

Our Sufficiency Is of God: Ahlfeldt

The Churchman: Coray

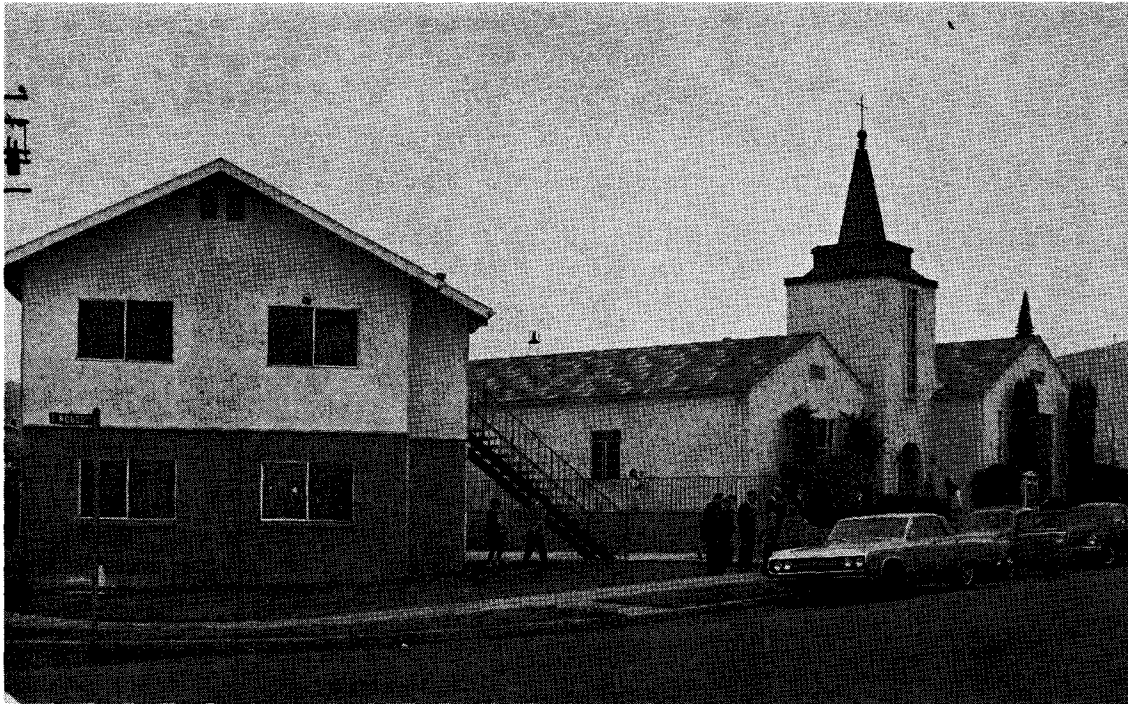
Editorial and Letters

Parable on Evangelism

News with Photos and Index

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Church Builds New Educational Unit

Beverly Church of East Los Angeles—a congregation that has stayed to serve a changing neighborhood where it began nearly a third of a century ago—last fall dedicated its new two-story educational unit to the glory of God. The building was named in honor of Mr. William Woodhouse, a charter member of the church.

(In the photo above the new structure is to the left, the social hall is in the center, with the sanctuary to the right.)

The new building provides much-needed space for a growing Sunday school with an enrollment near 200. The potential for growth was seen in an average attendance of over 200 during a contest a couple of years ago, but inadequate facilities discouraged regular attendance, in the opinion of many. With the incentive of a \$16,000 inheritance and a few thousand dollars in a building fund, the trustees submitted architect's plans to contractors,

(continued on page 5)

Our Sufficiency Is of God

CARL A. AHLFELDT

It is vitally important for the servant of the Lord to realize his own insufficiency, as the previous article stressed. Not to do so is to court disaster. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12). To fail to realize our own insufficiency is to deceive ourselves, and sooner or later the fact will catch up with us. We cannot change the truth of our Lord's statement to his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). But even more important is the fact that if we fail to realize our own insufficiency we also fail to give God the glory due unto his name. If anything is truly accomplished, and we take the view that we have accomplished it by our wisdom or ability, then we surely are taking to ourselves the glory that belongs to God. This our God will not permit. God's purpose in using those who are insufficient is "that no flesh should glory in his presence" (I Cor. 1:29).

But it is also vitally important that we do not stay on the note of our insufficiency. To do so would leave us powerless to accomplish anything. It would leave us in despair. The Apostle Paul was keenly aware of his own insufficiency, but he was gloriously aware of his sufficiency in God. We find this expressed throughout his epistles. It is very clearly expressed here in Second Corinthians. The picture we get of the Apostle here is not that of a weakling. Side by side with his consciousness of his own insufficiency is Paul's full confidence of his sufficiency from God.

Sense of Sufficiency

This sense of sufficiency from God in his case applied especially to his apostleship. There were those in Corinth who detracted from Paul and denied his place as an apostle and servant of the Lord. Entirely in keeping with a true humility, Paul boldly maintained his place as an apostle and minister of the Lord. He could do this with all appropriateness, for his suffi-

ciency was of God, and the glory went to God.

Thus we read (3:5-6), "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament (made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant); not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

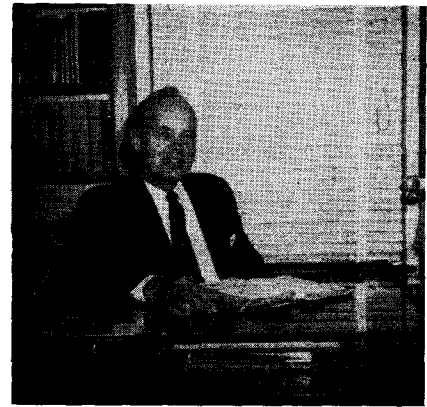
The message thus comes to those of us who labor or contemplate laboring as ministers of the gospel that God gives to us sufficiency. Our sufficiency, to be sure, is not that of an apostle, but of ministers of the Word of God, even as Timothy with Paul was a minister of the Word. Possibly Paul had Timothy and other fellow-laborers in mind when he said that "our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant."

Source in God

How clearly our sufficiency is from God. Surely each one of us in his mind knows this. It is God who calls us unto his service and he who will make us sufficient for that service. However, it is one thing to have a fact like this tucked away in our memory; it is quite another thing to have the blessed consciousness that our sufficiency is from God permeating our hearts and minds and undergirding us with divine strength. It is well for us then as we think further upon this matter of prayer to dwell upon our sufficiency.

Consider first *the nature of the sufficiency which God bestows upon us as his servants.*

This is the second of two papers given on the occasion of Westminster Seminary's annual day of prayer. Mr. Ahlfeldt is pastor of Pilgrim Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Bangor, Me.



In what way does God come to us in our insufficiency, in our utter unworthiness and lack, and enable us to be sufficient as his servants? The Apostle Paul says, "Our sufficiency is of God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." It is true, of course, that Paul experienced a sufficiency which you and I will not know. God made him sufficient as an apostle, and we are not apostles. There is much, however, that we can take to ourselves concerning Paul's sufficiency and that sufficiency which God provided for those who labored with him.

In the first place, God gives to us a personal experience of his transforming grace. God gave this to Paul in a very wonderful way. Paul felt keenly his utter unworthiness to preach the gospel, but he was also very much aware of God's forgiveness and of the standing which God gave him in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. This was a constant encouragement to him as he considered his ministry in the gospel.

Personal Experience

Note how he puts it in his first epistle to Timothy: "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came in-

to the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (I Tim. 1:12-15). Paul never ceased to marvel that a sinner like him could be entrusted with the glorious message of the gospel.

The sufficiency of any one of us in the service of the Lord must begin in the same way. As we noted earlier, our own sinfulness will make us very much aware of our insufficiency. Who are we to engage in the sacred task of proclaiming the Word of God? But then comes the blessed thought of God's sovereign grace, of our quickening unto life, of the forgiveness of our sins, and of the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. We have been redeemed, we have been transformed, we are trophies of grace. This brings peace again. We are the Lord's vessels delivered by him to be used in his service.

This experience of divine grace is the foundation of our sufficiency at all times. God's grace blots out our sinful past. God's grace enables us to stand day by day and moment by moment in the perfect righteousness of Christ. Therefore, and only therefore, dare we handle the sacred Word of God. Let no one presume to seek to engage in the ministry who has not experienced the reality of God's grace in his life.

Our sufficiency also consists in the fact that our message stems from God alone. The Apostle Paul felt that the message which he proclaimed was not something which he reasoned out from himself; he had received it from God by divine revelation. How true it is of us that our message is not of ourselves! If we had to provide the answers for the desperate needs that we face, how utterly we would fail! "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves." But we have God's holy Word. The answers are here, and here alone.

Power of the Holy Spirit

Furthermore, our sufficiency involves the power of the Holy Spirit in our ministry:

"Who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

As Dr. Machen points out in his book, *What Is Faith*, this verse has been greatly misused by those who would like to take the Word of God with a grain of salt. Such would

teach that all God requires is that we get a few great principles from the Bible and not insist on the letter of the law. This is their understanding of Paul's statement that "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

But this verse does *not* refer to a contrast between the letter of the law and the spirit of the law. It does not teach that literalism is deadly, while attention to great principles keeps a man intellectually and spiritually alive. The reference to the spirit here is a reference to the Holy Spirit. The letter, the thing written in the law of God, pronounces a dread sentence of death upon the transgressor. The Holy Spirit of God, as distinguished from the law, gives *life*.

If we were ministers only of the letter, how insufficient our ministry would be! It could only bring death. "The letter killeth." The letter of the law comes to us in the ten commandments. It comes to us repeatedly in all of God's requirements in his

Word. This holds true in the New Testament too. Think, for instance, of the Sermon on the Mount, or of our Lord's summary of the law of God in the commandment to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. Yet we all fail to obey, and the result can only be the dreadful sentence of death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4).

The Spirit Gives Life

But now our ministry is not of the letter, but of the Spirit. It is a ministry of the Holy Spirit, and here is life, for "the Spirit giveth life." The Holy Spirit applies to the soul the redemption purchased by Christ and thus brings life. He does this as he quickens dead sinners to life by giving them a new birth.

How utterly we are dependent upon the power of the Holy Spirit for our sufficiency as God's servants! In our own lives we are dependent upon the indwelling, sanctifying Spirit for a

MY COMMITMENT AS A MEMBER OF MY CHURCH

1. I will seek assurance of my own salvation through Christ, will study so as to grow spiritually, and will try to help others to know the Savior.
2. I will attend the services of God's House unless providentially hindered. (This means that I will not use light excuses of personal convenience and pleasure as common reasons for not attending services.)
3. I will endeavor to read the Bible and pray daily and, if I have a family, to lead them in such devotionals together. I will pray for my church, its pastor, its needs, and believe that God can truly bless us as his people.
4. I will consider my responsibility for the growth of my church by inviting others to attend.
5. I will consider carefully my Christian stewardship including the possibility that I should tithe all my income. I will try to find joy in my giving and not mere duty, knowing that "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver."
6. I will endeavor as my strength and time may allow to visit others in behalf of the church and to encourage Christian fellowship by getting acquainted with others.
7. I will weigh carefully criticism which I hear of others, endeavoring to uphold their good name as I would want my own good name to be respected.
8. I will try to make it a point to attend, when possible, the social and special activities of my church, such as the fellowship dinners, hymnsings, missionary society or youth group. I realize that such activities build a spirit of fellowship with other members.

This I want with all my heart before God, my Helper!

—from the monthly "Reporter" of the Bayview Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Chula Vista, California.

true, loving and free obedience to God's revealed will. In our ministry not one soul is quickened from death in sin without the sovereign, gracious working of the Holy Spirit. Our sermons receive their power and effectiveness as we are endued with the Spirit. Thus each one of us serving the Lord is to realize his complete dependence upon the Spirit of God.

In our instruction of others we are to make much of the importance of the Holy Spirit for them. We are to make it plain that they can expect no beginning of their Christian life, or continuance of it, apart from the mighty working of the Holy Spirit. Such then is the nature of our sufficiency: we have had an experience of God's transforming grace in Christ; we proclaim the eternal Word of God; we go in the power of the Holy Spirit. As Bishop Handley Moule put it, "We know our Master, our message, and our strength."

Having thus considered the *nature* of our sufficiency, let us now think for a little upon *the glory of our sufficiency in the work of the gospel*. Think of the glory of this work in which we are involved in the gospel ministry! Too often we lose sight of the glory of our task. Problems come, personality conflicts arise, pressures build up, we become discouraged. But let us never lose sight of the glory of the ministry of the gospel.

In this chapter where we find our text the Apostle emphasizes greatly the glory of this ministry of the New Covenant. In the days to come it will do us good to be very much aware of this glory.

Glory of the New Covenant

What a glory it is to be involved in the ministry of the Holy Spirit! "If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance—which glory was to be done away—how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" (II Cor. 3:7-8).

The work of the Holy Spirit, giving life to sinners, is indeed a glorious work. "The Spirit giveth life." What a marvelous work he does when he applies redemption! This work of the Spirit is part of the supreme manifestation of the wisdom and power of God.

Yet, think of it, you and I are involved! "Our sufficiency is of God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant." We stand all amazed at our involvement in God's application of salvation. As Calvin points out, "Christ, through our instrumentality, illuminates the minds of men, renews their hearts." As Calvinists we marvel far more at this than does the most zealous Arminian, for we realize how completely salvation is of God. Why then should he permit us to be his ministers? We can but wonder at the sufficiency that he bestows upon us. Surely God could have wrought this work of the Spirit without our ministry, but he has been pleased to permit us this privilege and honor.

The Everlasting Gospel

What a glory it is, moreover, to be engaged in the *permanent* realities of the New Covenant! "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious" (v. II). It is ours to proclaim the everlasting gospel. Certainly there was glory attending the ministration of the Old Covenant. What a place especially Moses had in that ministration! But the ministry of old had a transitory nature. You and I deal with realities which will never pass away.

Today we live in a time of change. What was "in" yesterday is "out" today. There are those who would introduce this fever of change into the basic message of the church of Jesus Christ. They would turn from the historic Christian confessions and from the Bible itself. This is the tragedy of the Confession of 1967 adopted by the United Presbyterian Church. Its proponents would deny the possibility of objective, eternal truth. In doing this they have lost the glory of their ministry.

For those of us who take to heart the ministry as God has committed it to us a very real part of the glory of our sufficiency as ministers of the New Covenant is that God has committed to us the everlasting gospel. No matter what happens in this world, no matter how conditions change, the message committed to you and to me is relevant. Our sufficiency in such an abiding message is glorious.

And then, what a glory it is to stand in the ministry of the blazing *fullness* of divine revelation which we have in the New Covenant! Grace

was revealed before Christ came. How blessed is the central truth of the Covenant of Grace which we find throughout the Scriptures—God's assurance that "I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:33). Yet the time of the Old Covenant was one of shadows and types, of promises yet to be fulfilled. But you and I enjoy a fullness of the revelation of this blessed truth such as was never known before. The sun of righteousness has indeed risen with healing in his wings (Mal. 4:2).

How rich is the truth that we have to proclaim! "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech" (v. 12). How explicit and plain our proclamation can be! When Paul wrote to the Ephesians he referred to "the mystery . . . which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3:5). Thanks be to God who makes us sufficient as ministers of the New Covenant with its full revelation of the truth! Our sufficiency in the work of the gospel is indeed a glorious one.

Let us turn finally to *the blessed effects of our sufficiency*. God provides us with sufficiency as ministers of his Word with effectiveness which brings great blessing.

A sense of our sufficiency from God will sustain us in times of discouragement. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians out of a very real personal experience. During the third missionary journey, when he wrote both Corinthian epistles, he had been through deep distress. He wrote First Corinthians while he was still at Ephesus. What a time of trial it had been! While there he had received word of false teaching in the churches of Galatia. Judaizers had been spreading their false doctrine. This had distressed the Apostle, and he had written the epistle to the Galatians.

Sustaining Grace

Then came the word of serious problems in the church at Corinth. With very deep concern he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians. Still more trials descended upon him. There was the great uproar instigated by Demetrius the silversmith. The Apostle's very life was in danger. Paul records for us how he felt at that time: "For we would not, brethren,

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Beverly Church *(from cover)*

but bids of over \$60,000 instead of the hoped-for \$40,000 almost halted the project.

In the providence of God, however, the trustees learned of a carpenter-contractor, Mr. Ed Price, who specializes in working on three or four churches at a time, and he was hired to supervise the job. Ground was broken in late November 1967, with Pastor Calvin Malcor preaching from Nehemiah and urging the people so to labor on this building that others would be able to say, "The people had a mind to work."

"That well sums up the project; they surely did work," says Mr. Malcor. "I cannot overemphasize the help of volunteer labor, which saved us many thousands of dollars. The congregation is blessed with several men skilled in various phases of construction. Men and boys alike did everything from digging ditches to painting. Fathers of our Sunday school children would come over to work three or four hours at a time, all hours of the day. The women and girls helped with scrubbing and sweeping. No task was too small — or too big!"



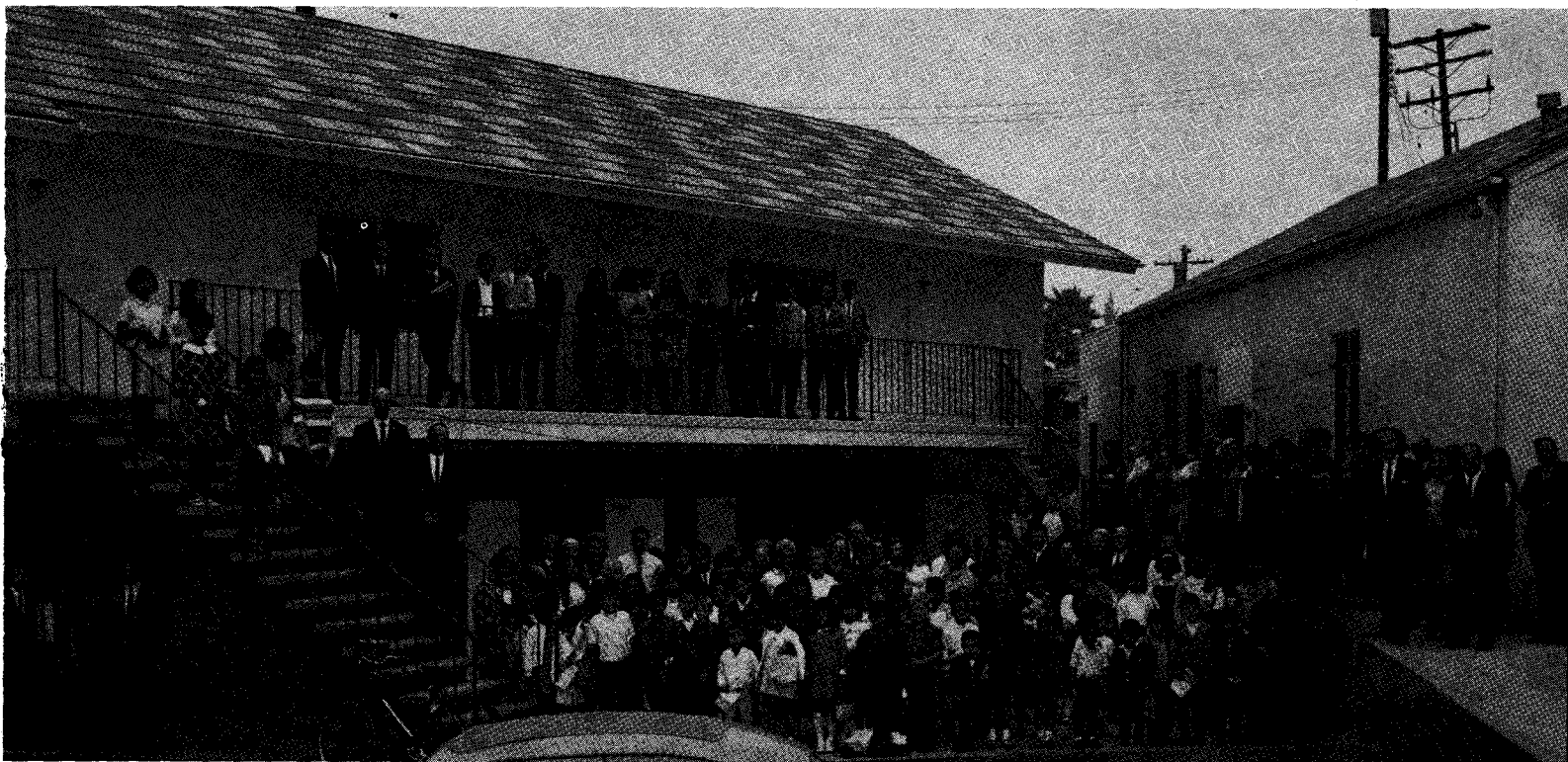
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF BEVERLY CHURCH
Roley DeBoard, Ralph Quintana, Donald Reynolds, Grover Coleman,
Chairman Walter Flores, Pastor Calvin Malcor, Joseph Garrisi, M.D.,
Herbert Pink, John Novinger, Joseph Jepson

Mr. Woodhouse was one of 142 persons instrumental in the formation of the church in October 1936 under the leadership of the Rev. Donald Blackie. Leaving a new building, they began to meet wherever they could —

a tent, a mortuary — to raise a testimony for Jesus Christ in opposition to the modernism of the day. For about a decade they used a remodeled store building for all services.

In 1939 Mr. Blackie was succeeded

Congregation and Sunday School members at the October dedication of the William Woodhouse Education Building



by a Westminster Seminary graduate of that spring, Mr. Dwight Poundstone, who remained as pastor for over 17 years. During his ministry the sanctuary with a half-basement was completed in 1948 and the social hall was added six years later. Mr. Arthur Olson came as pastor in 1957 and the present pastor began his service in 1963 on his graduation from Westminster.

Missionary Vision

Situated in a semi-industrial area bisected by several freeways and near large shopping centers on Beverly and Atlantic Boulevards, Beverly Church has resisted the temptation to move to the suburbs. It is about seven miles east of downtown Los Angeles in a neighborhood that has undergone many changes in three decades. Here the congregation has remained with a vision of propagating the Reformed

faith under the blessing of God. Scores of children and young people of Japanese ancestry, many with a background in Buddhism, attend the Sunday school. Mexican and other nationalities are represented in what has become a predominantly Roman Catholic neighborhood.

While comparative figures do not show much change in membership totals over the years, twice in the past decade the Beverly congregation has been divided in the formation of new congregations. Twenty-six communicants were "given up" in 1958 to Whittier, now Calvary Church of La Mirada. More recently 32 communicants were transferred to El Camino Church of Goleta, of which a former pastor of Beverly, Mr. Poundstone, is now the minister. Thus the witness to redeeming grace through Jesus Christ continues to be spread far and near.

facts and doctrines of our religion, and that all who hold to those facts and doctrines, whatever theories they may employ to explain them, are worthy of our confidence and fellowship."

That these declarations were of momentous significance is clear. In an article titled "The Parting of the Ways" (*The Presbyterian*, June 24, 1924) Dr. Machen let out this blast against the position of the Affirmationists:

The Affirmation is also destructive of the entire actual basis of Christianity; for in the fourth section, the basic facts of the gospel, notably the bodily resurrection of our Lord, are designated as "theories" to explain something else—theories for which alternatives are to be permitted by the Scriptures . . . It is not merely the Scriptures which are being assailed in the Affirmation, but the whole character of our religion as a religion founded on historical proofs.

The Issue Raised

Comes now one of the enigmas of modern church history. Why did not the conservatives in the Presbyterian Church institute disciplinary action against the signers of the iniquitous Auburn Affirmation? Machen placed the issue squarely before the denomination. There the matter rested.

It is interesting that both Lefferts A. Loetscher (*The Broadening Church*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954)—a writer severely critical of Machen's stance on issues, and Edwin H. Rian (*The Presbyterian Conflict*, Eerdmans, 1940)—a man who at that time was completely back of Machen, have expressed surprise that nothing official was attempted in the way of discipline. *The Presbyterian*, a once influential evangelical organ, had this comment on the silence of the orthodox party (September 4, 1924):

There seems to be no sound explanation of the action and attitude of the conservatives except that they made a grave mistake. No advice was given to the Church concerning the "Auburn Affirmation" and, as a result, the matter has troubled the Church ever since.

Ned B. Stonehouse reports in his *Biographical Memoir of Machen*:

For a time after the publication of the Affirmation, consideration was given to the possibility of circulating a counter-affirmation. After conferences with Macartney and others it was decided that conservatives would be on stronger ground if not making any formal and signed reply, but Machen's tentative draft contains a masterful analysis.

(continued on page 8)

CAPTAIN WITH THE MIGHTY HEART — 11

THE CHURCHMAN

HENRY W. CORAY

"In the beginning the world was so made that certain signs come before certain events." So said Cicero.

Years before the alleged "Machen Controversy" convulsed the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. various signs darkened the ecclesiastical horizon—clouds that were to assume thunderhead proportions and unleash forces that would telescope into stirring and shattering events.

Briefly, some of these were: the 1903 declaratory statement adopted by the General Assembly that watered down the confessional teaching concerning the peculiar and particular love of God for his elect people; an official pronouncement to the effect that all who die in infancy are saved by Christ—a controversial subject even among Reformed scholars, and a theme on which the Bible is silent; an effort engineered in 1918 by Presbyterian churchmen advocating union, at the cost of pure doctrine, with seventeen other Protestant bodies: although defeated, this nevertheless mustered the support of a hundred Presbyteries,

proof of the startling drift toward an open-ended framework; the bold defiance of the Presbytery of New York relative to a directive of the General Assembly ordering that Presbytery to do something about the presence of liberal Henry Emerson Fosdick in one of its pulpits.

Auburn Affirmation

Even more tragically significant was the publication in 1923 of a document known as the Auburn Affirmation, signed by more than twelve hundred ministers in the church, asserting that "the doctrine of inerrancy, intended to enhance the authority of the Scriptures, in fact impairs their authority for faith and life, and weakens the testimony of the church to the power of God unto salvation through Jesus Christ"; and also stating that such distinctively Christian, doctrines as the virgin birth of Christ, his vicarious atonement, physical resurrection, and mighty miracles "are not the only theories allowed by the Scriptures and our standards as explanations of those

The Presbyterian
GUARDIAN

EDITOR

ROBERT E. NICHOLAS



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"The Good Earth"

Among the memorable phrases used by the astronauts during their moon sojourn was a frequent reference to "the good earth." Perhaps it was brought to their minds in a special way as they shared an unforgettable reading of the first ten verses of Genesis. Twice the clause occurs: "and God saw that it was good"—the second time in reference to the land and seas which make up the surface of our planet.

One of the men expressed the opinion that the bright object called earth, suspended in the vastness of dark space, looked so good from his distance that mankind's endless quarrels and hatreds seemed embarrassingly shameful. Well, sinful man in a world once good is indeed a shame to his fellowmen and, worse still, an affront to his Creator.

As Moses by inspiration repeatedly states, what God created he saw to be good. And when the climax came with the creation of man in the divine image, God declared that his finished creation was *very good*. How appalling the change from what was there at the beginning! Man has turned from his Maker in disobedience. Not only has the heart of man become deceitful and desperately wicked, but the earth itself has come under a divine curse.

Yet somehow man cannot escape calling his home a "good earth." Such is what God made it to be. On this terrestrial ball, and so far as we know only on this planet, the eternal God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. Only of man is it said that he was fashioned in the likeness of his Creator, a personal being capable of fellowship with his Maker, possessing

the gift of word-communication with that Word who is himself God.

To this earth in the fullness of time came that Word. He was made flesh and dwelt among us and men beheld his glory. Here on a hill called Calvary the Son of God died to redeem a people for himself. One day they shall inhabit a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

The Christian's perspective is unchanged, though he too marvels at human achievement while giving all honor to God. He knows that today as in the first century, if men believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one should rise from the dead—still less though we circle the moon or land upon it or venture to Mars.

God has already spoken. Only in Christ can earth become good again.

—R.E.N.

EDITOR'S MAIL BOX

Dear Sir:

Recently one of our missionaries spoke of the desperate need for more missionaries to fill the places of those soon to retire, not to mention new missionaries in addition to replacements.

I would like to suggest that one reason why our missionary program is bogging down is that our churches, by and large, are not evangelizing the communities right around their church buildings. Do the majority of our men and women love the souls of those around them enough to go out, even once a week, to evangelize? How then can we expect a heart for evangelism overseas?

We must begin at home. We have few young men or women ready to go overseas because we have too few who even cross the street to tell the story of Jesus to a poor lost American. One must have an evangelistic heart for one's own neighborhood before one desires to go elsewhere to extend Christ's kingdom.

Now I am not referring to elders' visitation. I am not referring to following up delinquent members. Such visits are important, but this is not the key to having a heart for missions. Our Orthodox Presbyterian members must be taught to love their neighbors as themselves. They must be urged to go into the community surrounding their church building to evangelize.

A Cure for Missions

People must be taught that it is not enough to attend all of the services. It is not enough to teach Sunday school or be an active officer within the security of the fellowship. No, souls that live around our church buildings must be evangelized.

This doesn't mean a mere call at the door to invite the inhabitants to attend a church service. It means seeking an entrance to that home to tell the story of our loving Savior, the Lord Jesus. It means going from house to house proclaiming the gospel.

As men and women go into the highways and byways they encounter souls. This drives them to study the Scriptures to have answers for future encounters. It drives them to prayer for wisdom and strength. It drives them to prayer for the souls to whom they have witnessed or whom they will yet evangelize. It gives them a pastoral heart, for as souls are converted through the word of the gospel they need shepherding.

It adds life to the church as these new-born souls are added to it. It brings joy to the believers as they behold these new Christians. It challenges those who are not yet evangelizing. It brings peace of conscience to those who are testifying, for they know they are fulfilling the commands of our Lord to love one's neighbor and to go and tell him of the Savior.

When this happens in our local churches, then our missionary program abroad will begin to boom. Those who have a heart for souls at home will have a concern for souls abroad. Those who are evangelizing in the community around their own church building will desire that souls elsewhere should hear the same gospel.

Then there will be men and women who have labored in their own neighborhoods ready to go to other communities in our land and across the seas.

Your brother in Christ,
WALLACE A. BELI.
San Diego, Calif.

Dear Sir:

The statement of the Presbytery of Southern California on Creation (in the November-December issue) appears to have strong biblical support except for portions of point six. One might ask, however, if this body considered the evidence of nature as well

as the statements of Scripture in preparing this formulation.

Now that the "once for all" affirmation for ordained men has been established in this area, it would be refreshing to see the Presbytery turn to some of the more immediate concerns of our society.

J. W. HAAS, JR.
South Hamilton, Mass.

(Ed. note: While it is proper for a Presbytery to state what it believes to be the teaching of the Bible on a particular matter in response to a legitimate question, readers should bear in mind that such statements do not become "established" as a part of the constitution nor are they binding as a "once for all" interpretation.)

Word from Australia

Dear Sir:

Thanks for the invitation to write something on the work here for your readers. I have contemplated this from time to time, but honestly the work is little different than what we would be doing in the U.S.A. if in the OPC pastorate—except it is largely among Dutch immigrants in this country. I'm the only Westminster Seminary graduate in the Reformed Churches of Australia, with the exception of Professor G. Van Groningen, Th.M. '55, of the Reformed Theological College in Geelong, 650 miles away.

Some statistics may be of interest. There are 32 Reformed Churches of Australia, with 7939 members (including 4286 baptized) and 27 ministers plus one emeritus. In New Zealand there are 13 Reformed Churches, with 2323 members (including 1327 baptized) and six ministers plus two emeritus and one missionary to Taiwan.

Half of our ministers here are now graduates of the Reformed Theological College in Geelong, which like Westminster operates as an independent institution. We still have six vacant pulpits in New Zealand and three in Australia, due to emeritation, the return of some Dutch ministers to Holland (we still have a dozen here), and the return of G. I. Williamson to the States to assume a Covenanter pastorate in Wichita, Kansas. There are three former OPC men in New Zealand besides myself here. The pastoral situation may not get better for some time, since there are only 12 men in the Geelong College at present, half of whom belong to our churches.

Integration with the indigenous ele-



RAYMOND AND EDITH ZORN

ment of the country is slow, for we are still regarded as a foreign denomination. Dutch, however, is on the way out, not only for the sake of the "natives" but also for the children, who are no longer conversant in that language. Everything is in English here in Sydney.

Our aim in this generation is to establish a good foundation for the Reformed faith in years to come. This will include not only the catechizing of the covenant youth but also Christian schools, of which we now have three in Australia, with a fourth to begin next year.

Our biggest problem, besides a general apathy to the claims of Christ which is reflected in the public at large also, is the influence of modernism now making inroads upon the Gereformeerde Kerken in Holland. Since most of our people come from this communion, the ties with it are strong in background and family connections. Fortunately, a large number of our people are aware of what is taking place in Holland and do not want the same thing to happen here.

What we miss at the Theological College, however, is the good old Van Tilian apologetic that directly challenges the world with the claims of Christ and maintains the antithesis. I fear that the College apologetic too much follows the idea of expressing as much good about everything as you can and going as easy as possible with criticism. Does the latter lead to compromise at times? This is what I fear is true.

Remember us in your prayers.

Cordially, in Christ,

RAYMOND O. ZORN
Sydney, Australia

No Action Taken in Church Courts (from page 6)

A flood of material was sent out by indignant evangelicals attacking the Affirmation. In addition, mass meetings were held in strategic cities across the nation alerting Presbyterians to the alarming advance of apostasy in the church. But the question persists: Why did not the upholders of the faith, and specifically Machen as he was to do later in the Board of Foreign Missions controversy, take the case into the courts of the church?

I cannot find the answer in the Machen correspondence or in his public writings. One can only speculate therefore. Was it because the "moderate" conservatives advised against action for fear of dividing the church? Was there a weakness in the doctrine of ecclesiology at Princeton Seminary? Was Machen so inexperienced in church court procedure that he simply did not want to become immersed in waters "over his head"?

We may never know the answer on earth. It is enough to point out that subsequent tragic developments in a once great church reveal that the year 1923 was a kind of Munich in Presbyterianism. Other bodies in the Reformed tradition ought to take a lesson from what happened—or didn't happen. "Resist the beginnings of evil," runs a Continental proverb. The Auburn Affirmation gives evidence that the term *liberal* is a misnomer. The liberal within the gate is a relentless enemy of truth and freedom, and has no more moral right to be called liberal than a circle has to be called a square.

The Auburn Affirmation summoned the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to the crossroads. Who can say what would be the state of the church today had proper action been taken then?

Robert Frost was so devastatingly right, was he not? He wrote:

Most of the things we think
we see in life
Are due to truths being
in and out of favor.
I shall be telling this
with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages
hence:
Two roads diverged in
a wood—and I—
I took the one less
traveled by,
And that has made all
the difference.

The Presbyterian Guardian

Our Sufficiency (from page 4)

have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead" (II Cor. 1:8-9).

Then Paul left Ephesus. He stopped at Troas, and had an opportunity there to preach Christ's gospel. But he had no rest in his spirit because he did not find Titus, and had no word from the Corinthians. He went on to Macedonia and there he met Titus with encouraging word from the Corinthians. Thereupon the Apostle sat down and wrote his second letter to the Corinthians with joy and relief.

During all this difficult time it had been God's sufficiency which had sustained him. How well Paul knew what this sufficiency would do for him in time of discouragement! "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant."

God's Sufficiency

Fellow laborers, it will be true for us too. Some of you can look back all the way to the early days of Westminster Seminary. There have been difficult days, but God's sufficiency has sustained you. Many of you look forward to a life of service in God's kingdom. You may expect to face many situations similar to those of the Apostle Paul. It will be God's sufficiency which will give you fresh courage and rest and peace of heart. Life has become more complex and difficult in recent years. All of us will need a greater sense of our sufficiency in God to enable us to meet the needs and opportunities ahead.

Not only will a sense of our sufficiency sustain us, but it will make us bold in the proclamation of the gospel. We live in a day when we are at times strongly tempted to soften our message because the whole world and life view of thousands around us is very different from the truth which we proclaim.

The situation was undoubtedly similar for the Apostle Paul in his day. Think of what courage it took for

this Saul of Tarsus, formerly persecutor of the church, to face the antagonistic, militant Jews and proclaim that Jesus was the Christ and that there was salvation in him alone! Think of what courage it took for Paul to go into the pagan cities of the Roman Empire and there proclaim the message of the triune God and the crucified and risen Savior! Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (I Cor. 1:23).

Great Boldness

Not only did the Apostle face great opposition outside the church, but even within the church there arose those who were his detractors. In Corinth there were those who challenged his apostleship. This was a very serious thing in Paul's eyes, and he felt that he must strongly maintain his apostolic authority. Paul was willing very humbly to let personal advantages go by the board, but maintaining his apostleship to the glory of God was a matter of principle. As Paul faced these various sources of opposition he had great boldness in his proclamation of the gospel. It was a boldness with humility, but it was nevertheless a very confident boldness.

In this day of departure from the faith; in this day of enthusiasm for a false ecumenicity; in this day when many, even of evangelical churches, fail to present the whole counsel of God; in this day too we need that boldness which comes from a sense of our sufficiency in God. We in ourselves cannot face the opposition which confronts us, but God's sufficiency will enable us to meet our task. Most of us are convinced that we are warranted in having such confidence. Let me assure you that as the years go by in the service of the Lord it is demonstrated more and more clearly that our sufficiency in God warrants a holy boldness.

Transformed Lives

There is still another blessed effect from our sufficiency from God: it will bring blessed fruit in transformed lives. Now it is true, of course, that if there were no lives transformed God would still be glorified by a faithful ministry of his Word. Paul wrote, "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." We may not say, when few souls are con-

verted, or even none at all, that God has not been glorified by the proclamation of the gospel. Nevertheless, we may expect our sufficiency in God to bring positive results.

There will be souls converted to Christ through the ministry of his Word. Think of what God wrought through Paul at Corinth! As Paul labored faithfully there he was perhaps discouraged and somewhat fearful. He had been opposed by unbelieving Jews and felt that he must leave the synagogue. He continued his ministry in the house of Justus. Wonderful conversions took place. "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). Thereupon the Lord encouraged his servant. "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:9-11).

Trophies of Grace

Indeed there were results, and here in Second Corinthians Paul writes of them: "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (3:1-3).

Thus there were trophies of grace in the wicked city of Corinth. As his enemies detracted from Paul he could point with confidence to these trophies of divine grace. He goes on to declare that they were the result of his sufficiency in God: "And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant."

We are not apostles, but as ministers of God's Word we are to expect fruit in the conversion of souls. We have strong reasons to be confident of this. Though the apparent results in various ministries may differ greatly, yet if God has called us to his service we may expect positive results in the conversion of souls. This is the fruit

of our sufficiency in God.

Our sufficiency in God will also bring sanctification in the lives of the people of God. In our own lives first, and then in the lives of God's people to whom we minister, there will be the transformation wrought by the Spirit of God. Thus at the close of this chapter the Apostle declares, "But we all with open (unveiled) face beholding as in a glass (mirror) the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord (the Lord the Spirit)."

Sanctification by the Spirit

How marvelous it is to see the transformation which God's grace effects in the lives of people! We see them in their sin and in the misery which results from sin. Before the desperate need in their lives we feel our helplessness. We preach God's Word to them; we seek to instruct them; we counsel with them; we pray earnestly for them. Then we see the change which comes into their lives. They grow in spiritual stature; they increase in their knowledge of God's Word; they become involved in the work of the Lord. As God's servants we know full well that we did not bring this to pass. Yet with quiet joy we realize that this is a fruit of our sufficiency in God.

There are also those who under our ministry do not grow as they should. These bring heartache and cause us as God's servants to cry out to God. The Apostle Paul knew of such also, especially in Corinth. But he did not let them dim his gratitude and joy in the fruit of his ministry in those who grew in grace.

Great is our honor and privilege in being called to serve our God in proclaiming his Word. I can think of no loftier privilege here upon earth than that of the gospel ministry. Were it not for the sufficiency which God supplies, this ministry would leave us in utter frustration. But now a halo of glory surrounds it. May God grant to each one of us a fresh vision of the glory of our task. Let us bow in humble adoration and thanksgiving before our God and look to him for the grace which will meet our every need.

Parable on Evangelism

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur there was once a crude little lifesaving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought for themselves went out day and night tirelessly searching for the lost. Many lives were saved by this wonderful little station, so that it became famous.

Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding area, wanted to become associated with the station and give of their time and money and effort for the support of its work. New boats were bought and new crews trained. The little lifesaving station grew.

Some of the members of the lifesaving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those saved from the sea. So they replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in the enlarged building. Now the lifesaving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they decorated it beautifully and furnished it exquisitely, because they used it as a sort of club.

Fewer members were now interested in going to sea on lifesaving missions, so they hired lifeboat crews to do this work. The lifesaving motif still prevailed in this club's decoration, and there was a liturgical lifeboat in the room where the club initiations were held.

Forgotten Purpose

About this time a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boatloads of cold, wet, and half-drowned people. They were dirty and sick. The beautiful new club was a chaos. So the property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where victims of shipwreck could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's lifesaving activities as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members insisted upon lifesaving as their primary purpose and pointed out that

they were still called a lifesaving station. But they were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save the lives of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own lifesaving station down the coast. They did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a club, and yet another lifesaving station was founded. History continued to repeat itself, and if you visit that seacoast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are frequent in those waters, but most of the people drown!

—THEODORE O. WEDEL, *quoted in the monthly "Newsletter" of the Hacienda Heights, Calif. Orthodox Presbyterian Church.*

New Church in Lancaster

Westminster Presbyterian Church began holding services in July, meeting in the Lancaster School of the Bible, Lancaster, Pa. The Rev. Wilbur Siddons, pastor, renounced the jurisdiction of Donegal Presbytery in June after twenty years in several pastorates in the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. His most recent service was as pastor of the 450-member Memorial Church in Lancaster.

In leaving he announced at a morning worship hour that he was "a conscientious objector. My conscience objects to the unbiblical policies, the worldly programs, the immature pronouncements, and the secular position of the United Presbyterian Church."

Mr. Siddons voiced particular objection to the Confession of 1967. "The authority of the Bible is the formal principle of the Protestant Reformation," he said, "but for the first time in the history of creeds the Confession of 1967 deals with the Scriptures and fails to contend that they are inspired of God." He regarded as even "more devastating" the subscription questions now required of all officers. He stated that within his Presbytery "more than one church sought to add to the subscription questions a statement acknowledging that the present standards are subordinate



TRI-COUNTY ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 Future Location; Pastor L. Craig Long and Elder John Weidenhamer; and
 present meeting-place in East Lewisburg

Tri-County Church Looks Ahead

to the Scriptures as the Word of God." The response of the Presbytery was to inform the churches that all Sessions must abide by the new forms without alteration.

Ministers are now "directed in the expression of faith and life," he said, and forbidden to express their faith "according to the Westminster Confession"! He observed that "those who pleaded for tolerance in the past now refuse tolerance to those who gave it to them before," in spite of assurances by proponents of the Confession of 1967 "that there would be room for all, from the evangelical to the liberal."

After calling attention to the fact that under the former constitution many ministers had repeated their ordination vows with mental reservations, Mr. Siddin pointed out that "the tables have turned . . . and I am faced with the same problem: Should I uphold the new vows with tongue in cheek?" No, he concluded, "My conscience will not allow me to uphold a profession that is not in conformity with the Person of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ nor in conformity with the Word of God. I am not going to be a hypocrite."

Westminster Church has about 150 members, with some 200 persons attending morning worship. The new congregation has affiliated with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. Pastor Siddons is a graduate of Wheaton College and of Gordon Divinity School.

Tri-County Orthodox Presbyterian Church began her third year on December 8 with Home Missions Secretary LeRoy B. Oliver as guest preacher. The pastor is Luther Craig Long, Ph.D. Morning worship is at 9 a.m. in the Farmers' Best Restaurant, East Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

The church's witness to the gospel is extended by a live broadcast of the morning service over WPGM (1570 on the AM dial and 96.7 FM). It is reported that the number of visitors present is generally larger than the membership. Evening services at 7:30 are held in the Susquehanna Youth for Christ Center on 11th Avenue, Shamokin Dam.

The latter town is in Snyder County, while Lewisburg is in Union County. Northumberland is the third county of the trio that gives to this new congregation its distinctive name. Most of the members come from 10 to 20 miles to attend services, and not one family except the pastor's had been Presbyterians prior to affiliation with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Long, in addition to serving the church as pastor, is director of psychological services at the Danville State Mental Hospital, and he teaches graduate courses in Psychology for Penn State and Bucknell Universities. No salaries or honorariums are given to those who serve the church in any capacity. All current expenses are met by means of voluntary contributions

in an offering box at the door.

The denominational Committee on Home Missions and Church extension has purchased three attractive residential lots on Route 15 just south of the Bucknell campus in Lewisburg. The congregation is now making an effort to pay for this \$10,000 site as soon as possible so that a building may be erected for the church's program. Members are filling building fund cans with pennies and other monies in their homes.

The prayers of God's people are requested for the spiritual impact of the church's testimony in the tri-county area. Gifts toward the land payment and the building of the first chapel unit will of course be appreciated. Groups or individuals wishing so to "invest" in this new work may write to the treasurer, Mr. John Weidenhamer, 602 Iklar Street, Lewisburg, Pa. 17837.

COLLEGE TEACHERS

We invite confidential inquiries from persons committed to the Reformed Faith wishing to consider teaching at Trinity, a baccalaureate liberal arts college located in a Chicago suburb.

The doctorate or an active doctoral program is expected. Inquiries about combining college teaching with graduate study in the Chicago area are also solicited.

Dean of the College
 TRINITY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
 Palos Heights, Ill. 60463

Return Requested

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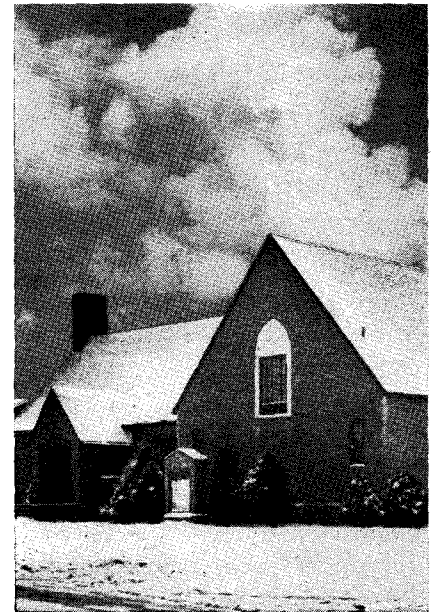
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