, only the priests shall drink of it." The Church of Rome withholds the cup from the laity in direct violation of the command of Christ. This is a high-handed usurpation of authority intended to exalt the priests to a distinct caste in the church.

The Church of Rome has mutilated the holy Sacrament arbitrarily and in defiance of the express command of Christ. But let us thank God that through the Reformation we have the complete sacrament again restored to us as intended by Christ Himself.

Let us mention a sixth blessing that has come to us as a part of our Protestant heritage. It is the blessing of civil and religious liberty in general. In Luther's day the States of Europe were subject to the Emperor, who in turn was subject to the Pope. But Luther gave to the nations the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and with that sword the chain of tyranny was severed, and the people set free.

The blessings of civil liberty and freedom of conscience which we enjoy in this nation, and which are guaranteed to us by our constitution, are directly or indirectly the fruit of the

protestant Reformation. Our Constitution is a protestant constitution. There would be no religious liberty pledged in the Constitution if it were the product of Rome. Rome holds that there is only one true church—the Roman Catholic Church, and only one true faith,—the Roman Catholic faith. All others are heretical, are accursed, and have no right to existence.

In conclusion let us rethink our protestant heritage. Protestants, Wake Up! This nation was founded by Protestants. Shall we despise our precious heritage? Shall we throw away our dearly bought liberties? Shall we become again enslaved to an all-powerful state and an all-powerful church?

Shall we compromise the truth, shall we yield our liberties for the sake of appeasement? Rome makes no concessions. Rome boasts herself to be the only church. Rome is determined to win America. Shall we let it happen? If it happens, our liberties will be gone. Rome has not changed. She is, in principle, as dictatorial as in Luther's day. She claims the right to control man's body and soul, the temporal and the spiritual, the state and the church, the present and the future. She extends her authority even beyond the grave into the realm of the hereafter. There is no government on earth that claims such absolute power as that of the Church of Rome.

If I have seemed somewhat impassioned in this message, it is not because of any personal animosity; it is rather because I love truth and freedom. I firmly believe that unless we Protestants value our heritage and safeguard it, we shall lose it. Nothing worthwhile is maintained of itself.

Let us take our stand anew upon the solid rock of the Word of God.

## Italian Protestants Hindered

ITALIAN Protestant denominations have been informed by the state-owned Italian radio network that the time of their regular Sunday morning broadcast will be changed early in January. Authoritative Protestant spokesmen indicate that they consider the constant shifting of the hour of protestant broadcasts to a constantly "worse" time as a definite form of "obstructionism" on the part of the Italian government.

## Course of Study for Christian Schools

By MISS CHARLOTTE MILLING

COURSE OF STUDY FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS, prepared by the Educational Committee of the National Union of Christian Schools; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Grand Rapids; 1947; \$5.00.

THE volume entitled "Course of Study for Christian Schools" has been some years in preparation and has made its appearance at a most opportune time. God has been and is blessing the work to which Christian schools are committed. Interest in the movement is rapidly gaining momentum, the number of schools is growing and enrollment in the established schools is increasing. In many of these schools the teacher, or teachers, have had the responsibility of preparing the course of study. With the publication of this book there is now available a work which will be of much assistance in aiding Christian teachers to formulate the objectives of Christian education in general and the various subject matter fields in particular. Basic to an understanding of the principles of Christian education is the treatment accorded the philosophy of Christian education in this volume, to which the first section of the book is devoted.

There are those who, upon reading or hearing of a "Christian School," believe that such an institution teaches—in addition to the "Three R's"—Bible study, memory verses, and hymns. They think it is a good thing that school and Sunday school are combined and that children are exposed to things educational and spiritual; but such is not the definition of a Christian school. True, Bible study, memory work, and hymns are taught, as are the subjects which comprise a school's curriculum. But there is not a distinct or a departmentalized division wherein things pertaining to spiritual matters are labeled "Religion" and relegated to their isolated pigeon-hole, with matters designated "Education" receiving a like treatment. Rather, there is brought to the child an integrated picture. "Christian education presents a God-centered pattern. It is an unconditional and wholehearted commitment to the proposition that all

things are of God, through God, and unto God. . . . It constitutes the great unifying force for which many educators have been seeking in vain because they sought it where it could not be found."

An understanding of the pupil is basic to one's philosophy of education. The "modern" educator attempts to fan the spark of divinity within the pupil. Man, he informs us, has lifted himself by his own bootstraps, freeing himself from the primeval slime, and is ascending constantly to higher planes. Diametrically opposed to such a view is that of the Christian educator. Man, created perfect, in the image of God, fell from that estate. He is degenerate, totally depraved, unable to accomplish any good thing in the sight of God. Sin "has enfeebled the pupil's intellectuality. It has debased his emotions. It has perverted his volitions. . . . He is sadly disintegrated." The cause of this disintegration, sin, must then be removed if the pupil is to read God's revelation aright and so be truly educated. Thus it becomes the privilege of the Christian teacher to confront his pupils with their sins, with God's displeasure thereat, and to present to them the way of salvation, trusting that the Holy Spirit will accomplish His work in their hearts.

A thorough and well-planned program of Bible study initiates the second portion of the book. There follow then courses of study in the subject fields from kindergarten through the elementary school. These are presented in outline form, giving information in well-chosen terminology and avoiding much of the verbosity which is typical of many courses of study. A statement of the philosophy and objectives of each subject area precedes discussion of methods, materials, ways of evaluation and suggested textbooks. Pedagogically and psychologically, the material presented is sound and of great merit. The techniques advocated are effective. The standards of achievement set are ones which would encourage the pupil to perform his tasks to the best of his ability, for "God's honor demands that His image be developed in each individual to the max-

imum of God-determined limits. On the other hand, no more may be expected of a child than is made possible by his God-given talents and abilities." Teachers must make allowances for individual differences and attempt to meet those needs through wise planning. Without pretending to be exhaustive, the suggestions given are numerous, concise, and practical. The teacher may avail himself of further references listed in the bibliography for each subject field and is also encouraged to make use of his own initiative and resourcefulness in applying various procedures to the suggested principles.

In our opinion the book is marred all too frequently by typographical errors.

This volume should be in the hands of every Christian school teacher. To him it shall prove valuable as a reference guide, enabling him to find things quickly because of its efficient set-up of information. It will be of aid because of its many practical suggestions. Groups interested in forming a Christian school will profit by it, for it will give them suggestions and answers to questions they will encounter. It is a work which has been well done and one which has met a definite need in the field of Christian education. May God indeed bless it to "the most effective attainment of the ultimate goal of Christian education . . . the glory of His name."

### Gordon College Secures Estate

GORDON College of Theology and Missions, located in Boston, has acquired the large Princemere Estate on the North Shore. The property consists of 215 parcels of land acquired by Mr. and Mrs. Frederick H. Prince over a period of 50 years. There are more than 1000 acres with driveways, fields and ponds, including a part of Chebacco Lake.

The estate will become the campus and future home of Gordon College. The Chapel for the College is now under construction near the main entrance in Wenham. Other buildings for the college will be erected on other suitable locations. The College will move to the estate as the buildings become available.

## A Story with a Familiar Sound

### *Orthodox Presbyterianism in Ireland Recalls Its Organizational Beginnings*

AT A meeting in Belfast on Saturday, October 15, 1927, a company of people who were or had been office bearers or members of the Irish Presbyterian Church, decided to form a new denomination, the Irish Evangelical Church. In taking this step were they guilty of schism? To answer this question we must look at the circumstances.

Those who took the lead in establishing this Church were quite aware of the importance of maintaining the unity, even the outward unity, of the professing church. But they had reached the point where they felt that to remain where they were was to be under an alien yoke—a thing clearly forbidden in the Word of God.

The whole story of the growth of Modernism from small beginnings to a position of control in the Irish Presbyterian Church, and of the battle against it, cannot be told in a short article like this. We choose a few salient issues near the close of the campaign.

#### **The Formula of Subscription**

A memorial was prepared for presentation to the General Assembly in 1925 by 23 students for the ministry—almost the whole student body—asking for "relief with respect to the formula of subscription." The Rev. James Hunter, the leader of our secession, who was a member of the College Committee, stated that "a letter signed by students of the Assembly's College was read before the College Committee, protesting against some of the questions put at ordination. They objected to the term 'Word of God' being applied to the Bible, and they wished to accept the Confession and Catechisms only in a general way. A deputation was appointed to confer with them, and one of the deputation encouraged them in their attitude, and held out a hope for a change in the law." The memorial was withdrawn by the students as an assurance was given them by church leaders that an Assembly Committee would be appointed to consider the changes and report on them. At the 1925 Assembly such a committee was appointed; in

spite of the opposition by Mr. Hunter it was carried by 157 to 114. Mr. Hunter was a member of this Committee, and many were the battles he fought against the revolutionary changes suggested. The Principal of the College, who was the Convener of the Committee, assumed the same attitude to the Word of God as the students, and the majority of the Committee stood with him; he repeated the cry, "There is no external infallibility."

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Readers of *The Presbyterian Guardian* and those familiar with the beginnings of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church will find in this story from Ireland an account that has a familiar ring. It is taken from the December issue of *The Irish Evangelical*, a magazine devoted to the interests of the Irish Evangelical Church, as orthodox Presbyterians in that country chose to call themselves after the secession of 1927. The editor of the paper is the Rev. W. J. Grier, a student of "old Princeton" Theological Seminary. We use it by kind permission.

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Largely on account of the propaganda of Mr. Hunter, the proposed changes in the questions and formula were not carried in the Assembly of 1926, but the Formula Committee was continued in existence. To disarm opposition a vague statement was adopted at the Assembly of 1928. One of the two men who brought forward this statement was a signatory of a leaflet widely circulated before the Assembly of 1927 entitled "Truth at a Glance," a leaflet which though professing to be truth, yet gravely misrepresented the charges brought by Mr. Hunter against Professor Davey of Assembly's College.

Mr. Hunter had time and again from public platforms and in committees challenged the modernist leaders of the Church to say what doctrines they regarded as fundamental. This vague statement of the 1928 Assembly was their only reply: "The Church is fully agreed on the funda-

mental doctrines of the faith as set forth in the Westminster Confession, and regards the present formula of subscription as a declaration of adherence to the said doctrines." They left the said doctrines unsaid. And as to the Church being fully agreed on fundamental doctrines, everyone knew there were the widest divergences within her bounds. The Modernists, whether students or ministers, evidently regarded the statement as giving them sufficient latitude. Attention is drawn to it in the New Code sanctioned by the Assembly of 1947. Apparently the Modernists feel entitled to read their fundamentals into the Confession.

#### **The Heresy Trial**

In the meantime, other important events had transpired. In 1926 Mr. Hunter issued a series of S.O.S.'s to Irish Presbyterians, attacking the teaching given at Assembly's College, and by three of its professors in particular. Much printer's ink had been used in the controversy of Cooke's day. Mr. Hunter followed in the steps of Dr. Henry Cooke and Dr. John Paul. But he was blamed in the Belfast Presbytery and elsewhere for unconstitutional procedure—the Modernists feared lest the eyes of the people be opened. Mr. Hunter witnessed both inside and outside the courts of the Church. Now he brought charges against Professor J. E. Davey. By this time some who at the first professed willingness to act with him forsook the cause and even joined the opposite ranks, but he pressed the battle to the gates.

What was involved in these charges? If Professor Davey was right, we have:

#### **(1) No Holy, Infallible Book of God**

Speaking before the Belfast Presbytery, Professor Davey repudiated any "doctrine of external infallibility and inerrancy" of the Scriptures. He said, "the way of faith must be maintained, and external infallibilities are a denial of that way of faith." He referred to mistakes in the Bible and said, "Without hesitation I should say that there are literally hundreds of similar discrepancies or direct contradictions in Old and New Testaments." The Scriptures on Professor Davey's view are just a hodgepodge.

#### **(2) No Divine, Infallible Saviour**

"There is no omnipotent or omniscient and independent Christ in John any more than in the other gospels"—so Professor Davey told the Presbytery.

He declared, "an omniscient and omnipotent Christ makes the story meaningless." Christ's opinions as to the stars, evil spirits and Old Testament critical questions are not final for us, said Professor Davey.

### (3) No Holy, Atoning Sacrifice

Speaking of Christ on the cross, Professor Davey said, "The thought came to Him in the minutes of felt desolation that He had failed, that He had made the great mistake, when it was now too late to go back, that He had done the very thing which He had refused in His earlier temptations—He had tempted the Lord His God—and that now God had abandoned Him and all was gone . . . if His thoughts and feelings were true, it was God He had let down, if I may use the phrase—the Anointed had failed the Most High." To suppose that such thoughts and feelings were in Christ's mind is utter irreverence. On this supposition He could not have been the Eternal Son of God, the Holy One, at all.

In his book, "The Changing Vesture of the Faith," which was put in as evidence before the Presbytery, Professor Davey declares the Protestant doctrine of imputation to be as irrational as the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. He taught his class that sin cannot be transferred.

If there is no substitution, no bearing on Christ's part of the punishment due to us, we are without hope.

Yet the Belfast Presbytery approved of Professor Davey's teaching by large majorities on each of the five charges. Mr. Hunter appealed to the General Assembly, but it likewise voted in favor of modernist unbelief by 707 votes to 82. Now any minister of the Church could preach these doctrines and claim that they had the sanction of the highest court of the Church. To deal with Mr. Hunter and any others who would in future raise the voice of protest, the 1927 Assembly appointed a Commission with full Assembly powers. Opposers could be suspended and "unfrocked," and from such decisions they would have no right of appeal to any court on earth. What were they now to do? They could not remain under an alien yoke with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14). They therefore seceded. In doing so they were no schismatics. They were but carrying on the traditions of their godly forefathers, and they were rendering obedience to the apostolic in-

junction: "mark them which are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them" (Rom. 16:17, RV). They did not act hastily or leave her bounds lightly. They had done what they could to purge her of error and failed. Now in the action which they took they could say with Luther at Worms: "We can do nothing else. Here we stand."

We are not saying that no good men remained within the Church. We are saying that within her active ministry not a single voice is being raised in loyalty to Christ in earnest contention for the faith (Jude 3). Professor Davey, an arch-priest of Modernism, was appointed by the Assembly of 1942 to the most important office in the Church—the office of Principal of her College—without a

single dissentient voice. Modernist textbooks are in use in plenty in the College. A student at the College was recently ordained in the Non-Subscribing Church, commonly called Unitarian. One of the Assembly's professors and several of her ministers were present, expressing their good wishes and one of them declaring that they and the Non-Subscribers all belonged to the one army of the King of kings.

We are not saying that in the past twenty years we as a Church have done all we ought to have done. We have not carried the flag to the top of the hill. Yet God has blessed us and prospered us. And we continue to stand for the whole book of God and the whole counsel of God, and for the crown and covenant rights of the Godman, Christ Jesus, the Lord our righteousness.

## The Visible Church

### Part 6: How Determine the Witness of the Corporate Church?

By JOHANNES G. VOS

**I**N SEEKING a solution of this problem, two extremes must be avoided as destructive of any real testimony to the truth. In the first place, it is necessary to avoid the conception of the Church bearing witness to the truth by means of a total body of dogma issued by an inner hierarchy and published to the world as an infallible statement of truth, to be accepted by all men with an implicit faith. This is the Roman Catholic conception.

In criticism of this it may be said that it is destructive of a real testimony to the truth because in this system everything is made contingent upon the validity of the hierarchy's claim to infallibility. Moreover on this system it is not really the visible Church that is the pillar and ground of the truth, but a select inner hierarchy headed by the Pope. The lay members, even though constituting perhaps more than ninety-nine percent of the total number, have no part in the Church's corporate witness except by an unquestioning and absolute acceptance of whatever is placed before them by the hierarchy. As the Westminster Confession asserts, this is "to destroy lib-

erty of conscience, and reason also," and we may add, it is to destroy all real corporate witness to the truth on the part of the Church. Rome virtually equates the Church with the hierarchy, so far as testimony to the truth is concerned; the laity is not regarded as essential to this function.

In the second place it is necessary to avoid the extreme which lies at the opposite pole from that of Rome, and which would give full play to the so-called atomistic tendency of Protestantism. If we reject the claim of the Pope of Rome to be infallible, we must also avoid that disproportionate recognition of the right of private judgment which would allow every individual Christian to claim to be a pope. While it is certainly true that Rome is wrong in virtually excluding the lay Christian from participating in the corporate witness of the Church, and that there must be a real, and not merely a fictitious, relation between the Church member as such and the Church's testimony to the world, nevertheless it must be realized that as long as human fallibility exists there will be no two Christians, who think at all seriously

about divinely revealed truth, who are in complete agreement in their view of the truth.

Now if the principle of private judgment is to be exalted above measure, every individual Christian can demand that the visible Church as a body bear witness to the entirety of revealed truth as *he sees it*. Since every other Christian could with equal right make the same demand, and the various demands thus made would conflict with each other, the result of this tendency would be only confusion and anarchy. There being no agreement concerning the extent and content of the truth to which the Church is to bear witness, and every Christian naturally being unwilling to surrender his own private judgment to some other Christian's view of the truth, a corporate witness to the truth would be impossible. The logical end of this state of affairs would be the existence of as many denominations as there are individual Christians in the world. Only so could each be a member of a denomination which would fully bear witness to the truth as each, in the exercise of his right of private judgment, views the truth. That is to say, if the right of private judgment is to be allowed unlimited scope, there can be no visible Church on earth, but only a multitude of individual, and individualistic, Christians. Now this "atomic tendency" of Protestantism is only too real, and while it would be unthinkable to surrender the right of private judgment to Rome's demand for an implicit faith, still this does not mean that private judgment may be allowed to assert itself without any limits, and demand an ecclesiastical confession of every element of doctrine that any individual Christian believes to be true. If every Christian were to refuse, as a matter of principle, to be a member of any Church that did not bear a corporate witness to *everything* that he held to be divinely revealed truth, all agreement and hence all corporate testimony would be utterly impossible. Again, if every individual Christian were to refuse, as a matter of principle, to be a member of any Church that bore a corporate witness to *anything* that he regarded as error, all agreement and hence all corporate testimony would be out of the question.

Thus it is clear that the Scriptural doctrine of the visible Church as a witnessing body requires a balance to be struck between the concept of cor-

porate ecclesiastical testimony and the concept of private judgment. Somewhere between the two extremes represented by Rome and by the atomistic tendency of Protestantism in its full logical development, the true course must lie. A line must be drawn, an area must be defined, within which unity of confession exists and is insisted upon, even at the cost, if need be, of excommunicating those who dissent, but outside of which divergence of belief is tolerated. Thus in the nature of the case no Church can really bear a corporate witness to all the truth which God has revealed in His Word, nor may any denomination make such a claim. To claim such a total testimony to divine truth would amount to claiming infallibility as Rome does. And in the nature of the case no Christian can expect to find a Church which will bear a complete and exact testimony to his own personal faith. Inevitably there will be a divergence, at least at the periphery which lies outside the area of ecclesiastically defined dogma. Those zealous persons who look for a visible Church on earth which will fully and precisely embody their personal faith—no more and no less—as its corporate witness, are looking on earth for what can exist only in heaven. They overlook the truth that even the best Christians are still subject to error, and that neither in individuals nor in Churches can there be such a thing as total orthodoxy on earth. The removal of the intellectual effects of sin, like the removal of the moral effects of sin, is a gradual process, and can never be complete in this life.

### Dean W. Adair

*In the midst of life we are in death.  
Of whom may we seek for succor but  
of thee, O Lord?*

ON Thursday evening, December 24th, the Rev. Dean W. Adair, pastor of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, was found dead in his home in Cedar Grove. His death was the result of a nervous and mental breakdown.

Mr. Adair is known to have been subject to periods of extreme mental depression over a period of years. The condition is traced at least as far back as the time he spent as a Chaplain in the army. In February 1947, shortly

after coming to Calvary Church, he had a period of severe melancholy, at which time he consulted a neighboring physician concerning his condition. He seemed to have recovered, and during the meetings of the General Assembly showed no indications of such disturbance. However, just a week before his death he paid a visit to the Rev. John Verhage of Oostburg, and at that time indicated extreme depression. However, he did not follow the suggestion which was made of another visit to the physician.

From 1936 to 1943 Mr. Adair engaged in religious work in New England, part of the time under the Committee for the Propagation of the Reformed Faith. In 1943 he entered the army as Chaplain, but within a few weeks suffered a nervous breakdown, and was hospitalized. Following his discharge he was for a time pastor of the Westminster Church at Hamill, S. D., and in 1946 accepted the call to the church in Cedar Grove. His work in all of these fields was characterized by humble and sacrificial devotion.

Funeral services were held at Calvary Church on Saturday, December 27th, being conducted by the members of the Presbytery of Wisconsin. The Rev. George W. Marston of Evergreen Park, Illinois, preached the sermon.

In addition to Mrs. Adair and two children, John aged 9 and Ruth aged 6, Mr. Adair is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Adair, and by two sisters and two brothers.

The prayers of the church are asked for the bereaved family, and for the Cedar Grove congregation which has suffered a grievous loss and shock in the tragic death of its pastor.

### Resist South India Church Union

AN estimated 25,000 Anglicans in Nandyal have refused to enter the newly formed Church of South India. Four Anglican clergymen refused to sign the declaration of assent, and thirteen who originally signed have subsequently withdrawn. The reports indicate that the movement seems to be chiefly a lay one, led by men of some education, in which the clergy have joined. It looks like a "continuing" Anglican church in India.

## The Glory of the Christian Church

By the REV. PROFESSOR R. B. KUIPER

### IV THE ANTIQUITY AND PERPETUITY OF THE CHURCH

#### Birthday

**H**OW old is the Christian church? Two answers have been given to that question. Christian theology generally says that the church originated in the garden of Eden immediately after the fall of man, when God promised a Saviour and man accepted this promise in faith. But Modern Dispensationalism says that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, a little more than nineteen hundred years ago, marks the birthday of the Christian church.

Which of these answers is correct? That can best be decided in the light of a definition of the church. If we know precisely what the church is, it should not be difficult to determine whether or not it existed before Pentecost. Now the Apostles' Creed defines the church as "the communion of saints." It is just as correct to say that it is the communion of believers. Was there a communion of believers in Old Testament times? There certainly was. Ever since the fall of man there has been but one Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and but one way of being saved, namely through faith in Him. As New Testament saints are saved through faith in the Christ of history, so Old Testament saints were saved through faith in the Christ of prophecy. The Christ of prophecy and the Christ of history are, of course, identical. And so Isaiah, David, Abraham, Abel and a host of others were members of the one body of Christ, His church. And if we assume, as undoubtedly we may, that Adam and Eve believed the promise of God that the seed of the serpent would indeed bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, but that the woman's seed would bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15), then it may be asserted that they constituted the first Christian church.

#### Maturity

It must not be thought that the church was mature from the day of its birth. It did not come to maturity until the Holy Spirit was poured out upon it. And that makes Pentecost incomparably the most important turning-point in its history. It also accounts for the fact that the glory of the church under the new dispensation is far greater than was its glory under the old.

The church of the new dispensation has a fuller revelation. Whereas the Old Testament saints had to be content with the shadow of things to come, we may walk in the full light provided by Him who is at once the Son of God, the effulgence of the Father's glory, the express image of the Father's being (Heb. 1:3), and the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). And it was He who on the day of Pentecost made good His promise to grant unto His church the Spirit of truth to lead it into all the truth (John 16:13).

The church of the new dispensation has a greater freedom. It is no longer in the position of a little child which needs to be told in minute detail what to do and what not to do, but it has attained to majority (Gal. 4:1-7). Not only has the ceremonial law, which prescribed the worship of ancient Israel, been abolished, but the liberty of the New Testament church concerns also the moral law of God. It is indeed in sacred duty bound to keep this law, but it delights in doing so, and that is the very essence of liberty. To be sure, that liberty was not unknown to the Old Testament saints, but it is enjoyed in larger measure by the New Testament church because upon it the Holy Spirit was poured out as never before, and "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17).

The church of the new dispensation has a visible form all its own. Time was when the church was bound up with the patriarchal family. Subsequently it was bound up, though not

identified, with the Israelitish nation. But on Pentecost it came into its own as a distinct organization.

The church of the new dispensation is universal. In Old Testament times the church was confined almost entirely to the nation of Israel. Only occasionally and by way of exception was a heathen received into the church. Ruth, the Moabitess, affords an outstanding example. But on Pentecost cloven tongues as of fire sat on the heads of the disciples and they proclaimed the great works of God in many languages. Men were present from all over the Mediterranean world, and three thousand of them were received by baptism into the Christian church. They were the firstfruits of the great harvest that would be gathered in from the field of the world.

#### Continuity

Much more could be said about the greater glory of the New Testament church. But after all had been said that could be said, the fact would still remain that the church of the new dispensation is the continuation of the church of the old dispensation, and also the further fact that the church of Jesus Christ in both these periods is glorious indeed. What deserves to be stressed is that the very continuity of the church contributes greatly to its glory.

Of that the apostle Paul wrote in glowing terms to the gentile Christians at Ephesus. After reminding them that once they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, he went on: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the

enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord (Eph. 2:12-21).

According to Dispensationalism the church was non-existent before Pentecost, and even when the Son of God came to earth, it was not His purpose to establish a church. He came to establish a kingdom, but when the Jewish people rejected Him as king, He decided to postpone the kingdom until His second coming and in the interim to found a church. Thus the

so-called church-age becomes relatively insignificant, a mere parenthesis. But the fact is that the church was founded already in Eden and will continue to the end of time, yes for ever and ever.

The church of Christ is continuous to the point of the most glorious perpetuity. It embraces all the ages of human history and will extend through the boundless ages of eternity. Instead of being a temporary substitute for something better it constitutes the very heart of the eternal plan of God. And instead of comprising the believers of but a few centuries it is the communion of God's elect of all ages, the countless throng of all who are written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world and will dwell eternally in the city which has no need of the light of the sun, neither of the moon, because the glory of God lightens it and the Lamb is the light thereof.

that is, an enclosure in which the travelers and their beasts might find refuge for the night.

Where this particular inn was we are not told. But at the inn a strange thing happened. The Lord met Moses. Furthermore the Lord sought to kill Moses. We are not told how the Lord sought to do this. Some have suggested that Moses was suddenly smitten with a fatal disease. Others have said that some direct act on the part of the Lord was performed. This latter is probably correct, for we are told that the Lord actually met Moses. In all probability the Lord appeared before Moses in human form. He came face to face with Moses and proceeded to attack him.

Brief as this account is, it immediately arouses within our hearts questions. Why should the Lord do this? There are those who say that this story is merely an example of an ancient belief in desert spirits. They would place it upon a par with other stories of ancient superstition. However, such fancies as this we may dismiss without serious consideration. The story is brief, but it is historical. The Lord did actually meet Moses and He sought to kill him, as the text states. But why?

In answer to the question, we may note that the Lord does not act in capricious and arbitrary fashion. He who was sending His servant upon a most dangerous mission would not in mere caprice seek to destroy that servant. No, there is a reason for the Lord's action. Moses has been disobedient. He has not circumcised his son. His wife, Zipporah, recognizes at once the reason for the Lord's action, and so proceeds to circumcise her son, with the result that the Lord lets Moses go free. As soon as the child has been circumcised, in other words, the Lord refrains from Moses, and from this fact we learn that Moses had been guilty in not having the youth circumcised.

But was this omission or neglect so serious? It was indeed serious. Circumcision had been enjoined upon Abraham and his descendants as a sign of the covenant. It signified that the circumcised person belonged to the people of God, and in its sacramental meaning separated that person from the people of the world. When the ordinance had been instituted at the time of Abraham, it had been instituted in the utmost solemnity. If a person were not circumcised, then "that soul shall be cut off from his

## "Bloody Husband"

### *A Study of a Significant Event in the Life of Moses*

By EDWARD J. YOUNG

WE ARE to study one of the strangest passages in the entire Old Testament. It is related in three short verses. However its importance is not to be gauged by its brevity. Although the passage is short, it teaches a lesson of permanent importance and relevancy. In the fourth chapter of Exodus we read, "And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision" (verses 24-26).

Part of the difficulty in understanding this passage is to be found in its shortness. Therefore, it may be well if we paraphrase the thought and expand it where necessary. We must first understand what the Bible is saying, before we can interpret its words. The thought of the passage, therefore, is as follows: At an inn, the Lord met Moses and sought to kill him. Zipporah, the wife of Moses took there-

upon a sharp stone and circumcised her son, and in so doing reproved her husband. As a result of the circumcision the Lord let Moses go, and Zipporah said to Moses, "A bloody husband thou art."

#### **The Demand of the Lord**

Moses had taken his departure from his father-in-law Jethro. "Go in peace," Jethro had said, and Moses with his wife and sons had set out for the land of Egypt. Before him lay a great task. Upon the throne of Egypt sat a Pharaoh who had little sympathy with the children of Israel. He was using their services as slaves and had no desire to part with those services. Moses and Aaron were to stand before him to ask that their people might make a religious pilgrimage into the wilderness. They came in the Name of the Lord of Hosts and depended upon His power. The way to Egypt lay through the desert, and on this way Moses and his family came to an inn, where they would take their rest and probably spend the night. This inn was probably merely a caravanserai,

people; he hath broken my covenant" (Genesis 17:14). In other words, the penalty for the disobedience of this command was death, for the expression, "cut off from his people" means to be cut off by death. This was a very serious matter. When the ordinance was instituted, the Lord demanded obedience upon the part of His people.

### The Sin of Moses

It is a grave mistake to think of a covenant between God and man as a covenant between two equal parties. Not at all. Every covenant that God makes with man has in it the element of grace, for God is the Creator, and man is but a creature. It is therefore not for man, the recipient of covenant blessing, to question the wisdom of the terms of any covenant that the Lord makes with him. Man must obey, and he should obey thankfully and with a heart rejoicing that the Lord has consented to deal graciously with him. To disobey the covenant of grace is equivalent to acting as though one were wiser than the Lord. It is to despise His commands.

Now it was precisely this that Moses did. He had not even bothered to have one of his sons circumcised, and for this reason the Lord met him. But one will ask, Surely the Lord would not slay Moses, the greatest figure in the entire Old Testament economy? But this is just what the Lord would do. Through the grace of God Moses had indeed been exalted to a position of unparalleled superiority in the Old Testament economy. True enough. But God is not a respecter of persons. He is a just God. And if the lowliest of the Israelites, should he neglect the ordinance of circumcision, would be punished with death, so also would Moses.

The lesson which this fact inculcates is of tremendous significance. Let no one think that because he occupies some position of importance in the outward organization of the Church, he can sin with impunity. Nay, rather, if God has honored us greatly in this life, our responsibility is all the greater that we scrupulously observe to do all that He has commanded us. And let us not think that in doing the work of God we can neglect to observe what we think are little things. A little lie, now and then, a little bit of dishonesty, a little sleight of hand ethics, a little "harmless" sin on the side. No,

we cannot sin with impunity. We cannot neglect anything that God has commanded us, for the Lord will not hold us guiltless. The picture which this passage presents is one of the heinousness of sin. God's command has been broken, and the man who has broken that command is not fit to do God's service before Pharaoh.

### The Influence of Zipporah

With what has been said so far, no doubt most readers will agree. Certainly a man who neglects the so-called "little" things cannot be trusted in those things which are big. But why, we may ask, did Moses neglect to observe God's command? Was not Moses a true follower of the Lord? Was not Moses zealous for the honor of the Lord and for the deliverance of his people? Yes, Moses was a true worshipper of the Lord, but, instead of hearkening unto the voice of the Lord, Moses listened to his wife.

Careful students of this passage seem to agree that the reason why the child had not been circumcised was that Zipporah did not wish it. This becomes apparent from her quick action and from the reproaches which she cast at Moses. In all probability Zipporah had thought that circumcision was unimportant; besides it was a bloody rite; why therefore should it be performed? And evidently Moses had given heed to the voice of his wife.

This was a very wrong thing. The husband should surely love his wife even as Christ loved the Church, but the wife should be in obedience to her husband in the Lord. It is a tragic thing when a woman seeks to impose her own ideas upon her husband, when that husband is a minister of the Lord. How often have the careers of sincere and God-fearing ministers been brought to nought by the influence of wives who have tried to dominate. This is a wicked thing, and Moses had done very wrong in this instance in hearkening unto his wife. He had not acted as a man; he had been a weakling.

Zipporah, therefore, acts immediately. She takes the first instrument at hand, a sharp stone, and circumcises her son, casting down at the feet of Moses the fore-skin. It is almost a defiant act, as though to say, "Now I hope you are satisfied." At any rate, the command of God has now been obeyed. From this time forth Moses doubtless had a higher regard for the

importance of obedience than ever before. He had doubtless learned the lesson that one cannot be a servant of God and at the same time neglect His commands.

Zipporah reproaches Moses. "A bridegroom of blood thou art to me." Her words are strange, but the meaning seems to be clear. Moses was as good as dead from the attack of the Lord. His life, however, had been purchased, but it had been purchased only by the shedding of the blood of his son. Hence, he was as a bridegroom, new, alive as it were from the dead. But he was a bridegroom that had been purchased by the shedding of blood. Hence she calls him a bridegroom of blood.

Without doubt this event produced a deep impression upon Moses. And it is quite likely that because of this occurrence at the inn, Moses sent back to Jethro his wife and children. Alone now he would go to Pharaoh. But it was better to go alone than to follow the advice that Zipporah would give.

The incident is not without a touch of sadness. We can see Moses taking leave of his wife and children, bidding them Godspeed as they set out for the home of Jethro in the Sinaitic wilderness. But Moses must now face the enemy alone. Before him is the mighty land of Egypt; upon the throne sits an hostile Pharaoh. The people are yet in great bondage. But, as never before, Moses understands the need of absolute obedience and absolute submission to the Word of Him who has the power of life and death. And, strengthened by the occurrence at the inn, Moses sets his face toward the adversary.

### Runner-Wichers

ON December 16 Mr. H. Evan Runner, an elder of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, was united in marriage to Miss Elisabeth H. Wichers, daughter of Mrs. C. Wichers and the late Mr. Wichers. Following the required civil ceremony, a religious ceremony was held in the Reformed Church of Badhoevdorp near Amsterdam, Holland, with the Rev. Dr. G. C. Berkouwer presiding. Mr. Runner is at present completing work for an advanced degree at the Free University of Amsterdam. Mr. and Mrs. Runner plan to return to America in the fall.

## Betzold Home from Korea

CHAPLAIN and Mrs. John Betzold and their two children have arrived in this country from Korea. They reached West Collingswood on January 1st and will have a month's furlough before taking on the next assignment with the army.

## Testimony Being Circulated

ACCOMPANIED by a covering letter which indicates that it is to be circulated throughout the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, a document entitled "A Testimony" has been making the rounds of ministers and elders of the church. Without agreeing with its evaluation of the present state of the church, we print it here for the information of our readers. Editorial comment will be found on another page.

### A Testimony

Prepared at Quarryville, Pa., Sept. 3 and 4, 1947

THE Orthodox Presbyterian Church was founded to continue what we believe to be the true spiritual succession of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A." (Minutes of the First General Assembly, p. 3). In pursuance of this aim the church adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith. With such actions we, the undersigned, are in full accord.

The reason for this Testimony is the serious situation that has been developing in the church for some years, and has now become extremely acute. The unity of our church is endangered.

What is the trouble? The trouble is not the entrance of Modernism, for all accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God. The trouble is not Arminianism, for our ministers and elders accept the Calvinistic system of doctrine.

The trouble is Sectarianism. By this we mean the imposition of requirements that are narrower than those of the Bible and the Westminster Standards. True Presbyterianism requires agreement on some points and allows differences on others. But within the Orthodox Presbyterian Church there is an increasing demand for uniformity where the right to differ should be recognized. This is contrary to Presbyterianism. It is Sectarianism.

This Sectarianism is evidenced in several ways.

First, with respect to the ordination of men to the ministry, tests beyond those required by our constitution have been invoked. There was a long and persistent effort in the Presbytery of Philadelphia and in the General Assembly to prevent and then to bring into question the ordination of Dr. Gordon H. Clark. And during this past year there was a similar determined opposition to the ordination of Mr. C. Alan Tichenor, in spite of the fact that the previous General Assembly had upheld the Presbytery of Philadelphia in approving the theological examination of Dr. Clark who had expressed essentially the same views.

Second, with respect to foreign missionary appointees the same extra-constitutional tests have been raised. This was seen in 1944 in the unsuccessful opposition in the Committee on Foreign Missions to the sending out of Rev. Francis E. Mahaffy. The increase of this Sectarianism has now in 1947 become extremely manifest in the case of Rev. Floyd E. Hamilton. Although he had served with distinction for twenty years as a teacher and missionary in Korea, he was prevented by committee and assembly actions from returning there to teach in a seminary that had urgently requested his services.

Third, with respect to communicant membership there has been some agitation for the Sectarian policy of imposing more than the Scriptural requirement of credible profession of faith in Christ.

Fourth, this Sectarian policy is also seen with respect to the attitude taken toward other evangelical groups. Frequently it has been maintained that Arminian fundamentalism is a subtle foe of Christianity quite as dangerous as Modernism. In contrast to this Sectarian attitude we appeal to the Presbyterianism of Charles Hodge and J. Gresham Machen. Charles Hodge in his *Church Polity*, p. 99, says, "Presbyterians may recognize Methodist preachers as ministers of the Gospel, and welcome them to their pulpits." This was of course before the days of Modernism, but obviously Hodge did not think that Arminianism was as dangerous as unbelief. Dr. Machen says: "A Calvinist is constrained to regard the Arminian theology as a serious impoverishment of the Scripture doctrine of divine grace; . . . Yet there again, true evangelical fellowship is possible between those who hold, with regard to some exceedingly important matters, sharply opposing views." (*Christianity and Liberalism*, pages 51 and 52.)

Sectarianism has resulted in driving some ministers and lay members out of our church and has discouraged others from joining with us. It has not only cost us much good will among evangelical Christians, but it has also seriously impaired our influence for good in the Christian world. To such Sectarianism we are

unalterably opposed.

In order to further the purpose for which our church was founded and to counter this Sectarian tendency, we propose the following as truly Presbyterian objectives.

1. That the main effort of the church be devoted to the proclamation of the Gospel as set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. The Great Commission condemns as un-Scriptural the comment offered at the last General Assembly to the effect that we should be willing to sit and discuss issues all year—a sentiment all too frequently met with in our church. A better perspective is needed. Without compromising their concern for doctrinal purity the courts of the church can spend less time on technicalities and academic discussion and pay far more attention to furthering the growth of the church.

2. That the church recover its missionary vision and stress the missionary imperative by encouraging young people to devote their lives to full-time Christian service, by expediting the sending forth of missionary appointees, and by stimulating prayerful interest and support.

3. That the church emphasize the need for consistent Christian living to counteract intemperance and worldliness, keeping before it the Scriptural principles affirmed by the General Assembly of 1942, one of which is: "It is the duty of every Christian who is strong in faith to remember the infirmities of those who are weak or whose understanding of the Word of God is inadequate, to refrain from despising or grieving such, and to take care lest the use of Christian liberty may become an occasion of stumbling to them" (Minutes, p. 29).

4. That the church cultivate an appreciation of other Christian groups which stand for the Word of God and that it cooperate with them in matters of coinciding concern.

In conclusion, we who subscribe to this testimony appeal to the members of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to join with us in efforts to achieve these objectives, in order that our church may realize the high purpose for which it was founded. May it please the great Head of the Church speedily to deliver us as a denomination from strife and contention and to engender within us all a greater loyalty to the Word of God and our Presbyterian heritage.

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# The GUARDIAN NEWS COMMENTATOR

VIEWING THE NEWS FROM THE RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE AND THE RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR PRESS

## Creed for Church of Christ in Japan

**A**FTER months of discussion and study, a committee has prepared a creed for submission to the whole Church of Christ in Japan. RNS reports the meaning of the articles as follows:

"Believing that the Old and New Testaments, which are the Word of God, are the infallible basis of our faith and life, and accepting as a valuable heritage of the historic Church since the days of the apostles, the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed which, being based upon the Bible, the ancient Church confessed; and standing on the faith of the gospel which the reformers and others clarified; we are united by the following confession:

"1. We believe in God the Father who is the Creator of all things.

"2. We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, His only Son, who, descending from heaven, became a man for our salvation, died on the cross for the redemption of our sins; he arose, ascended into heaven, and as the ever-living high priest intercedes for us.

"3. We believe in the Holy Spirit who, emerging from the Father and the Son, testifies of the Son in us.

"4. We believe the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, being three, are one God.

"5. We believe that we are united with the Lord Jesus Christ by this faith, are forgiven and justified, sanctified and made partakers of eternal life.

"6. We believe that, until the day when the Lord comes again and accomplishes his kingdom, the Church into which we are called by this faith, is the holy and only body of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is present on earth as the visible Church, giving us fellowship through the Holy Spirit, and executing the task of reconciling the world with God through the preaching of the Gospel and the observance of the Holy Sacraments."

Meanwhile it is reported that the

Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church has officially decided to become independent of the KYODAN or United Church of Christ in Japan. The Lutherans apparently were willing to maintain close connection with the KYODAN, provided they could retain their own church position, but when it became clear that the KYODAN was interested in establishing one united church with one common creed, rather than a fellowship of churches, the Lutherans felt compelled to withdraw and reassert their independency.

## Relief Funds Confiscated

**D**R. George W. Sadler, a secretary of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board reports that relief funds for Romania were confiscated by the government in Bucharest. Dr. Sadler entrusted more than \$10,000 to Romanian delegates at the Baptist World Congress in Copenhagen last summer. The money was to be used for relief work in Romania, and Dr. Sadler felt it would be easier to give the money directly to the delegates, than to transfer funds from America to Romania. But when the delegates arrived in Bucharest, they were immediately arrested, and the checks and drafts confiscated. Dr. Sadler received word in October to cancel payments on the drafts, and sometime later a fuller explanation of what had happened reached him.

## Radio and Religion

**W**E HAVE heard of a number of local churches which have secured wire-recorders and made recordings of their regular services. These recordings are then taken to the homes of shut-ins or to hospitals where church members may hear the entire service in transcription.

Two High Masses of Catholic

churches have been televised, one in St. Louis and one in Philadelphia. In the Philadelphia case, a priest read in English the principal parts of the ceremony as the celebrant sang them in Latin. The preacher for the occasion, however, explained that witnessing such a television broadcast would not meet the Catholic's obligation to be present in person at the Sunday Mass. In due course, we have no doubt, religious ceremonies from the Vatican will be televised for presentation in many parts of the world. The possibilities and use of television will probably tend toward an increase in the liturgical or ceremonial aspect of televised services. But it still remains true that the simple preaching of the Word of God by faithful pastors is of more importance to the flock than all the elaborate ritual men can imagine.

## Hungarian Reformed University

**P**LANS are under way for the establishment of a university, under the control of the Danubian District Assembly of the Hungarian Reformed Church. The University will be partly in Budapest and partly in another city. The Church has several colleges, including Debrecen, but there has been no Reformed University in Hungary. The new school will include law, art, and medical faculties, if present proposals are carried out.

## Appeal Letters from Germany

**I**T WOULD seem that personalized relief appeals from Germany have reached the stage of being a "racket." Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church have been asked to ignore letters coming from individuals in Germany asking for food or clothing. Such letters are being sent to many ministers and organizations in this

country. One was received at the GUARDIAN office recently. We believe it is best to have relief shipments handled through one of the authorized and responsible agencies with offices in this country. This does not apply, of course, to the sending of parcels to individuals with whom the sender is personally acquainted.

### Catholic "Defense" in Spain

THE magazine *Ecclesia*, published by the Spanish Catholic Action, has called for a defense of the Catholic faith against protestant propaganda. "A nation as Catholic as Spain," declared the journal, "cannot stand with folded arms as exotic creeds, not satisfied with the benevolent authorization given them by the State for the private exercise of their cult, dedicate themselves to carrying on acts of proselytism. These include organizing youth meetings, publishing bulletins under the form of parochial leaflets, selling heretical books at the doors of our churches, and distributing publications insulting to our faith." The paper also charged that the Protestants were not always moved by religious, but often by anti-patriotic motives.

### Lutheran Hour Has Correspondence Course

THE International Lutheran Hour is conducting a correspondence school of religion, and some 5,500 persons are at present enrolled in the school. Included are 100 inmates of San Quentin prison and 75 from the Indiana State Penitentiary. The course is described as including 30 lessons in the "fundamentals of the Christian faith, on a doctrinal rather than a Bible history basis." The school is a part of a missionary enterprise, and pastors are notified of any enrollments from their territory.

It has also been announced that the Missouri Lutheran Synod expects to spend more than \$1 million during 1948 for reconstruction, renovation and new building projects. And the United Lutherans are seeking \$60,000 to rebuild and equip a hospital in Tsingtao, China, which was destroyed during the war.

### Conference on Theological Education

THE year's end saw a conference on theological education in process in Switzerland. Held under the auspices of the World Council of Churches, the conference was attended by leading representatives of education in various countries. Dr. Benjamin Lacey, president of Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va., was among the delegates.

The purpose of the conference was to study means for strengthening theological education in the churches of Europe. The program was expected to include factual reports on the status of education in the various countries, discussions of theological trends in Britain, America and Germany as well as other countries, and a consideration of collaboration and cooperative procedures which might be worked out between various theological faculties.

### Film on Stewardship

THE United Lutheran Church's motion picture on stewardship, titled "And Now I See," has been released for use by other denominations. Prepared in Hollywood, with Ralph Morgan in the leading role, the picture presents the story of a church councilman who is brought to understand that a Christian with conviction must practice his religion. It is a three reel film and was produced by Cathedral Films.

### Northern Baptist Publication

THE General Council has approved plans for the publication of an official organ for the Northern Baptist Convention. Details have not been worked out, but a tentative budget of \$200,000 was voted to enable the journal to begin operations. Perhaps the next few years will see a flood of official denominational magazines. For reporting the doings of the church, such publications might be excellent. But when it comes to enunciating policy or evaluating events, either they are restricted by the necessity of remaining neutral, or they become the instruments of propaganda for the powers that be. There is no real substitute for a free and independent press.

### Excavations in Rome

ONE of the most interesting projects now under way is the excavation being made in the vaults under St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. The work was begun in 1940, to provide better spacing and arrangements for the tombs of popes and other nobility. But a number of new tombs have been discovered in the process, both of pagans and of Christians. And so the work is being carried on with great zeal. One reason is said to be to permit pilgrims to Rome to visit these historic grottoes, during the Holy Year 1950. But most important reason of all, probably, is the hope of discovering the tomb of Peter himself. Such a discovery would add greatly to the prestige of the Roman pontiff. However, since the excavations are under the close supervision of Vatican authorities, we may be sure that nothing adverse to the claims of Romanism will be publicly reported.

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