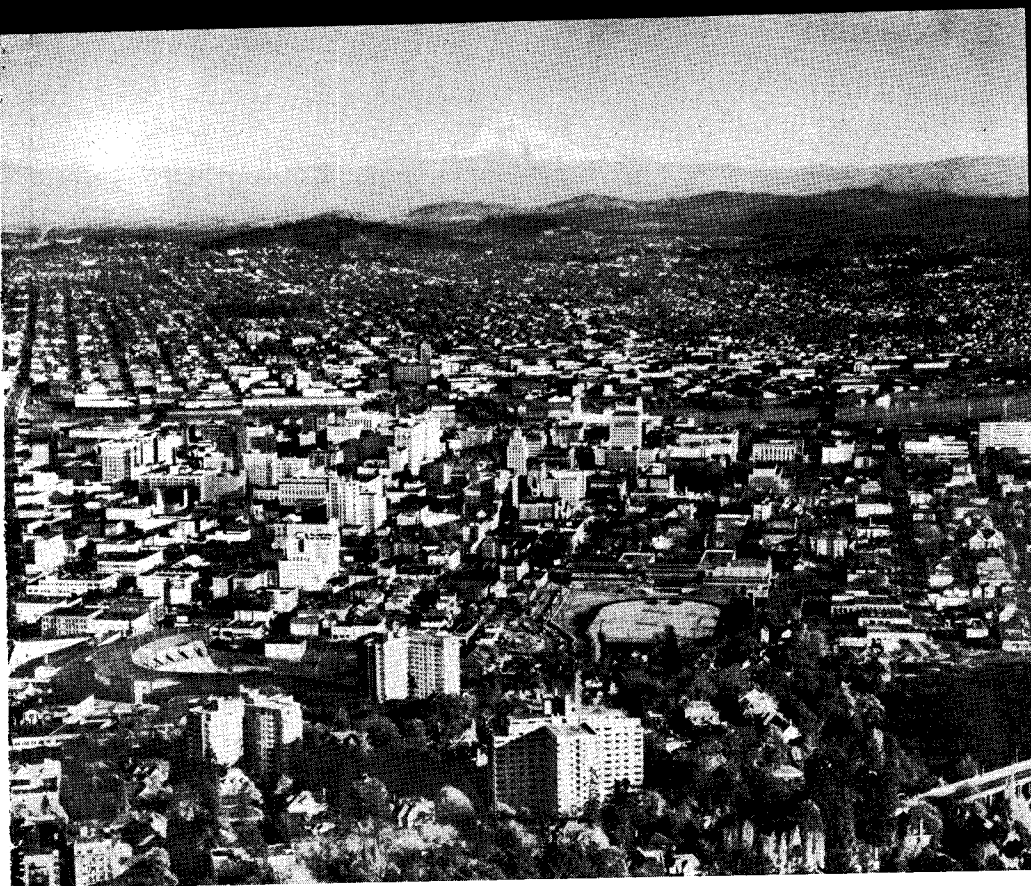


# GUARDIAN



## PORTLAND, OREGON, WITH MT. HOOD IN THE BACKGROUND

Host City for the 1965 General Assembly of  
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

“The City of Roses” will play host to the thirty-second General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, beginning July 7th, 1965. Plans are already well underway at First Church to make the stay of the commissioners and their families a delightful one.

One recent newcomer to Portland is reported to have asked, “Why do Portlanders go on vacation? They live in

*(continued on page 42)*

## **A Determined Faith**

**EDWARD P. WYBENGA**

### **Luke 18:35-43**

Jesus was now moving toward Jerusalem by way of Jericho—to Jerusalem where he was to be slain as a sacrifice for the sin of the world. Multitudes were following him with something of that old-time enthusiasm and popularity. Jericho was at this time a beautiful place, noted for its palm trees and fragrant flowers—an oasis in the desert.

But to all these beauties of nature Bartimaeus was a stranger. There he sat along the wayside, living in continual darkness, a poor blind beggar dependent upon the mercies of others.

What a picture he presents of the helpless sinner apart from Christ. Such a person is spiritually poor. He has never experienced the blessedness of communion with God; he has no peace in his heart, no hope of heaven hereafter, no shelter from the divine wrath that must at last overtake the unrepentant sinner.

Such a person is also spiritually blind. He knows not God; sees no danger ahead; can not discern the glory of the Savior; has no appreciation for the blessedness of the gospel, and no apprehension of the beauty of holiness and truth.

### **An Earnest Appeal**

But there is another point of comparison between poor blind Bartimaeus and the sinner in his wretchedness. Just as that very condition of misery occasioned the expression of faith on the part of Bartimaeus—faith in the healing power of Christ; so the spiritual need of the sinner can be the occasion for the exercise of faith in the saving power of Christ.

The tramp of many feet and the hum of many voices caught the quick ear of Bartimaeus. "What does it mean?" he asked. He was told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. Good news, that! He had heard something somewhere about this wonderful person who had power to heal the sick and raise the dead. But if Jesus

was passing by, he would soon be gone. Then it would be too late. It was a critical moment in his life. Hence the urgent cry, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." Faith is in earnest. Faith must act. And therefore Bartimaeus' cry for help was long and strong and loud.

The crowd was disgusted with him. He seemed so boisterous, so rude. Was he not after all a contemptible beggar? How dared he interfere with the procession on the highway? And was not Jesus too busy with more important things than to be bothered by one so undeserving as Bartimaeus?

With such thoughts in their minds the people rebuked the blind man and told him to be quiet. But faith will not be stopped by obstacles. Faith cares little what people may say or think. Impediments thrown in the way only increase the intensity of faith. And so Bartimaeus cried so much the more, "Thou son of David, have mercy on me."

What a lesson for us all! False shame and fear of public opinion should never keep one from confessing his faith in Christ. And it never will where there is a true faith, for faith is in dead earnest. The need is urgent—a human soul is at stake! The opportunity is limited—the day of grace is passing by.

The grace of salvation is offered to you everytime you hear the pure gospel or read prayerfully your Bible; everytime the holy sacraments are observed; everytime the Holy Spirit strives with you or works upon your heart with his saving influence. Do not harden your heart, lest the day of grace pass by never to return! "Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

### **A Gracious Answer**

"And Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called" (Mark 10:49). Jesus had a serious mission before him. He was going up to

Jerusalem to be crucified. He must not be delayed. Yet he permitted the cry of a blind beggar to stop him. After all, had he not come to heal the sick, the blind, the lame, and to save the lost?

What was Bartimaeus' response to Jesus' call? It was prompt—he threw aside his garment and ran to Jesus; and humble—he came just as he was, blind and poor and claiming no merit of his own. So we too must come to Christ for salvation promptly and humbly, and just as we are.

Then follows Jesus' question, "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" This was not a question for information but to stimulate faith in Jesus' power and willingness to heal.

Bartimaeus replied directly and to the point, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." That was the cry of faith. Then followed Jesus' cure: "Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee." Faith was not the cause of the cure but the means. Faith was the connecting link between poor blind Bartimaeus and the almighty power of God.

Thus it is also in the spiritual realm. Faith does not save us by its own power or merit. It is Christ that saves! But faith makes contact between us and Christ. It unites us with him—his righteousness becomes ours, and our guilt becomes his. And so we are redeemed unto God, being justified by faith.

What a wonderful change came over Bartimaeus! He was transferred from a world of darkness to a world of light and beauty. No less a change comes over a sinner converted to God: "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

### **A Blessed Result**

"And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God." Following Christ, glorifying God—so we must witness to Christ's saving power. And we must follow him wherever he leads—in green pastures and beside still waters or up the hills of difficulty and through the valley of humiliation, until at last we reach the land of glory, honor, and immortality.

Faith is the victory that overcomes the world!

## The Sermon As a Work of Art

W. STANFORD REID

"Just a simple gospel sermon." How often does one hear this phrase both on the lips of ministers and of congregations as they describe the preaching of some ministers! To many such a phrase seems to sum up all that is good in a sermon. Nothing pretentious, nothing intellectual and of course nothing unorthodox—just the simple gospel. Indeed on many occasions ministers and congregations seem to rejoice in such preaching as a matter of pride and self-congratulation. The question which one must ask at this point is: why? What is the merit in a simple (with the emphasis on the *simple*) gospel sermon?

If one makes this inquiry one will find, as the author has discovered, that certain attributes characterize the "simple gospel sermon." One is that the sermon is primarily a bible study with great stress upon the biblical text, no doubt a very commendable characteristic. At the same time, although it stresses the biblical text it often largely ignores the teaching of the rest of the Scriptures, and also ignores all theological implications. This means that not infrequently the exegesis of the text is superficial, if not erroneous. Furthermore, one usually finds that illustrative material if employed, and it is not common, is weak and feeble. Consequently, the intellectual content is minimal to say the least.

Added to all this, the application of the biblical teachings to life and to the individual usually lacks point and concreteness, being limited to plati-

tudes exhorting one to faith, hope and charity or to place one's faith in Christ as Savior. Sometimes the lack of application seems to go along with the delivery which lacks fervour and even a sense of real conviction. At other times, what the sermon lacks in intellectual interest or practical application, the preacher tries to make up with sound effects, hammering the pulpit and shouting. Indeed the author knows, in one case at least, that the more the Bible is pounded, the simpler the gospel sermon will be.

What is the explanation of this? The proponents of the "s.g.s." (simple gospel sermon) declare that all one has to do is preach the simple gospel and the Holy Spirit will do the rest. After all, they will say, the gospel is very simple: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," so we should not introduce a lot of unnecessary intellectual and/or esthetic trappings. One also gains the impression that it involves relatively little work and next to no thought. For these reasons the s.g.s. is the undoubted answer.

### Another Extreme

There are some preachers and congregations, on the other hand, who feel that the s.g.s. is pretty poor fodder for the sheep of the flock. They desire more than straw which gives little or no nourishment. Consequently, some preachers who hold this view go to the other extreme, giving theological lectures each Lord's Day to their people. Their sermons are meaty, full of theology, crammed with references to Calvin's *Institutes*, the views of various Puritan writers and men such as Hodge, Warfield and even Machen. Intellectually they provide a feast for theological professors or students, but most of the congregation tends to choke on the dry solidity of the fare, particularly when the preacher is so busy teaching, that he has no time to apply, his theology. The result is almost the same as that of the s.g.s. for

both famine and feast if continuous can produce little growth beneficial to the individual.

The trouble would seem to be that many staunchly orthodox preachers do not recognize that the sermon is basically a work of art. Now, some will no doubt feel that such a statement indicates that the writer has sold out to "the social gospellers," the existentialists or some other group. But he has not. He does not believe in "art for art's sake," nor does he think that art is merely for amusement. He believes that primarily art is a means of communication, but communication not merely of ideas or emotional stimuli. Rather, art provides one of the most profound means of communication for it speaks from soul to soul intellectually, emotionally and esthetically. And from long and rather sad experience the author must confess that he has listened to truly artistic sermons on relatively few occasions. He can think of only a small number of preachers who have consistently and constantly sought to present the gospel in this way.

### Communicating the Truth

But what does one mean by calling the sermon a work of art? In general, to produce a work of art one must first of all have something vital to say. This is the basic requirement of all art, whatever its medium of expression. Art without any purpose or concept of truth to communicate, is empty art. Furthermore, whatever the artist desires to say, he should strive to express dynamically and attractively. Indifferent or lackadaisical expression is just not art. Finally the artist must appeal not to a sort of "general humanity," but should speak to the individual, so that John Doe can appreciate what he says and feel an urge to incorporate it into his own thought, feeling and action.

How is this done in the various art forms? One can only mention a few basic principles at this time. One of

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the essential things in art is form. A formless production can express only chaos which of itself is incomprehensible. At the same time form cannot be merely static, but rather must be progressive and dynamic as a Bach fugue or a Mozart symphony. It must also have point or focus as in a Rembrandt or Hobbema painting. And withal it may well have adornment, but not so much that one misses the central point of the message. Baroque art, for instance, very often becomes nothing but "ginger-bread," while sixteenth century Dutch art makes every detail of adornment contribute to the whole, as in the case of Rembrandt's "The Night Watch." Always the hearer or the observer must be able to carry away the message of the artist whether he works with tone, colors, or ideas.

### **Esthetic Appeal**

No doubt, however, many reading this article will ask the question: but is it right for the Christian preacher to think of such things? Should the Christian use art for the communication of the gospel? In asking this question does one not forget something very essential to the idea of art? As Dr. Andre Schlemmer of Paris, a Reformed French psychiatrist, has pointed out, art embodies all aspects of man's comprehension including the esthetic. Thus when one preaches the gospel artistically he seeks to bring every thought and aspect of man into subjection to Christ. He seeks to reach man with the gospel from every side of his personality, employing all his God-given gifts to bring man to the knowledge of the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

Yet in all of this, the preacher must be deeply conscious of the fact that his is not a creative, but really a recreative art. He does not seek to proclaim completely new ideas in a totally novel manner. Fundamentally, he endeavours to set forth the old, old story of God's grace to man in Christ Jesus, that man may repent and believe. To do this, he finds himself bound to the teaching of the Scriptures whence he must bring forth the materials for his sermons. Consequently, the sermon must always be exegetical and expository of Scripture, not proclaiming the ideas of men but the Word of God. At the same time, the sermon must deal with the Christian and the non-Christian where he stands. The preacher must always make existential application of his ex-

position. This means that the preacher must tie exposition and life tightly together. Here one finds the purpose in preaching.

### **Unity of Thought**

To so bring Scripture and life together, one must have unity of thought as in a short story. The stories of a Guy de Maupassant or of a Robert Louis Stevenson demonstrate the meaning of such unity. When the reader has finished, while there have been many details they all make up the one story producing a unified impression. One does not end with a collection of confused impressions, but rather a central idea upon which a strong spot of light is focussed as in some of Rembrandt's portraits. This brings the sermon to a point which the preacher can drive home effectively. One finds this in the sermons of Calvin, Luther and many of the great preachers since their day. This is the essence of the art of preaching which many preachers today ignore or neglect.

While speaking about unity of thought, however, one must go a step farther. To obtain unity of thought one does not simply repeat the same thing over and over again in different ways. Some preachers do, but they are hardly artistic. Rather the preacher must deal with his central idea from different angles and perspectives or lead up to it by proper steps. Thus he brings together different motifs in a way similar to the composer of a symphony or the weaver of a tapestry. When he has finished his work all the various colors or tones have come to form one harmonious whole which conveys a unified impression or message.

### **Illustrations**

Coupled with this idea of bringing together all the "voices" involved in the exposition of the text, the preacher should also look at the rest of Scripture and at systematic theological exposition of it to see how his theme appears elsewhere. As the composer of a fugue he should pursue this theme in its various forms as it appears in other areas of Christian thought. He may well find illustrations of what he strives to teach in both secular and sacred history, in other parts of the Bible or in the thinking of other men. This will enable him to understand the various nuances or modifications which God in his revelation, or man in his sin, has made of the central point of

his sermon. True, he cannot perhaps bring all these things into one homily, but he may well try to discover the main variations in order that he may make his exposition more comprehensible and more practical.

### **The Climax**

Finally there is the climax of the sermon. A painting may not come to a climax, and indeed from its static character one may think it cannot. Nevertheless, a painting can, and a concerto or a novel must. In the same way a sermon which would be effective should not simply stop half-way through without a conclusion. It reaches its climax in God's summons to faith and obedience in some particular way or in some particular context. It is a call to human decision and action, not always in the same way nor concerning the same matter or problem. This is the end of the sermon. The denouement, as the short story writers would call it, comes in man's response. When man humbles himself, believes and obeys, there one sees the outcome, for the sermon ultimately is God's communication of his Word to man.

Yet in all of this the Spirit of God must work or nothing is achieved. The Spirit who adorns the world with its beauty and provides man with all his capacities, including his ability to create and appreciate art, alone can make the sermon effective. To this some may well reply: well then why bother? Can we not content ourselves with preaching a simple gospel sermon and leave it up to God?

Here once again, as in so many other cases, the Christian faces the mystery of the relationship between God's sovereignty and man's responsible action. God has called the church to proclaim his gospel of grace, and this it must do to the best of its ability in order to reach the whole man. To do this adequately it should proclaim its message clearly, persuasively and artistically, and leave the final results in the hands of God.

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### **Names Omitted**

These names should appear in the list of ministers in the "Minutes":

The Rev. Jack J. Peterson, 21 Bryn Mawr Avenue, Stratford, N. J.

The Rev. Bernard J. Stonehouse, 17 Webster St., Lewiston, Maine.

## Morning by Morning

### Three Mothers of Ten

**I**t used to be the woman who was the keeper of the hearth. She had the vital work of keeping the flame alive from one day to the next. The concerns of the world might belong to the man of the house, but without his hearth fire, daily living was impossible.

The details of daily living remain our responsibility. And the exercise of love is our special privilege. God, whose mercies are new every morning, gives us our challenges and the joy of meeting them in his strength. By sharing our thoughts we may be able to help each other to serve God better.

\* \* \*

**W**hich is your favorite? The crocuses that are first to push their brilliant colors through the cold, waking earth; the hyacinth whose fragrance thrills each time you pass; or the golden daffodils with bowing, nodding heads among the grass? Each in its turn heralds the coming of spring—a new beginning, new life, as it were.

Who can deny the pleasure that comes with this new growth each year? It is God the great Creator who accomplishes it, and we, his creatures, smile and sigh a bit and say, "It is good." Our spirits soar among the birds and nearly to the clouds as we watch the earth become clean and new and glowing. Perhaps this is why we have the custom of spring housecleaning? We want to join the fun, and indeed can hardly resist some days shaking the rugs and cleaning that closet!

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**W**ith all the publicity being given these days to racial equality or the lack of it, one wonders what the thousands of international students among us must think about our country. Have you tried to explain some of our problems and the different ways of solving them to a student from Nigeria or Korea or India? Have you ever had a student from another land in your home?

Our missionaries say that one of the ways we can help their witness is to show Christian love and hospitality to the students who are studying in the United States. Some spend several years here gathering education and yet

are never invited into an American home. Why not call your nearest college or university this month and arrange to have a student or two come over for an evening or for the week end? You'll be surprised how much good will come from it.

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**F**ive pre-schoolers were sitting around the kitchen table nibbling peanut butter and jelly sandwiches off paper plates and drinking their milk from brightly colored paper cups. A mother at one end of the table kept the confusion from becoming chaos, while three other mothers aimed spoonfuls from jars of baby food at the smeary faces of their younger children.

In a secluded corner of the kitchen, a toddler in a highchair, learning to feed himself, was pouring milk into the pocket of his bib and sprinkling pieces of cheese and hot dog around the floor. The coffee pot was just beginning to perk, and someone was fixing a plate of sandwiches and uncovering a frosted cake in a square pan in anticipation of the moment when the children would be temporarily satisfied and the older generation could take over the kitchen table.

This informal get-together is a weekly highlight for a group of young women in one of the local churches. The group meets shortly after ten o'clock for an hour or so of Bible study and prayer. The girls take turns babysitting, outside if the weather is decent; perhaps in an upstairs bedroom if it rains. Sometimes the job gets rough, especially in bad weather, if the prayer meeting runs overtime. The girls take turns leading the Bible study using an IVF study guide. Here we have the kind of Christian fellowship that the New Testament seems to take for granted, but that we so rarely experience in our lives.

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**C**. S. Lewis was a master in satire, insight and imagination. Although the book has been famous for many years, how many of you have read *The Screwtape Letters*? Having just reread them we were rewarded with a new sense of the subtleness of

sin in our own "respectable" lives. Although this is basically satirical reading, one who finds some of his own faults being uncovered will tend to be a bit uneasy. Screwtape is a senior devil writing advice to his young nephew, Wormwood, on how to win people to the Devil. Once you've read *The Screwtape Letters* you'll want to try other books by the late C. S. Lewis.

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**O**ne local paper runs a cartoon about two plump, middle-aged females, poking gentle fun at their various activities. The ladies belong to a garden club, and this provides occasion for many humorous situations. The minutes are generally confused, the treasurer always has problems, and the most trivial business is always conducted with a great deal of fuss.

Ladies' meetings are often the butt of jokes, and missionary societies may fit this pattern. How about the meetings of your society? Are they boring and bumbling, or are they a powerful witness to the work of Christ in his church?

Take a look at the constitution of your society for inspiration in planning improvements. Most constitutions list the aims and objectives of the group. Check the list to see how well you are doing the job for which you were organized. This is the time of year when many of us are considering the selection of new officers and outlining a program for another year. Perhaps this would be a good time to evaluate our goals and thoughtfully plan new ways to make our program more effective.

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**A** virtuous woman is something we'd all like to be—although it is interesting to note that in these days of sophistication, the last adjective women seem to want to apply to themselves is virtuous. Alluring? Yes. Efficient? Yes. Well-dressed? Yes. Dramatic? Yes. On and on goes the list. But "virtuous" seems a bit outdated. Perhaps this is our greatest witness to the world of women we meet: to be virtuous.

Let's especially be so in front of our daughters. Teenagers are quick to see our faults. Our lectures on cheating will mean nothing if we are smug about short-changing the super market. The temptation not to be virtuous is strong and enticing for these young girls. It's hard to choose between popularity and pleasing God. Our example should show the blessedness of fearing the Lord (Proverbs 31).

## Infant Baptism Optional ?

**ROBERT K. CHURCHILL**

You could almost feel a crisis coming, and how fitting that it should strike at the first meeting of the new Presbytery of the West Coast. No, not really the first, because the first was an informal meeting held earlier in the year on "Churchill's Ranch" high in the Sierra foothills. The topic then was "A Modern Spiritual Awakening," which many said "must be continued." Inside we probed the great question while outside the severest mountain storm in years whipped itself to a fury of destruction. As nineteen men ate supper in the "tumultuous privacy of storm," power failed and the lights went out. A candle was lit and the conversation on the great job of preaching went on. Strange, isn't it, that all the darkness in the world cannot put out the light of one small candle?

And all this leads up to the crisis about baptism which came at our first stated meeting of the Presbytery of the West Coast in March of 1964.

The problem came at us several ways. There was a complaint about a church which was allowing parents to become members without having their children baptized. There was also the abstract idea, rather easily held, that people could be members of the church without subscribing to infant baptism.

### **Spiritual Pilgrimage**

The intent in the whole question is heightened here in the West because for the past few years a committee of Presbytery has been working with some Independent groups and their pastors. The fellowship between ourselves and these groups of baptistic background has been mutually rewarding. In each case, the pastors have shown splendid advancement in the Reformed faith, have submitted to comprehensive examinations, and have come into our fellowship adding their own wealth of insight and experience. The spiritual pilgrimage of these men and their families, so similar to our

*At a more recent meeting than the one referred to in this article the Presbytery of the West Coast decided to leave the question to the local church Sessions. Presbytery, however, overruled the General Assembly meeting in Portland, Oregon next July to consider the issue. This article, and the one by Mr. Edwards, point up the differences in the two positions.*

own, has been lovely to behold. There are significant currents among the Baptists and other groups today which will put many a thoughtful man on our doorstep and we are grateful.

The church allowing parents membership without having their children baptized was asked to reconsider their action. But the decisive vote about baptism came as we faced a concrete situation. Two parents from one of our mission churches had asked the examining commission if they could be members without their children being baptized, and this request was passed on to Presbytery. Of course, there were difficulties. Children nearing teen age give us pause. I happened to have been on that commission to examine the prospective members. There were other fine Baptist families—would they be offended? Could we expect too much too soon?

The commission's recommendation was to the effect that since the Head of the church had always included the children of believers into the membership of his church, it was not within the province of ministers and elders to allow them to be excluded. So the recommendation contained the prayer that these parents enter the church as communicant members and bring their covenant children into non-communicant membership by baptism.

The debate on the entire subject was spirited; the issue was alive, vital. Was this the meeting of ancient heresy in

new dress, or was it another Jerusalem council facing the influx of the gentile world, and having to decide whether all should become Jews in order to be Christian? It quickly developed that several pastors favored the reception of members who could not see infant baptism. In fact, they were advocating this in their outreach work.

In support of this position they brought forward a precious Presbyterian principle that while it is requisite that office bearers of the church believe the entire confession of the church, we may not make such requirements for membership. Members are to be received merely on a credible confession of faith. These men pointed out that since we could not make belief in the doctrine of election a requirement for church membership, neither could we require subscription to the doctrine of infant baptism.

### **A Matter of Obedience**

Now of course this was sincerely offered and made us cautious. Constantly we must guard against adding human requirements to church membership and just as constantly we need reminding that we may not keep out of the church those whom God admits to heaven. This is Presbyterianism—neither narrower nor broader than the Word of God. Others cogently pointed out that baptism is the initiatory rite into Christ's church and kingdom. It is a matter of simple obedience. When in Scripture was it ever classed with belief in the high mysteries of election which, to say the least, requires knowledge and considerable growth? The broad and enduring basis for infant baptism is that the church in all ages has included children of believers bearing the covenant sign. Whose church will we be building if we change this heavenly pattern?

*(continued on page 43)*

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*Christ has always included the children of believers in his church.*

**The Presbyterian Guardian**

... without having their children baptized?

## An Assumption Re-examined

ALBERT G. EDWARDS

Should parents who refuse to have their minor children baptized be admitted as communicant members into the Orthodox Presbyterian Church? The answer must be Yes, if the parents in question make a credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In taking this position, there is no desire or attempt to evade the teaching and intent of the standards, both primary and secondary, adhered to by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Rather, there is a desire to do full justice to the standards.

There are many places in Scripture that declare that those who were received into the church were baptized, and their household, the very strong inference being, as explicitly stated in our secondary standards, that this is the proper path to follow, and that the church has a responsibility to require it. References which might be cited would be, among others, the following: Acts 2:38, 39, 41; Acts 16:30-33. See the Westminster Confession of Faith, 28:1, 4, 5; the Westminster Larger Catechism, Q. 165, 166; the Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q. 95; the Directory for the Public Worship of God (*The Standards of Government, Discipline and Worship of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*), IV, A, 2; B, 2, 3, 4.

The issue before us in this discussion, however, does not revolve about what our standards have to say about the propriety and importance of the baptism of covenant children, for there should be no question as to what they state. Rather, the real issue pivots on two other matters. The first is the scriptural doctrine of the church, and the second is an assumption concerning the reception of members that is often made, an assumption that needs to be carefully re-examined.

### Purity of Doctrine

Concerning the doctrine of the church, the Scripture teaches that the church has a responsibility to main-

tain purity of doctrine (Acts 20: 26-32). If it is the responsibility of the church to maintain purity of doctrine, it is also the responsibility of individual believers to seek out the fellowship of those where it is maintained (II John 6-11). Furthermore, it is to be recognized that not all those who seek to be identified with a vigorous and faithful congregation will be equally clear about all points of their faith. There will be some who are strong in the faith. There may be some who will seek reception who are weak in certain areas of doctrine and practice. Nevertheless, even these are to be received (Roman 14:1; Mark 9:24). It would be unthinkable to tell a person who is weak in the faith in regard to certain doctrines and practices of Scripture, although stronger on those doctrines which directly affect one's salvation, that he must seek out the fellowship of a congregation which does not seem as concerned to maintain the purity of doctrine.

Our standards insist rightly that the baptism of covenant children is normal and proper, and therefore to be required by the church. However, they are also careful to insist that baptism does not contribute to the salvation of any, and is not *in this sense* to be thought of as essential (Westminster Confession of Faith, 28:5). The Bible is very careful to insist on the other hand that the essence of our relationship to the visible church is a matter of a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9, 10).

In Acts 2:47 we are told that the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved. Although we know from the context that none of these objected to baptism, nevertheless the point that is stressed in regard to their reception into the visible church is

not the matter of their baptism, but the statement of their salvation. The church is for *saved* people, and *saved* people should be in the church. The issue that determines whether a person should be in or out of the church is that of his salvation, as attested by the credibility of his profession of faith.

Some people have liked to say that the door of the visible church should be as wide as the door to heaven. Although this sounds fine, it is not quite accurate. To be more accurate, one should say that the door of the visible church should be as wide as the *Scripture* declares it to be. It should be no wider, and no narrower. If the Scripture declares that those who are saved belong in the church, then no one has a right to exclude even one whom the Scripture declares should be received.

### Apparent Dilemma

Many suppose that the church is in a dilemma at this point, being tossed between the horns of the scriptural doctrine concerning membership in the church, and the scriptural doctrine concerning the importance of baptism. Not so at all. The reason there appears to be a dilemma is because of a tacit assumption that is often made concerning the reception of members, an assumption that needs careful re-examination. The assumption is this, that the church must not receive those it must, in receiving, discipline.

It should be clearly recognized that the understanding of truth is an aspect of sanctification (John 17:17). It is gracious work of the Holy Spirit. It cannot be forced, because the Spirit cannot be forced. There can be no understanding of spiritual truth apart from the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 2:12). It should be clear, too, that one does not understand all there is

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*The assumption is this: that the church must not receive those it must, in receiving, discipline.*

to understand from the very first moment he trusts in Christ. We need the continued illumination of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:15-23).

All God's truth is important and related. By implication, each aspect of truth presupposes and depends on the rest. Nevertheless, not everyone sees this. There were in the New Testament church those who were called "babes in Christ" who, obviously, could not see the amazing inter-relationship of truth, and needed to grow in their understanding of it (1 Peter 2:2). Yet they were received into the church.

The point of this is that although any truth implies all other truth, yet there are some truths of Scripture which must be understood and received from the very beginning, and others, the understanding of which is permissibly deferred to a later time. Some have called these truths "primary" and "secondary." We will not quibble over names. We only want to indicate that the Bible itself recognizes such a distinction. It is not the understanding of and commitment to every truth, but the understanding of and commitment to at least the core truths concerning Christ and his atonement, that is necessary to our reception into the visible church.

### Discipline unto Sanctification

One of the means God has appointed in Scripture for growth in grace and sanctification is church discipline. When should it be administered? And to whom? A particular congregation obviously has no authority to administer discipline to one who is not under its jurisdiction. It therefore does not have access to the use of this scriptural aid to sanctification as far as a non-member is concerned. Far from this being an appeal to a utilitarian principle, this point is made as an appeal to put no impediments in the way of the sanctification of a believer that God, in his Word, does not put.

When should discipline be administered? Must there be an arbitrary period of immunity from the benefit of discipline for a person after he is received? Do not the vows required of a person seeking admission into the Orthodox Presbyterian Church indicate that the person promises to be subject to discipline *as soon as it is needed*? For some people, it may never be needed. For others, it may be needed from the very start. Why prevent a

*Those who make a credible profession of faith are to be received, whether they are strong in the faith, or weak.*

child of God from receiving what he may desperately need just because he desperately needs it? What basis is there in the Scripture for refusing to administer the healing and restoring provisions of God to those of his sheep who need them desperately (Ezekiel 34:1-4)?

### Lack of Understanding

If the Bible teaches infant baptism, then the church must seek to put it into practice. However, some Christians, in good conscience, do not understand the teaching. They have the responsibility to be obedient to the Word of God as clearly as they can understand it. They are perhaps strong in other aspects of their faith, but weak in this. They must be admonished to consider this aspect of God's truth, too. Admonition is the first degree of censure in ecclesiastical discipline.

The church has no grounds to go beyond this first censure, however, unless those being admonished refuse to continue to study Scripture. For as long as the persons in question are heeding the admonition and continuing to study what Scripture has to say about the matter, they are fulfilling the directive of the church. Only if those being admonished refuse to continue to study the matter, may the church proceed with further discipline, and then only because the admonition is being disregarded, not because of an inability to understand the biblical teaching on baptism.

Those who make a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior must be received into the visible church, whether they are strong in the faith, or weak. He who does not break the bruised reed requires of us gentle, understanding patience with those who are weak in the faith (II Timothy 2:23-26). The lost sheep must be brought into the fold, even though it has a strong propensity for going astray.

### Historical Precedent

That this is essentially the position held historically by Presbyterians may be seen from the following citations:

"While it is clear, that persons otherwise of good Christian character, are not to be excluded from the com-

munion of that Church, because they have scruples concerning infant baptism, there is in every case, where such persons apply for admission, a question as to the expediency of receiving them, upon which the Session of the church must decide" (Minutes of the General Assembly, 1834, p. 36, as quoted in the *Manual for Ruling Elders* by the Rev. Wm. Henry Roberts, Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1897, p. 140).

"Persons refusing to present their children for baptism are not to be refused on account of scruples concerning infant baptism, yet in every such case the Session must judge of the expediency of admitting them" (Presbyterian Digest, p. 674, as quoted in *What Is Presbyterian Law* by the Rev. J. Aspinwall Hodge, Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1882, p. 136).

Practically, what should be done in regard to parents who refuse to have their minor children baptized, and who yet want to be received into a particular congregation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church? Here are several suggestions.

1. First of all, it should be ascertained whether the parents who are applying for membership make a credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. If they can understand the teaching of the Scriptures and secondary standards, and see that the baptism of children is indeed taught, and yet refuse to have their children baptized, then there would be grave doubt about the credibility of the profession of their faith in, and submission to, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 9:41). On the other hand, if their refusal to submit their minor children for baptism is a matter of a sincere inability to understand, then there should be no reason to question the credibility of their profession on this account.

### Credible Profession

2. Secondly, if it is clear that their profession is credible, and if they want to join a particular congregation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, they should be clearly informed, both in the communicant membership prep-

*(continued on page 44)*



EDITOR

Robert E. Nicholas



All correspondence should be addressed to The Presbyterian Guardian, 7401 Old York Road, Phila. 26, Pa.

## "The Confession of 1967"

In mid-May the 177th General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. will act on a report from its Special Committee on a Brief Contemporary Statement of Faith. The chairman of that committee, Dr. Edward A. Dowey, Jr., has written an illuminating article in the February 15 issue of *Presbyterian Life*, giving some of his and the committee's thoughts about this forthcoming 5000-word Statement.

Dr. Dowey, Professor of the History of Christian Doctrine in Princeton Seminary, pays high compliment to the Westminster Confession as "monumental in style, catholic in scope, authoritarian in tone, technically brilliant in execution." Nevertheless, sensing within it "a premonition that the world of classical and Christian culture in which the writers are at home is coming to an end," he thinks it is high time after three centuries for a new confession which has less resemblance to "a monument marking the past" and greater usefulness as "a tool for present work."

Since a confession is not only "a summary of Biblical teachings and a guide to understanding them" but also "interpretation," Dr. Dowey holds that "the Bible must always be transposed into a contemporary key to be understood by contemporary men." Creeds and confessions, then, "are guides for the work of translating" the Bible "into the language and ethic of the living church" — in its "preaching, teaching, and social responsibility."

As we pointed out in a previous editorial in November 1964, any confession, ancient or modern, must be judged as to the truthfulness of its "interpretation" of Scripture. There should be no objection to a confes-

sional statement just because it appeared in the fourth century or the seventeenth or the twentieth. Whether the language is as old as the hills or as modern as the space age, the question is this: Does it accurately and carefully summarize and explain what the Bible says? Is it indeed a trustworthy guide to the church in her mission?

The Committee on a Brief Contemporary Statement has taken its task seriously over the past six years since it was set up in 1958. Its members— theologians, pastors, biblical scholars, historians, and specialists in philosophy and ethics—have met nineteen times, always for several days, twice for two-week sessions, reports their chairman.

Professor Dowey apparently expects his church to consider the committee's report most carefully during the next two years. His final sentence reads: "A heavy responsibility will rest on leaders and members to weigh seriously whether changes proposed are required for the church to be faithful to its mission today."

Although the first official appearance of the Statement will be in the Blue Book soon to be given to commissioners in preparation for the May meeting in Columbus, Ohio, rumblings of concern are already evident. Reports are circulating of informal meetings of some conservatives within UPUSA circles in more than one section of the country. Some ministers form their pulpits have expressed alarm at the impending changes.

Denominational leaders are of course ready to defend the committee's work, regarding it as the culmination of trends that have been developing for decades. *Time*, in its issue of February 26, quotes Dr. Eugene Carson Blake: "We decided in the 1920s that we would not be a fundamentalist church, but a conservative, Biblically oriented church that was not rigidly literalist" — a sentence, incidentally, that illustrates the prevalent use of words in an altogether different sense from that which we would place upon them!

In his article Dr. Dowey points back to the "modest revision" in the Westminster Confession that began at the turn of this century with the addition of three chapters and a declaratory statement that "softened predestination." The former UP Church "was bolder," he states, "adopting a new Confessional Statement in 1925 and

giving it priority over Westminster."

The proposal of the committee will ask the church to "retain the Westminster Confession and Shorter Catechism and add to them creeds from other periods" such as the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Barmen Declaration (by German Protestants in 1934) and the new 1967 Statement. All this will of course require "appropriate changes" in ordination vows.

The Brief Contemporary Statement, if approved by the 1965 Assembly, will then be "studied" by the whole church in order to obtain approval by the two following assemblies and by two thirds of the presbyteries before final adoption in 1967.

In his concluding paragraph Dr. Dowey also declares that this two-year "period of self-criticism and theological debate on the deepest level and of highest import, if carried out humbly and soberly, cannot fail to contribute to renewal of the church's life."

Here, then, is an invitation, and perhaps the last opportunity, for a great debate in the nation's largest Presbyterian body. The months ahead are truly of highest theological import; at stake is whether the "P" for Presbyterian is to be meaningful in any sense at all.

Are any voices to be heard crying in the wilderness, pleading for genuine self-criticism in the light of God's holy Word?

Is there an Elijah or a Jeremiah, an Athanasius or a Calvin, who will sound the alarm and make the issues clear?

Will men rise up in this presbytery and that in defense of the Westminster Confession, not because it is old, but because it is true?

Would that there might be a "renewal of the church's life" by a mighty work of the Spirit of God that would turn the church from its present course, calling her back to a forsaken heritage that she might proclaim once again the faith of her fathers!

R. E. N.

## EDITOR'S MAIL BOX

Dear Sir:

I should like to thank you for the editorial "Warrior at Rest." To those of us who knew Mr. Lynne Wade, this is a fitting tribute.

I am wondering if we could not

erect to his memory a more lasting memorial. Since Mr. Wade spent so much of his time in hospitals, would it be possible for those of us who knew him to give money for a wing in the new "Compassion of Jesus Hospital" to be built in Eritrea?

This could be a lasting memorial to one who so well knew the presence of God. His life was an example to Christians and non-Christians alike of the tremendous power of God in a man's life if that man surrenders his all to God.

I know that I should like to give to such a fund if it were to be established. Several of the people who had been giving toward Mr. Wade's support have spoken to me of their desire to share in such a memorial.

Sincerely in Christ,

EMMA (MRS. WM.) LAVERELL  
1077 Skippack Pike  
Blue Bell, Pa. 19422

## You'll Like Portland

(continued from cover)

the kind of city most people look for when they are vacationing."

There are few places in this city of 400,000 from which there is no view of Mt. Hood, the craggy, snow-capped, 11,245-foot peak that is the highest point in the state, and a winter wonderland little more than an hour's drive from First Church. On its slopes can be found skiing all year round. In the Mt. Hood area there are also many other activities to intrigue the hiker, mountain climber, camper, huckleberry picker, or those who are just out to look at beautiful scenery.

In the opposite direction is the Oregon Coast, about an hour and a half or two hours away from Portland. Rugged scenery and beautiful beaches combine to make it indeed an unusual place.

A ride up the Columbia Gorge eastward from Portland is breathtaking with the mighty Columbia on one side and towering mountains on the other, broken here and there by cascading waterfalls and covered everywhere with lush greenery and tall trees.

Portland with its suburbs has a population of around three-quarters of a million. It is modern and progressive, boasting a shopping center, the Lloyd

## Two Denominations Unite

One of the oldest and one of the youngest Presbyterian denominations in the United States will formally become one church on Tuesday, April 6, when their two general synods meet at Covenant College, Lookout Mountain, Tennessee. Commissioners from the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (General Synod) and from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church will merge as the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod.

The union, involving about one hundred congregations throughout the United States with combined membership of about 10,000, was first approved by both synods a year ago, and has since then been ratified by the presbyteries.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church has historical roots in the Covenanter movement in Scotland. It has been es-

tablished in the United States since the country's earliest years, but in 1822 a division in the Reformed Presbyterian Church led to the formation of the present group. The General Synod, or "New Light," as distinguished from the "Old Light" group has approved the principle of the right to vote under the American form of government and has rejected exclusive Psalm singing. The denomination now has about 2000 members in 27 congregations.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (formerly the Bible Presbyterian Church) is an outgrowth of the Machen-led separation from the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. Established in 1937 as an offshoot of the 1936 Presbyterian Church of America, it continued until 1956 when certain differences led to the withdrawal of Dr. Carl McIntire and others from the church. Shortly thereafter the denomination adopted its present name. The church has about 8000 members in 75 congregations, and through a growing system of agencies conducts an extensive program of education and missions.

The agencies of the two denominations will retain their identity until plans for merging can be worked out.

Concerning the union, the Rev. Donald J. MacNair, moderator of the last Evangelical Presbyterian synod, says: "It is based on existing unity in doctrinal standards and on a desire for a unified witness for the glory of God and the strengthening of the church. It is almost a first in recent times as a union which maintains the historic Reformed faith as its doctrinal basis. The union commends itself to conservative circles as a work of God's Spirit."

The Rev. Samuel Ward, Reformed Presbyterian moderator, says: "The future of our church is bright, with more men for denominational responsibilities, a wider missionary outlook and the appeal of a conservative Presbyterian denomination that can go forward in unity."

The new denomination's official name is the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. The Church will meet for its first business session immediately following the uniting service; the session will maintain the continuity of the older denomination, and will be called the 143rd General Synod.

NEWS RELEASE  
Lookout Mountain, Tenn.

ALBERT G. EDWARDS

Center, described when built in 1960 as the largest such center in the world. The city is studded with golf courses and parks. With many scenic drives, everywhere one finds greenery and flowers and especially an abundance of roses for which the city is justly famous.

First Church is grateful to God for its beautiful building which it occupied last August. The church is located in the beautiful Northeast section of Portland in a neighborhood that has grown up around it.

Many have already mentioned their plans to come for the Assembly. In coming, all should be sure to bring their families to make this a double delight, an opportunity not only to conduct the work of the Lord that is committed to the Assembly, but also to enjoy the delights of a particularly pleasant portion of God's wonderful world.

The Assembly Arrangements Committee urges all who are making even tentative plans to contact First Church, so that it will know about how many to plan for in making arrangements. The address is: 8245 N.E. Fremont St., Portland, Oregon, 97220.

# Churchill

(continued from page 38)

But debate ended and the vote came. The recommendation to ask the parents to come in with their children barely passed. Surprised? Well, there were extenuating circumstances. And also, perhaps we are being "watered down."

No sleep that night. Anxious thoughts about those parents. It's a hard pilgrimage and they can't see the joys ahead both for themselves and their children. Then there is the existential situation: "da mess we's in."

Our world has suffered many a shock, but the disturbance in our society regarding the family has been seismographic. There has come upon us the shattering of the unity of the family, the atomizing and de-christianizing of the home, that central building block both of civilization and the kingdom of God. The church, especially the Sunday school, is often an aid to this disjunctive process.

Multitudes today are destitute of Christian principles, yet there is one common creed both believed and practiced. "I believe," say these myriads, usually with a dim religious light in the eye, "that we should not influence or make decisions for our children. They should be left alone and then when they are older they will make their own religious decision." One would think that one look at the decisions young people are making today would shatter this pontifical utterance, but its infallibility continues undisturbed.

Of course, this philosophy is strained a little when it comes to changing a child's diapers, seeing that he takes a bath, or sending him to school. Schools and health authorities have no use for this notion, but God would be un-american if he did not accept it, it seems. The tragedy of our times could be described as "the road not taken." We have missed something large and primal in religion. The question before Presbytery is not academic.

## Covenant Theology

Our world cannot be saved without a rebirth of genuine Christianity, the family religion. Our nation is descending the slippery incline into Hell. There will come pauses in that downward course, little revivals, but without the revival of and wide applica-

tion of that which was once called Covenant Theology, we will never climb back up again. Without family religion as God meant it to be neither church nor nation can be saved.

The faith which was reborn in the Protestant Reformation has within it the infinitudes. It forms an infinite circle wherein resides the totality of life and truth. And part of that organism is the scriptural teaching of the Covenant in which the sanctity of the home and household baptism is central.

The crux of the matter before us is this: It is a fact beyond dispute that God has always included the children in his church and kingdom. No presbyter therefore may vote to allow them to be excluded. What God hath included let not man exclude. To bring in the doctrine of election here is beside the point. For while we may be saved with limited knowledge, we are not saved in disobedience.

It is this disobedience not only in not having the rite administered but especially in not fulfilling the sacred vows and promises inherent therein which has brought family life to its present spiritual bankruptcy. The external rite of either circumcision or baptism does not save; this was never its purpose. Nevertheless when we allow the sacrament of baptism to become optional we do not have the Word of God with us. We therefore do not bring to bear the demands of God on a lost generation, and we forsake the power and blessing of God in the very area where it is needed most.

## Understanding and Emotion

But present attitudes or fears about infant baptism call for understanding. We should remember that there is scarcely any subject more spoken against. Misrepresentation of infant baptism has been a universal formula and it can be heard from any direction. Furthermore, the millions who have misused the sacrament of infant baptism have brought superstition and spiritual paralysis.

Our sin is that we are doing so little to implement this grand theology. Books which deal with the emotional aspect of the subject should be republished, e.g., *Grace Westerfeldt* and

*Collingsworth's Lectures*. It so happens that a man may be convinced intellectually that the Scriptures teach the covenant faith, and child baptism. Yet because of the constant attacks on the position by ministers his emotions have been ignited and he is held back from full and simple surrender to the Word of God.

Of course, if we can go to parents in this baptistic world and tell them that they may come into the church without their children being baptized members, that we allow latitude on that question, I suppose we feel more helpful and understanding.

But I think there is a better way, a way in which God is more honored. Under the compulsion of the gospel we must say to believing parents: you and your children are lost by nature. This may be an entirely new concept for they have been given the opiate that children are neither saved nor lost till they reach a certain age, a view quite foreign to the Bible. But you continue with your gospel: our gracious God has made provision both for you *and your children* in his covenant of salvation. He has included the believers and their children in his church and kingdom. Our Savior welcomed little children, took them in his arms and blessed them and said that "these little ones" were in his kingdom. Of course, since they are in his church they ought to be baptized.

Now dear friends, this is a church of Jesus Christ and since he has included your children in his church, we think you will understand when we too must include them. Those whom the Chief Shepherd includes, the undershepherds may not exclude.

\* \* \*

*I dreamed, and in my dream I saw troubled parents searching, searching. And behold, they were searching for a church where their little ones would not be received as members. And in my dream, I saw also mothers, Christian mothers carrying little babies who were loaned to them for a short time by their Heavenly Father. And in my dream I saw these mothers come up to the church door and then turn sorrowfully away because they were required to bring Christ's little ones into the church. And I awoke; and behold, it was not a dream.*

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*Without family religion as God meant it to be neither church nor nation can be saved.*

## Edwards

(continued from page 40)

aration course, and also in the sessional interview, of the doctrinal commitment of the church and of the responsibility of the church to maintain its doctrinal commitment. (See the fourth question asked of those seeking communicant membership in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.)

3. Thirdly, they should be told that on being received they would be admonished to give careful and continued study to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures regarding the question of infant baptism, and that they would be approached by the Session from time to time in connection with its member-family visitation program to ascertain their progress and application in study, not by way of persecuting them, but as a matter of Christian concern.

4. Fourthly, if the applicants should consent to be received on such terms, they should be received, and forthwith admonished in the name of Christ, the admonition being recorded in the minutes of the Session and in the public announcement at their reception.

5. In the fifth place, the Session should from time to time visit and make inquiry concerning the continued study and progress in understanding of such members, noting these matters in its records.

6. In the sixth place, if the study should prove fruitful in bringing an understanding of the teaching and the proper administration of the sacrament of baptism, the facts should be recorded with gratitude to God, and the censure of admonition removed.

### Continuing Discipline

7. In the seventh place, if there should be a refusal to continue to be open to Scripture, then, and only for that reason, might some further steps of discipline be considered. It should be emphasized that any possible discipline taken would not be taken on the ground of the inability of the persons in question to understand the scriptural teaching of baptism, but only on the ground of their refusal to heed the admonition to search the Scriptures. It would be wrong to proceed beyond an admonition with people who are open to the Scriptures, but who are yet unable to understand the teaching regarding baptism.

The understanding of Scripture is

only by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. To force a person to do even a right action from wrong motives would be forcing him to sin. An action truly pleasing to God is not only one required by God in Scripture, but one done from the motive of loving God and with an aim to the glory of God. Compliance with an action without one's heart being in it is less than pleasing to God (Matthew 22: 37, 38).

A church would be guilty of forcing a person to go against his considered understanding of Scripture, and thus of requiring him to sin, if it were to *force* a person to have his children baptized when as yet he cannot understand the biblical teaching. The church should continue to admonish him to be open to Scripture, and to seek the illumination of God's Spirit, but it can go no further than that.

It should be stressed, in conclusion, that it is to be hoped that the desire of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to maintain distinctive truths of Scripture will not cause it to forget essential truths, and to place improper obstacles to the realization in the visible church of that unity of the Spirit of which the Bible speaks.

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*This principle is clearly enunciated in Scripture*

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# Education Begins at Home

**HERBERT W. BUTT**

Christian education, molding the child after the image of Christ, is not something that pertains exclusively to the school or to the church. It has its rise, in fact, in the home, the basic unit of society. Ideally, Christian education begins at home, on mother's lap, around the table with father as teacher, at work and at play. God has placed the responsibility of Christian nurture and discipline squarely on the shoulders of parents. Nothing goes quite right in church or school if they do not take this responsibility seriously and make every attempt to discharge it in the fear of God, depending upon the grace of the Holy Spirit for enablement commensurate to the task.

Just what are parental duties in this

regard? They may be reduced to five:

### 1. Teaching

This should be prominent in family worship, twice a day, preferably at breakfast and dinner. Let father read a chapter of the Old Testament at one occasion and of the New Testament at the other, making it a point to explain the passage, asking questions of the children to make sure they understand the sense to the best of their ability. If this plan is faithfully executed over the years, the children will acquire a remarkable store of Bible knowledge.

Missionary letters may profitably be read too, and prayer may be offered for missionaries and for needs of family, church and school and all the

saints. The best way to impart missionary concern to children is to inform them of missionary enterprises and personalities involved and pray with them in behalf of this aspect of kingdom effort.

As you lead your children in prayer for the work of God, the Holy Spirit will impart to them a spirit of prayer and supplication. God will teach them to pray. Also, family worship affords an excellent opportunity to take the lead in catechetical training. Why leave this responsibility exclusively in the hands of your pastor? His catechism classes are designed only to supplement your instruction in the home.

Scripture memorization should also be incorporated into family worship. A few moments daily devoted to this

will pay rich dividends in spiritual enrichment in later years. Did it ever occur to you that some day your children may be deprived of the use of Bibles? How grateful would they then be for Scripture printed indelibly upon their memories!

It is likewise important that parents be alert to capitalize on every natural opportunity to teach about God and Christ. "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." When at play or work with your children, often you may turn the conversation to spiritual things or draw a spiritual lesson from almost anything you may be discussing or observing.

## 2. Discipline

This is the handmaid to teaching. Without the faithful exercise of discipline, your efforts at instruction will not prove fruitful in the lives of your children. They must learn by experience that God is just and punishes sin. As his representatives, you must insist on obedience and punish wrongdoing. Through you, your children must learn of the severity as well as the goodness of God. This means you must on occasion use the rod.

"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell" (Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 23:13,14). If you fail to see to it that your word becomes law to your children, the chances are slim that God's Word will ever become law to them.

Discipline, however, must not all be negative. Commend your children for their obedience. Make it clear to them that you are pleased when they obey even as you are displeased when they do not obey. Rewarding obedience is not wrong, if it is not done to excess, and if it is made plain that obedience is the gift of grace and so is the reward!

## 3. Exemplary Conduct

It is almost a trite saying, "Actions speak louder than words." Yet, how

**Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.**

**And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.**

**And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates.**

— Deuteronomy 11:18-20 (cf. 6:6-9)

prone we are to forget this maxim. Our children will follow the Lord only insofar as they see us follow the Lord. Children are great imitators. They tend to do as you do more than as you say. You must not expect your children to follow Christ unless they see in you an example of the power of divine grace to free from sin and to perfect virtue, grace that enables you to walk by faith in times of trial, sorrow, disappointment and affliction. Your offspring, to desire your Lord, must see that in reality he is your Lord, and that in brokenness and contrition of heart you look to him alone for pardon, life, and enablement to do his will.

They must know you as one sensitive to your own sinfulness and willing to admit wherein you may have wronged others, even your own sons and daughters. If your life is a flagrant contradiction of your Christian profession, do not be surprised if your children grow up to reject the gospel. Parents can cause the Name of God to be blasphemed among their children, even as Israel was the occasion of God's Name being blasphemed among the Gentiles (Romans 2:24). From such miserable failure may the Lord deliver us.

## 4. Prayer

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much," James tells us. Such prayer for your children will ensure them much spiritual blessing. As you pray in the Holy Spirit for them, he will work in them mightily, granting them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, imparting to them faith in Jesus Christ. What greater joy can a parent experience than that of observing the fruit of the saving work of divine grace in the heart of his child!

This joy may be yours, if you mix the household promises (Acts 2:39; 16:31; Ps. 103:17,18; Ex. 20:6; and Gen. 17:7 with Gal. 3:14) with

faith, humbly beseeching God to fulfill them in your family, to the glory of his grace. Also, by all means do not forget to claim the promise of Gen. 18:19! In the American Standard Version it reads, "For I have known him to the end that he may command his children and his household after him that they may keep the way of Jehovah to do righteousness and justice to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he has spoken of him."

This means that God freely showed favor to Abraham with a view to his receiving grace to bring up his children properly, to the end that they might serve the Lord, and to the further end that all the rich blessing he had promised Abraham he might bring upon him. As children of Abraham through faith in Jesus Christ, may we not expect God to have shown us unmerited favor in the gospel, to the end that we may bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord with a view to their blessing and our blessing to the fullest possible extent? "According to your faith, be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29).

## 5. Love and Companionship

We parents show that we love our children when we teach them, discipline them and pray for them, and when we live exemplary lives before them. In addition to all this, however, it is needful that we demonstrate to them in no uncertain terms our affection for them. Let us tell them that we love them. Let us spend time with them, listening to their accounts of a day's happenings or giving them opportunity to unburden to us their problems, little or big.

We must somehow communicate to them the fact that we stand prepared to help them at all times, and that their concerns are our concerns. It is incumbent upon us to romp and recreate with them. It is our obligation to provide for them in every way, not just food, clothing, shelter; but the best we can in the way of educational opportunities and training in various skills.

No sacrifice on our part in their behalf will be too great, if we love them as God does. May God afford us grace, through the mediation of his Son, to be Christian parents in deed and in truth. Then it will be our joy to guide our children's steps in the way of peace and everlasting joy.

# Aunt Polly's Letter

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MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:

The last time I wrote to you I told you about the old, old Chinese lunar calendar. I explained how it and our solar calendar have been combined. You will see that I have dated this letter as the date looks on this combined calendar. According to the calendar we use the above date is March 3, but according to the lunar calendar it is the first day of the second month.

There are two holidays on the Chinese calendar this month—women's holiday and young people's holiday. On women's holiday the women and older girls usually do not go to work outside the home, and in many homes the men and boys try to be very helpful on that day. Even in the schools the women teachers and the girls do not attend their classes—the men teachers do all the work; but on young people's holiday everybody gets the day off as the schools are closed.

The religious celebration on the Chinese calendar this month is a very important one. It is for the birthday of Kwan Yen, the goddess of mercy of the Buddhist religion. It may be that more people pray to this goddess than to Buddha himself, for she is supposed to take pity upon humans who suffer in this life. Her story is a sad one for it illustrates what Paul says in the first chapter of Romans, that from ancient days people "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator."

Fairly authentic history tells us that Gwan Yen was one of the two queens of a Tibetan monarch, who was the founder of the present capital of Tibet, Lhasa. When she married she brought with her Buddhist books, relics and pictures from China. Her husband built one of the most sacred abbeys to house them. It is now one of the glories of Lhasa. King Srong Tsan Gampo became a very interested Buddhist and in 622 (the same year that Mahomet fled from Mecca) he sent ministers to India to bring the sacred books of Buddhism to Tibet and translate them into the Tibetan language.

Literature circulated by the Buddhists on Taiwan, however, tells a story about Gwan Yen which they say is tradition. This story—though it be tra-

dition—gives the reason why the Chinese worship this human being so I will tell it to you.

Gwan Yen was a kind princess whose father ruled a country near what is called Cambodia today. When she was still young she became a very religious Buddhist and refused to eat meat. A truly good Buddhist eats only vegetables. This religion teaches that when we die our souls will live again in the body of another person, if we have been very, very good. Otherwise, if we have been bad, we will live in some animal. (This is called reincarnation.) So when we kill and eat an animal we are destroying a person's soul. Gwan Yen grew up eating only vegetables and spending her time thinking about the great Buddha and reading the sacred books about him.

When the time came for her father

to secure a husband for her, she refused the man her father had picked. There are two versions of what happened next. According to one, her father killed her. But another says that her father ordered her killed but that a tiger came and carried her to a safe place. Both versions say that she became a supernatural being—a being who is superior to ordinary persons. In this superior nature Gwan Yen is said to have descended into hell. In hell her love and mercy were so strong and great that it became like heaven. So the wicked ruler of hell sent a request to the ruler of heaven to remove her! Whereupon she returned to earth and lived in a cave. There she stayed thinking about her god, Buddha, and doing good deeds. After nine years she died.

Gwan Yen's father became very ill soon after her death. He was told that he would be cured if he would obtain the hand and eye of the most merciful and sympathetic person—one who lived in a cave in the mountains. This of course was Kwan Yen, the goddess of mercy. Though she was dead, she

JESUS LOVES ME

耶穌愛我

Chorus:

LORD JE - SUS LOVES ME

主 耶 穌 愛 我

JEW YEA - SU I WHOA

(Repeat 3 times)

HAVE HOLY BOOK TELLS ME

有 聖 書 告 訴 我

EA SHENG SHOE GOW SU WHOA

was somehow found and willingly sent her father her hand and eye, and he was cured. By doing this she showed supreme mercy because her father had once killed her body.

Some Chinese believe that even while Kwan Yen was alive she became god-like. But she refused to go into the Buddhist heaven, Nirvana, because she wanted to lessen the suffering of her fellow men by her good works and character. It makes your missionaries on Taiwan and the Christian believers there very sad to think of the thousands of people who look to this goddess of mercy, Kwan Yen, for love and mercy. For our Lord Jesus alone can give mercy and love, because he was God come in the flesh. As our only Savior he bore all our sins and sorrows in his body on the cruel cross. This was truly supreme mercy and love.

Finally, I haven't forgotten that some of you have asked me to write out for you the chorus to "Jesus Loves Me" in Chinese so that you can sing it. You will see how to pronounce the Chinese characters, and the English meaning. As you sing I hope you will ask God to help many Chinese to believe in the Savior and his wonderful love as told in the Holy Bible.

Lovingly yours,  
AUNT POLLY GAFFIN

### Packer to Address Institute

The Rev. James I. Packer, Ph.D., Warden of Latimer House, Oxford, England, is to be guest lecturer at the 15th annual Reformed Ministerial Institute at Westminster Seminary, May 25-28. The noted English writer will give four morning lectures on "The Puritan Heritage" and one evening address on "The Theology of Spiritual Renewal."

Under the sponsorship of the Alumni Association of the Seminary, the Institute will also present two members of the faculty: Professor John Skilton, who will give four studies on "II Peter: Some Implications of the Petrine Authorship"; and Professor Paul Woolley, whose morning lectures are to deal with "The Ecclesiastical Resistance in the 19th Century Netherlands as an Historical Pattern."

Mr. Woolley is also scheduled to lead an open forum on Thursday evening on the significance of the Vatican

## WHY THE CROSS ?

Why did Jesus Christ die on the cross? Many answers have been given. For instance, those who had a hand in having him crucified said that he was an evil man because he had claimed to be equal with God: he was therefore put to death for his own sin. This answer we know to be completely wrong.

Another answer is that Jesus died as our great example, showing us how to live the good life. Here possibly is part of the reason, for the Bible does tell us in I Peter 2:21 that "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps."

But is this *the* reason for the cross? No, Christ's death had far greater significance than just his example. Peter goes on to write, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (2:24). Here is the reason why Jesus died over nineteen centuries ago on a hill called Calvary: a substitutionary death took place there. Christ became the substitute for believing sinners by bearing their sins specifically, upon that cross.

How could the Savior ever have done this? Scripture tells us that Jesus "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Peter 2:22). As the sinless one he certainly need never have died. But the amazing truth is that Jesus did die—not for his own sins, for he had none—but for *our* sins, for the sins of all who trust him as Savior. Obviously Peter did not mean to say that Christ died for the sins of those who reject him. No, he bore the sins of those who accept him as Savior and Lord, those whom Peter calls "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation . . . the people of God" (2:9, 10).

When the Bible says that Christ bore our sins, the implication is that sin is a burden. In his death upon the cross Jesus took the *burden* of sin from the hearts of his sinful people so that they may stand before God without their heavy load of sin. The Savior also bore the *guilt* of sin. We are guilty before God for we have sinned against him in thought, word, and deed. In Christ God has given the son of his love to pay the full price of our redemption, removing our guilt and delivering us from the *punishment* of eternal hell.

Why the cross? That guilty sinners may be pardoned and declared righteous in the sight of God! Then saved sinners who trust in Jesus Christ may say:

My sin — O the bliss of this glorious thought! —  
My sin, not in part, but the whole,  
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more;  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul !

DONALD F. STANTON

Council. On Wednesday night a special lecture will be given by a participant at that Council, the Rev. Thomas B. Falls, D.D., Rector of Sacred Heart Parish, Manoa, Pa., former Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Patrology, St. Charles Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa.

### Southern California Presbytery

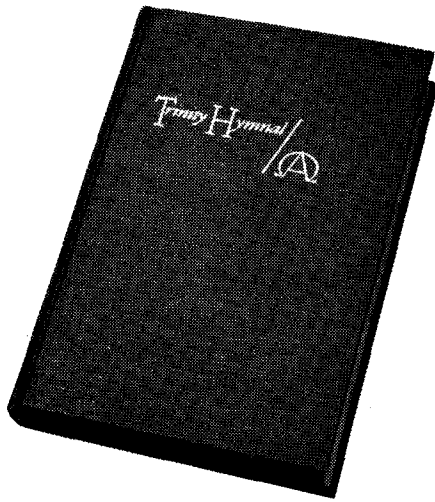
At a meeting of the Presbytery of Southern California held in Beverly Church, Los Angeles on February 11-12 the Rev. Edwards Elliott was chosen as moderator for the coming year. The Rev. Ralph Clough was

named to a two-year term as stated clerk.

After an examination in theology the Rev. Stanley P. Allen, who had been ordained in 1940 by the Bible Presbyterian Church, was enrolled as a member of the Presbytery. He is now assisting in Fountain Valley, a branch work of the Garden Grove Church. Mr. Edward Volz, a member of First Church, Manhattan Beach, was examined and enrolled as a candidate for the gospel ministry under the care of Presbytery.

Mr. Clough was appointed moderator of the session of Westminster Church, whose pastor, the Rev. Michael

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Feb 66



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Stingley, preached his final sermon there on January 3, resigning to enter the chaplaincy in the Army. After completing instruction in New York he will be stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, where he will be joined by his family.

"Christian Maturity" was the theme of the Rev. Bruce Coie's sermon at the popular evening service on Wednesday. A men's chorus of presbyters sang under the direction of the Rev. Dwight Poundstone, and the 25-voice Beverly Youth Choir, directed by Mr. Lyburn Layer, also provided special music.

### TEACHERS NEEDED

#### Oostburg Christian School

Two teachers needed for the 1965-66 school year: one for grade 1, and one for grade 3 and part of 4. Send letters of inquiry to Roland J. Dirkse, 725 Park Ave., Oostburg, Wisconsin 53070.

#### Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy

Elementary division (formerly known as Willow Grove Christian School) has vacancies in grades one and two. Write Mrs. Jonathan Cilley, Secy. Education Committee, 209 Abbeyview, Willow Grove, Penna.

#### Washington Christian School

Teachers invited to apply for positions in elementary grades; we have a definite vacancy in grades 1 and 2. Send applications or inquiries to Mr. Ronald Boss, 11320 Kemp Mill Road, Silver Spring, Md.

#### Evangelical Presbyterian Day School

Opportunity for three new teachers including a teaching administrator for a Christian day school in Huntsville, Alabama sponsored by the First Bible Presbyterian Church. Six classes running through the fourth grade. New building. Inquiries invited to:

Presbyterian Day School Board  
3100 University Drive  
Huntsville, Alabama

#### Westminster Christian School

Opportunity for Kindergarten teacher. Send inquiry to 15000 S.W. 67th Avenue, Miami, Florida.

*We apologize for the late arrival of this issue. The next number will be somewhat delayed also, it appears, but an enlarged May-June issue should find us back on schedule. Thank you for your patience. There are some surprises in store for you.*

### Zip . . . Zip . . . Zip

If your zip code number does not yet appear on the address shown above on this page, we should like to receive it at your early convenience.

The sooner we can change all our address plates to include your zip number, the better.

In due time all our sorting and bundling for mailing must be according to zip code areas—with a hoped for speed-up in delivery to you by the post office. Thank you again for your help.

\* \* \* \*

As an avocation I have tried my hand  
At writing;  
I have been fortunate enough  
To have published a trio of novels on  
Oriental life.  
Last week I was introduced to an American dowager  
Who learned of my meager contributions to literature.  
"I just love your writings," she bubbled,  
"When are you going to do more?"  
Flattered, I said, "Thank you, Madame;  
It happens I am so busy with my regular work  
I fear that anything I do  
Will have to be published posthumously."  
She overcame a puzzled expression,  
And brightened, and purred,  
"Oh wonderful! I can hardly wait."

*The Old Chinese Philosopher*