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Union
with
Christ

PROFESSOR JOHN MURRAY
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Union with Christ

JOHN MURRAY

The fountain of salvation itself in the eternal election of the Father is "in Christ." Paul says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:3, 4).

The Father elected from eternity, but he elected in Christ. We are not able to understand all that is involved, but the fact is plain enough that there was no election of the Father in eternity apart from Christ. And that means that those who will be saved were not even contemplated by the Father in the ultimate counsel of his predestinating love apart from union with Christ—they were *chosen* in Christ. As far back as we can go in tracing salvation to its fountain we find "union with Christ"; it is not something tacked on; it is there from the outset.

Redemption in Christ

It is also because the people of God were in Christ when he gave his life a ransom and redeemed by his blood that salvation has been secured for them. They are represented as united to Christ in his death, resurrection, and exaltation to heaven (Romans 6:2-11; Ephesians 2:4-6; Colossians 3:3, 4). "In the beloved," Paul says, "we have redemption through his blood" (Ephesians 1:7).

Hence we may never think of the work of redemption wrought once for all by Christ apart from the union with his people which was effected in the election of the Father before the foundation of the world. In other words, we may never think of redemption in abstraction from the mysterious arrangements of God's love and wisdom and grace by which Christ was united to his people and his people were united to him when he died upon the accursed tree and rose again from the dead. That is but another way of say-

ing that the church is the body of Christ and "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25).

New life in Christ

It is in Christ that the people of God are created anew. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Ephesians 2:10). Here Paul is insisting upon the great truth that by grace, not works, we are saved. Salvation has its inception in God's grace. And this is certified by the fact that we are saved by a new creation in Christ.

It should not surprise us that the beginning of salvation in actual possession should be in union with Christ, because we have found already that it is in Christ that salvation had its origin in the eternal election of the Father and that it is in Christ that salvation was once for all secured by Jesus' ransom blood. We could not think of such union with Christ as suspended when the people of God became the actual partakers of redemption—they are created anew *in Christ*.

But not only does the new life have its inception in Christ; it is also continued by virtue of the same relationship to him. It is in Christ that Christian life and behavior are conducted (Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 1:4, 5; cf. 1 Corinthians 6:15-17). The new life believers live they live in the fellowship of Jesus' resurrection; in everything they are made rich in him in all utterance and in all knowledge.

Death and glory in Christ

It is in Christ that believers die. They have fallen asleep in Christ or through Christ and they are dead in Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:14, 16). Could anything illustrate the indissolubility of union with Christ more plainly than the fact that this union is not severed even in death? Death, of course, is real—spirit and body are

rent asunder. But the separated elements of the person are still united to Christ. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psalm 116:15).

Finally, it is in Christ that the people of God will be resurrected and glorified. It is in Christ they will be made alive when the last trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible (1 Corinthians 15:22). It is with Christ they will be glorified (Romans 8:17).

We thus see that union with Christ has its source in the election of God the Father before the foundation of the world, and it has its fruition in the glorification of the sons of God. The perspective of God's people is not narrow; it is broad and it is long. It is not confined to space and time; it has the expanse of eternity. Its orbit has two foci, one the electing love of God the Father in the counsels of eternity, the other glorification with Christ in the manifestation of his glory. The former has no beginning, the latter has no end.

Glorification with Christ at his coming will be but the beginning of a consummation that will encompass the ages of the ages. "So shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). It is a perspective with a past and with a future, but neither the past nor the future is bounded by what we know as our temporal history. And because temporal history falls within such a perspective it has meaning and hope.

What is it that binds past and present and future together in the life of faith and in the hope of glory? Why does the believer entertain the thought of God's determinate counsel with such joy? Why can he have patience in the perplexities and adversities of the present? Why can he have confident assurance with reference to the future and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God?

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It is in Christ that believers die. They have fallen asleep in Christ or through Christ and they are dead in Christ. . . . "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

It is because he cannot think of past, present, or future apart from union with Christ. It is union with Christ now in the virtue of his death and the power of his resurrection that certifies to him the reality of his election in Christ before the foundation of the world—he is blessed by the Father with all spiritual blessings in the heavens in Christ just as he was chosen in Christ from eternal ages (cf. Ephesians 1:3, 4).

And the believer has the seal of an eternal inheritance because it is in Christ that he is sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise as the earnest of his inheritance unto the redemption of the purchased possession (cf. Ephesians 1:

13, 14). Apart from union with Christ we cannot view past, present, or future with anything but dismay and Christless dread. By union with Christ the whole complexion of time and eternity is changed and the people of God may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

"Union with Christ" was the very heart of the Christian faith as Professor Murray taught it and as he himself lived it. This brief summary is from an article appearing in the Guardian of April 15, 1954, part of a series that was later published as Redemption Accomplished and Applied by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Born in northwestern Scotland in 1898, John Murray was gifted by his Lord to be one of his generation's greatest theological minds. He came of the staunchly loyal stock of Scottish Presbyterianism that still rejoices in the doctrines of sovereign grace.

After service in World War I, during which he lost one eye, John Murray set out to prepare himself for the gospel ministry. He received the M.A. from Glasgow University in 1923 and came to Princeton Seminary to continue his studies. He received the Th.B. and Th.M. degrees from Princeton in 1927 and returned to Scotland for further graduate study in Edinburgh University.

In the fall of 1929, John Murray returned to Princeton to begin his life's work as a teacher of theology. He moved to Westminster Seminary the next year and continued there as an instructor in systematic theology, becoming a full professor in 1937. He continued to teach until his retirement in 1966.

After his retirement, Professor Murray returned to his home in Scotland. Soon afterward, he persuaded Miss Valerie Knowlton to join him there in a marriage that has since been blessed by a son and a daughter.

Just a few months ago, after exploratory surgery, John Murray was informed that he had an incurable cancer. The progress of the malignancy was causing him severe pain when the Lord mercifully called him



home on May 8, 1975.

In addition to his wife Valerie, and a sister who lives nearby, Professor Murray is survived by his son, Logan Young, age 6, and daughter, Ann Margaret, now almost four years old.

To attempt any assessment of the impact of Professor Murray's faithful service to his Lord in teaching, preaching, counseling, and simply living as nearly conformed to the image of Christ as any humble saint within recent memory, is more than space and ability permits. Perhaps it all may best be summed up in the concluding sentence of a memorial scroll presented to Mr. Murray at his last attendance on a General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in 1966: "We thank God on every remembrance of you."

— J. J. M.

The Kyles of Sutherland were enveloped in mist, and the day was damp and cold, as though in sympathy with the many mourners who gathered from North, South, East and West, yea, and from across the Atlantic, to pay their last respects to the memory of Professor John Murray of Badbea, Bonar Bridge in Scotland. Some 500 people were congregated there in the historic Free Church of Creich, the church of the revered Dr. Aird, for the funeral service of this saintly scholar on Tuesday, May 13, 1975.

The impressive silence that pervaded this large representative company of ministers from all denominations and people from all walks of life, indicated their consciousness that a prince in Israel had fallen.

The service was conducted by the Rev. M. MacDonald, minister of the Creich congregation, with the assistance of Dr. David Freeman, U. S. A., Rev. John MacSween, Isle of Lewis, Rev. D. Lamont, Edinburgh and Rev. H. Cameron, Dornoch, the Praise being led by Mr. Hector MacLeod, Bonar Bridge.

The dignity and simplicity of the service, in true Reformation style, was just as Professor Murray would have desired. John Murray had gone forth from this small community to become one of the world's leading theologians. Having finished his course and kept the faith, it now seemed fitting that the small cemetery on the shores of the Kyles of Scotland should contain the remains of this worthy servant of Christ until the day break and the shadows flee away.

At the graveside the Rev. D.B. MacLeod Laing reminded us all of the truths that Professor Murray held so dear and so ably taught and preached. He urged sinners to flee the wrath to come and seek refuge in a crucified, risen and exalted Christ, while mercy lasted.

K. J. MacLeay,
Courtesy of the Banner of Truth
Trust, Edinburgh, Scotland.

All Things in Common

ROBERT B. STRIMPLE

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things in common (Acts 2:42-44).

In the second chapter of the book of Acts, we have the authoritative account of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost. His message climaxes in the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus—this Jesus whom they had crucified—his Messianic Lordship, and his outpouring of the promised Holy Spirit.

Pierced to the heart, Peter's hearers ask him, "What shall we do?" They were commanded to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. And with the command is given the promise that "you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (verse 38).

The new life

We read that about three thousand obeyed the command that day. That they received the promised gift of the Holy Spirit is indicated by a capsule summary of the new life into which they entered. One of the elements of that new life in the Spirit was that they "had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need" (verses 44, 45, *NASB*).

They had all things "in common"—the Greek word is *koina*, which has the same root as the familiar term *koinonia*, "fellowship," appearing in verse 42. It means "to share"; and these early Christians knew a very practical, a very concrete, a very down-to-earth kind of sharing or fellowship. They shared their possessions, their

property, their money.

We should remember that this is frequently what Paul has in mind when he speaks of Christian fellowship. For example, in Philippians 4:14, he writes that "no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone." In Romans 15:26 he speaks of a *koinonia* "for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem." Then in 2 Corinthians 9:13 he speaks of the generosity of your *koinonia* with the saints in their needs; in both these places the word is translated "contribution."

In my experience the only Christians I have found perpetuating this quite biblical use of the term "fellowship" are the Plymouth Brethren. I have had men come up to me after I had preached in a Brethren assembly, hold out their hand and say, "I would like to have a little fellowship with you, brother." After shaking hands I would find a check had been left in mine—a most meaningful "right hand of fellowship" indeed!

The sharing life

Not only did these converts in Jerusalem share their financial resources with the needy among them, but they also took their meals together (verse 46)—and we think of the provision for the daily serving of food to the widows (Acts 6).

Again, at the end of Acts 4 we have a picture very similar to the one given in the second chapter:

And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own; but all things were common property to them. And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all (Acts 4:32, 33).

Once again the focus is upon the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and the reference to the abundant grace, the grace of the Spirit, upon the congregation, which was exemplified in this:

For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales, and lay them at the apostles' feet; and they would be distributed to each, as any had need (Acts 4:34, 35).

Reading the comments made on these two passages is a striking reminder of how unhelpful those commentaries on our shelves too often can be. The critical commentators will debate whether Essene influences were present in the primitive Christian community, or whether Luke is merely propagandizing a Greek audience by suggesting, fictitiously of course, that the communal ideal of Plato and Aristotle found its fulfillment in the Christian church.

And evangelical commentators, it seems, expend all their energies in obviating any false conclusions that might be drawn. They are quick to point out how far this practice was from worldly communism or socialism, being strictly voluntary and based on love for one's brethren in Christ. It will be pointed out that the sharing of property presupposes that possessions were not disposed of altogether. Acts 12:12 tells us that Mary, John Mark's mother, retained her house!

Sensitive to the needy

All this is true enough, of course, although one may question whether the same commentators use the same caution in appealing to proof-texts to support the divine right of capitalism.

It will be stressed that there is no suggestion here that community of goods was to be a regular, necessary feature in the constitution of the church. We will be warned that monastic or Anabaptist attempts to reproduce these conditions have invariably failed and brought dishonor to the cause of Christ. We will be told that these were special measures taken by the brethren in special, emergency cir-

cumstances in the city of Jerusalem at a time when its economy was rapidly deteriorating and many were in need.

Again, true enough. But can we be blind to the fact that such "special circumstances," such emergency circumstances, exist in many congregations of Christ's church today? Luke tells us that "there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales, to lay them at the apostles' feet; and they would be distributed to each, as any had need."

No one was allowed to be in need! Can we say even of our own local congregations that because of the generosity of the brethren there is not a needy person among us? And with our economy going as it is, and unemployment rapidly on the increase, will there not be increasing numbers of needy among us?

Instead of being so sensitive to the need to explain that reference to distribution "according to need" in non-socialistic terms, let us be sensitive to the needs of our needy! And let us expend our energies and our resources in creative measures to meet those needs. The social law of Christ com-

mands the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak, the rich to help the poor, and all to bear one another's burden. As we do this, we fulfill the law of Christ.

Zealous for the Spirit

There is one commentator, I have found, who is not content merely to explain the passage away so that we won't feel threatened by it, but rather lets it speak to him and to his readers with full force. As so often, that is John Calvin. He wrote: "We must have hearts that are harder than iron if we are not moved by the reading of this narrative. In those days the believers gave abundantly of what was their own; we in our day are content not only jealously to retain what we possess, but callously to rob others. They set forth their own possessions with simplicity and faithfulness; we devise a thousand cunning devices whereby we may acquire everything for ourselves by hook or by crook. They laid down at the apostles' feet; we do not fear, with sacrilegious boldness, to convert to our own use what was offered to God. They sold their own possessions in those days; in our day it is the lust to purchase that reigns

supreme. At that time love made each man's own possession common property for those in need; in our day such is the inhumanity of many, that they begrudge to the poor a common dwelling upon earth, the common use of water, air, and sky."

We must not, however, make the contrast between that early church and our own so stark that we call into question the reality of God's grace in the hearts of his people today. Last January I had surgery. Not only did the members of our congregation provide the family with meals in those busy days for my wife, but through the board of deacons a gift was anonymously given of such generosity that all my hospital and medical expenses were covered. I don't know who gave that gift, but I know whose Spirit was at work!

May we all be zealous to see the fruit of the Spirit thus displayed in these difficult days in all our congregations before a watching world.

This message was first given at a chapel service at Westminster Seminary. Dr. Strimple is vice-president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty at the Seminary.

Reformed and Presbyterian Congress announced

Miami, Florida, has been selected as the place and October 26-30, 1977, as the time of the long-planned Presbyterian and Reformed Congress of North America. A gathering expected to include as many as 2500 church leaders, the congress is being sponsored by the National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship (NPRF), a loosely knit group of ministers and elders belonging to some ten different Presbyterian and Reformed churches.

The purpose of the Congress, according to a statement issued by the NPRF board of directors, is "to deepen our understanding of and commitment to the doctrine taught in the Word of God and summarized in the classical Reformed standards." It will also "take into account the most fruitful ways of applying the Word of God to the urgent needs of the world," and will "strive for a clearer expression of the unity of the true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Described by an NPRF spokesman

as planned to be "issue oriented," the Congress has been set intentionally for the year following the nation's bicentennial, as one religious initiative at the beginning of the third century of the United States.

While both leaders and participants will be invited from outside the U.S., "this congress will be composed of individual participants; it will not gather as a formal assembly or judicatory of the Church." On the other hand, "it is convened because we cannot ignore others of like precious faith but must encourage and admonish one another to the end that we may find means of strengthening our fellowship in serving the Lord."

Denominations to which NPRF members belong include the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Christian Reformed Church, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in America, Presbyterian Church in the U. S., Reformed Church in America, Reformed Church in the U.S. (Eureka Classis), Reformed Presbyterian Church/Evangelical Synod, Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

Special to P.C.A.

This issue of the *Guardian* is being sent to most ministers of the Presbyterian Church in America. Several of the articles are particularly significant to them in view of decisions to be made in the General Assembly this coming September.

The *Guardian* is indeed gratified at the interest shown in its ministry by many PCA people in the months since the new church was organized. We particularly appreciate the willingness of several PCA individuals to contribute articles for publishing. We believe these are of interest, not only to the membership of the PCA, but to all our readers.

The *Guardian* will continue mailing each issue to the PCA ministers now on its list, at least for the next several months. We hope that many of you will be persuaded to subscribe for yourselves. Any PCA minister not receiving the *Guardian* may do so by dropping us a note asking to be put on the list. Additional copies may be ordered for PCA elders or deacons or members at a special introductory rate of \$3.00 for the first year.

Thornwell's View of The Exercise of Church Power

Presbyterians in America are living through a very significant time. For the first time in over a century, the Presbyterians in the southern part of the United States have suffered a major division. Some 50,000 members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States have separated from their "mother church" to form the Presbyterian Church in America.

As a group essentially drawn from the "Southern Presbyterian Church" who think of themselves as continuing their past Southern Presbyterian heritage, this new church has a special interest in the writings of James Henley Thornwell, one of the founding fathers of the "Southern Presbyterian Church." Happily, the Banner of Truth Trust is presently in the process of republishing Thornwell's *Collected Writings*, together with his *Life and Letters* by Dr. Benjamin Morgan Palmer (this latter volume already being available). Every Presbyterian minister would do well to obtain these works and study them.

Autonomous mission boards

Of particular interest to all Presbyterians, and not only those in the newly formed Presbyterian Church in America, will be the principles that Thornwell stated regarding how the church is to carry forth her great mission.

The Presbyterian Church in America is presently debating this very matter in connection with her world mission program. Thornwell set forth his views during the period between the 1837 Old School–New School division and the 1861 separation of the Southern "Old School" Presbyterians from their Northern brethren.

Prior to the 1837 division, much of the mission work of the Presbyterians, both home and foreign, had been car-

MORTON H. SMITH

ried on by independent mission boards. After the 1837 division, the "Old School" Church determined to carry on its own mission work through its own agencies. Virtually all of the Old School men were agreed that independent agencies were not the proper means for the church to carry on her work.

As the "Old School" Church sought to develop her own means of carrying out her mission, she established her own boards of missions. Thornwell, however, argued against such an establishment, insisting that this was virtually establishing independent agents to carry out the work that Christ had given the church to do.

In these formative years of the new Presbyterian Church in America, it seems well to bring forward again the great principles of Thornwell. They can serve as a warning against the use of independent boards and agencies, as well as a warning against the establishment, even unintentionally, of semi-autonomous boards in the church itself. The organizing committee of the Presbyterian Church in America was aware of Thornwell's views, and in setting forth the overall structure of the new Church, has intended to be guided by them. The day always exists, however, for a committee to begin to act in a semi-autonomous way, and thus gradually move into being a board, instead of a committee of the church.

Thornwell had an incisive mind that was able to set forth the issues of debate with great clarity, and then to subject the issues to the light of Scriptures. It shall be our purpose in this article to gather together a series of extracts from his writings, with a minimum of comment, so as to allow

the flavor of his own language and style to be seen and felt.

(All of the citations from Thornwell, unless otherwise noted, will be from *The Collected Writings of James Henley Thornwell*, edited by John B. Adger and John L. Girardeau, vol. 4.)

I. Thornwell's view of Open Discussion

It was Thornwell's contention that any matter should be fully and openly aired. He was not afraid of the truth, wherever it might lead him. As he debated the question of how the mission work of the church should be implemented, he said:

"The case of missions will suffer nothing from a discussion conducted in the fear of God, and prompted by a single desire to glorify His name. Light is the friend of righteousness; and we never can expect the people of God to engage in any spiritual enterprise with interest and prayer unless its principles are directed to their *faith*. It is by *faith* that kingdoms are to be subdued and righteousness wrought, the mouths of lions stopped, the violence of fire quenched, and the edge of the sword escaped. By *faith* alone can the weak be made strong, and the timid wax valiant in the fight; and if ever the empire of darkness is to be overthrown and the armies of the aliens put to flight in this rebellious province of dark dominions, the sacramental hosts of the elect must go forth strong *in faith*, wielding no other weapons than those which their leader has commanded or approved" (pp. 173f.).

II. The Purpose of the Church

"If our model of church-government is according to the pattern revealed in the Mount, whatever is

subversive of its fundamental principles must necessarily be unScriptural and destitute of all Divine authority. The great object of a visible church-organization or definite system of church-government is to put the Church in a situation, and provide her with all the necessary furniture of officers and means, for building up the kingdom of God and extending its conquests throughout the world" (p. 163).

"The Scriptural view of the Church, as a visible institution, is that she is a mere instrumentality employed by Christ for the purpose of accomplishing His own ends. She is the body, and He the Head; and as the members can only move and act by the volition of the head, so the Church is subject to the will of Christ in all things. She has no will, wisdom nor power of herself. She is the instrument, and He the agent. She is not His confidential advisor, to whom He reveals His purposes, and whom He consults concerning His plans. She is not His confidential agent, to whom He communicates His will, and leaves it to be executed as *she* may see best. She is a *positive* institution, and therefore, must show a definite warrant for everything that she does. It is not enough that her measures are not *condemned*. They must be *sanctioned*, *positively sanctioned*, by the power which ordains her, or they are null and void" (pp. 209f.).

"The power of the Church is purely ministerial and declarative. She is only to hold forth the doctrine, and enforce the laws, and execute the government which Christ has given her. She is to add nothing of her own to, and to subtract nothing from, what her Lord has established. Discretionary power she does not possess" (p. 163).

III. Thornwell's view of Government

Thornwell set forth the issue between the two views then being debated in great simplicity and clarity:

"This whole question is but an off-shoot from another question dividing the minds of brethren amongst us, and that question is *the organization of the Church itself*. Our differences about boards spring legitimately from our differences as to the nature and constitution of the Church. There are amongst us those

Thornwell's views and principles can serve as a warning against the use of independent boards and agencies, as well as a warning against the establishment, even unintentionally, of semi-autonomous boards in the church itself.

who hold that God gave us our church-government, as truly as He gave us our doctrine; and that we have no more right to add to the church-government, which is Divine, than to add to the doctrine, which is Divine. They hold that while the Church may, of course, employ whatever agency is really necessary to do the work entrusted to her,—for that is implied in the very command which enjoins her duty,—yet she has no discretionary power to create a new church court or judicatory, or body, of whatever name, to stand in her own place" (p. 218).

This is an argument that is against both boards established by the church itself, or the use of independent boards outside of the church.

Thornwell continues with the other side of the issue:

"Others, as wise and good men as the first, believe no definite form of church-government is of Divine origin, but God has left it to *man* to organize His Church; and just as civil government was ordained of God in the general, but man is left to arrange its particular form as may, in his view, best suit particular circumstances, so church-government may be modified according to circumstances—according to human ideas of expediency, at the whims of men. God gave only general principles, and man is to work out of them the best system that he can. Thus, one party amongst us holds that Christ gave us the materials and principles of church-government, and has left us to shape them pretty much as we please. But the other holds that God gave us *a Church*, a constitution, laws, presbyteries, assemblies, and all the functionaries necessary to a complete organization of His kingdom upon the earth and to its effective operation; that He has revealed an *order* as well as a *faith*, and that as our attitude in the one case is to hear and *believe*, in the other it is to hear and *obey*. Of one of these parties the motto is, 'You may do all that the Scriptures do not forbid'; of the other, 'You can do only what the Scriptures command.'

"There is no use in blinking this question, for we know that this radical difference respecting the Church does exist, that those of us who hold the opinions first referred to contend that man is not to be the *counsellor of God*, but to accept the Church as it comes from God, and do what He enjoins. We cannot appoint another co-ordinant body to do the work that God appointed us to do. The General Assembly is, and ought to be held to be, the Board of Missions itself. Christ never authorized us to put this work into other hands. It will be said these views are narrow; but are they not true? . . . We are all here ["Ministers and Elders"] as Ruling Elders; only rulers can enter into the assemblies of the Church; we cannot admit here any person that is not recognized as a ruler in the Holy Scriptures. And the Ruling Elder is not here simply by the appointment of the people. Both come here as the representatives or chosen rulers of the people, equally of Divine right and authority, and equally entitled to be here as rulers of the Lord's house. And it is in this capacity, as rulers in Christ's kingdom, that the members of this court have committed to them, for the Church, that work which they may not delegate to any other body" (pp. 218f.).

Here again we see Thornwell's strong argument against the establishment of independent boards to carry out the work of the church. It is an argument that applies equally to boards within or outside of the church.

IV. The Danger of Boards

Thornwell argued at length against the establishment of boards that could act in a semi-autonomous way. He defined the difference between boards and committees. It might be well to get his basic principles about these two different organs clearly before us.

"Committees are usually appointed for one or two purposes—either to prepare or arrange business for the body which appoints them, or to execute some specific trust by the order and direction of the body to which they are responsible. Of the first kind are the Committees of Bills

and Overtures . . . ; and of the latter kind is the Committee of Presbytery to install a pastor . . . It is clear that in neither of these views can any of the Boards of the Church be regarded merely as Committees. They neither prepare and digest business for the action of the Assembly—for they do it themselves; nor execute any specific trust according to the direction or command of the body which appoints them. They are confidential agents, acting upon their own suggestions, and their own view of expediency and duty, without pretending to wait for positive orders from the General Assembly. They are clothed with plenary power to act and do as according to them shall seem most advisable in all matters embraced in the general subject entrusted to their care” (pp. 150f.).

Those who would follow Thornwell in this area must constantly be on the alert regarding any committees established to carry on the work of a church court. Such committees ought only to do that which is directly given them to do. They do not have the prerogative of going ahead of the direction of the Assembly. It was Thornwell’s contention that the entrusting of the power of autonomous operation to a board was virtually to make such boards into additional courts of the church. His contention was that the duties of carrying out the Great Commission were given to the church, and should be carried out by the divinely ordained organizations of the church, namely, its presbyteries. He warned against the Assembly’s vesting in any other body that which constitutionally belongs to the presbyteries:

“The Assembly unquestionably had no right to take from the Presbytery its constitutional authority, and to vest it in any other organization” (p. 153). This was said in context with his description of the power of the presbytery regarding missionaries. He said:

“But, with the single exception of the power of ordaining and of instituting actual process for the crime of heresy, the entire supervision of missionaries and their work is committed to the Board—in other words, the power and jurisdiction granted by the Constitution to the Presbyteries are vested by the Assembly in its own creatures” (p. 152).

As the Presbyterian Church in America moves forward in her organization,

care must be taken lest the full control of either home or foreign missionaries be placed in the hands of Assembly committees.

The Danger of Hierarchy

In addition to the danger of establishing new ecclesiastical courts, Thornwell argued against the establishment of a non-biblical hierarchy.

“We tolerate no official authority in one Minister above another. Our system does not admit it. But the fact is unquestionably that the various officers of our Boards are invested with a control over their brethren, and power in the Church, just as real and just as dangerous as the authority of a Prelate. They constitute a college of ecclesiastical functionaries who determine the character and shape the destinies of the Presbyterian Church in these United States of America. Ministers receive commissions from them, and upon them are dependent for their daily bread; and no slavery is more abject than that which grows out of a hopeless dependence upon others for the necessities and comforts of life. This tie will bind to obedience much more firmly, in ordinary cases, than the ordination vow of the humble priest to reverence and obey his superior Lord [e.g., a bishop]” (p. 156).

Thornwell said this in illustration of his belief that “Boards are subversive of *Presbyterianism*” (p. 155). It was his contention that

“Whatever, therefore, is not done by Elders and Ministers, assembled in some one of the courts above mentioned, is not done by them as *Presbyterians*. It is only in these courts that we recognize the Church as an organized body. Here and here alone, do we find *Presbyterianism*” (p. 149).

The Danger of Independent Agencies

We would again point out that, though his argument was leveled against Boards within the church, which tended to act as separate organizations semi-autonomous to themselves, this would also be a valid argument against the church placing her work in the hands of boards outside of her authority. He spoke very strongly of this:

“The first enormous and command-

ing evil of the voluntary societies [or independent missions agencies] which arrested attention and aroused opposition, was their absolute independence of the authority and jurisdiction of the Church. For years, consequently, her efforts were directed to the single point that the *Church*, as such, should have the control of all the spiritual enterprises of Christian benevolence” (p. 146).

Thornwell was here referring to the debates that had taken place prior to the 1837 division of the Old School from the New School Presbyterians. One of the contentions of Old School Presbyterianism was that independent agencies outside of church jurisdiction were improper agents for carrying out the work of the church. His arguments need again to be heard by twentieth-century Christians.

It may well be, during a time of great decline in a denomination, that individuals and organizations need to resort to independent agencies outside of the church itself in order to carry out the Great Commission. Once, however, the church has been reformed, either from within or by means of separation into a new denominational structure, then the only proper agents for carrying out the Great Commission are those of the church herself. It was to the church that Christ gave his Great Commission.

In his speech before the 1860 General Assembly, Thornwell strongly condemned the formation of boards. This would also apply against the use of independent agencies outside of the church.

“But have we not always boasted that our Church is adequate *as organized in the Scriptures*, to do all the work required at its hands? Have we not gloried in our polity as complete, with all of the muscle, veins and arteries of a perfect system of life and motion? Have we not said that to Congregationalists, You are radically defective in coherency, and have to form societies unknown to the Word of God; and to the Prelatists, You have to borrow of us a General Convention of Presbyters? But our brethren have actually formed within our own Church bodies which independents were driven to form, because their polity is inadequate to the work that Christ requires of His people! . . . Is our Church competent, or is she

God gave us a church [with all that is] necessary to a complete organization of His kingdom upon the earth and to its effective operation; He has revealed an order as well as a faith, and as our attitude in the one case is to hear and believe, in the other it is to hear and obey.

not competent to do her work? Is she so organized, and so equipped, and so officered, that she can, in the use of her own courts and her own powers, do what the Master has bidden her to do? If not, then openly acknowledge your beggary, and cast about for the best system you can find! If not, then openly acknowledge your impotence, and pronounce your Divine institutions a failure" (p. 221).

V. Thornwell's Remedy for False Methods

Thornwell was not just a critic of the developments around him, but he felt strongly that the church had within herself the means of carrying out the Great Commission without such independent boards, either within or without her gates.

"But the great plea which is urged for these institutions is, that without them, in the present state of Christian feeling, nothing would be done: no one would put the shoulder to the wheel. If we understand the force of this plea, it recommends the Boards and a system of permanent agencies as an excellent substitute for vital godliness in churches. Surely, if our Ministers and congregations were what they should be, something would be done. They would count it all joy to engage in the work of the Lord according to His own appointment. If the spirit of love and zeal does not exist among us, it is vain to offer unto the Lord any other oblation. . . . Let us take and propose no substitute for vital piety and active godliness. Substitutes will only increase and perpetuate the evil. Let us lay the axe at the root of the evil—begin reformation at the right point, and God will smile upon us and bless us. Let the provisions of our system be carried out and sustained in their true spirit by every Session, every Presbytery, every Synod, and the General Assembly; let a healthful circulation be diffused through all the veins of the Presbyterian body; . . . In conclusion, all that we ask is Presbyterianism, simple, pure, unadulterated Presby-

terianism—the regular, uniform, healthful action of our noble system. We oppose no good work, but we cannot go out against the foe unless the Lord go with us, and we can have no reason to expect His assistance when we have trampled His institutions in the dust. When the law goes forth, it must go forth from Zion; and because we have told her towers, and marked her bulwarks, and considered her palaces, and have been fully assured that she is the city of the Lord of hosts, the city of our God,—we are resolved neither to rest nor to hold our peace till out of Zion shall go forth the law and the Word of God from Jerusalem" (pp. 171f.).

A Remedy in Presbytery

It was Thornwell's view that the presbyteries should handle the whole business of missions:

"Before closing this article, I wish to present a few additional considerations showing that the Presbyteries ought to take the whole business of missions into their own hands.

"The first is, that the Church absolutely requires it. . . . The General Assembly is the 'bond of union, peace, correspondence and mutual confidence among all our churches.' . . . But the Church must be *enlarged* as well as *united*. Now it is evident that there can be no extension without the formation of individual churches. This is the first step—the Church spreads by increasing the number of its particular congregations. Whatever provision therefore, our Constitution has made for the formation of new churches is just its provision for missionary operations. . . . Now this power is expressly given to the Presbyteries, and to the Presbyteries exclusively; and hence, by necessary inference, the Presbyteries are the missionary agents contemplated by our system" (pp. 212f.).

Again, Thornwell gives his commitment to the church as being the divinely ordained agency for carrying out missions in the following words:

"My faith in the adaptation of our system is founded on my faith in its Divine origin. Believing that our Zion is the city of our God, and that He has promised to establish her forever, I am fully persuaded, that, if we would carry our principles into thorough, practical operation, His presence and spirit would attend us and make our wall salvation and gates praise. Let us only have faith in the success and efficacy of Divine institutions, and we shall find experience more than justifying our highest expectations. The sickly sentimentalism, which for years has passed current for the spirit of missions, which has been fostered and diffused by the American board and kindred institutions, which appeals to the carnal sympathies of man rather than to the faith of God's elect, has had its day and done its work. The real spirit of missions—a spirit of jealousy for the Lord God of hosts, of love to a glorious Saviour, and of ardent attachment to the pure, spiritual principles of His kingdom, combined with a godly desire to save the souls of men from death—is beginning to revive. The Church is waking up to the magnitude of the importance of the contest with the powers of darkness; and knowing her enemies and the enemies of man to be strong, vigilant, and active, she is inquiring for tried armour—for weapons which will stand in the day of battle and drive her enemies discomfited before her. She is returning to the simplicity of faith, and inquiring for the old paths of safety and success. It is a good omen. . . . What we want is *faith*—faith in the Divine promises, faith in the Divine appointments; and when this faith is imparted, earthen pitchers and lamps will be strong and resistless in our hands. To this faith our Church is returning. God grant that she soon may be fully established upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the Chief Cornerstone" (pp. 215f.).

As one who has been involved from the beginning in the formation of the new Presbyterian Church in America, it has been this writer's hope and dream that this new church would truly be the continuation of the kind

(Continued on page 95.)

On the Baptism with the Holy Spirit

A special committee was erected by the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to study "the matter of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a special experience in addition to regeneration and conversion," with a view to sending a report to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod study committee considering this subject.

The Assembly's committee was composed of the Rev. Herbert S. Bird, the Rev. John J. Mitchell, the Rev. William E. Welmets, Ph.D., with the Rev. Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., Th.D., serving throughout all the discussions, though named originally as an alternate. The committee's report, as presented to the Forty-second General Assembly, is given here.

The report takes the form of a series of statements, with scriptural basis, on various areas of concern in the whole area of the Holy Spirit's activity in the church of Christ.

• 1. The baptism with the Holy Spirit, as the fulfillment of the prophecy of John the Baptist (Luke 3:16) and of Jesus (Acts 1:4, 5), is a once-for-all event in the history (or, accomplishment) of redemption, along with the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, with which it is most closely associated (Acts 2:32, 33). Baptism with the Spirit is not an event in the experience of individual believers subsequent to conversion (1 Corinthians 12:13).

In keeping with Jesus' words in Acts 1:8 ("in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth"), baptism with the Holy Spirit is realized as an event in four stages: (1) on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit fell upon the entire body of Jewish believers (Acts 2:1-4); (2) in Samaria, when the Samaritan believers received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17); (3) in Caesarea, when the Holy Spirit fell upon all the Gentile listeners, the initial nucleus of the far-flung church among the Gentiles (Acts 10:44); and (4) at Ephesus, when the Holy Spirit came on previously bypassed disciples of John the Baptist in close conjunction with their being baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:1-7). Baptism with the Holy Spirit is thus associated with the once-for-all foundation and the on-going witnessing nature of the church of Jesus Christ, rather than with experiences of individual Christians.

• 2. Every believer comes to share in the baptism with the Holy Spirit through his union with Christ at conversion (1 Corinthians 12:13).

• 3. To share in the baptism with the Spirit means to have a place in the church, as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:21, 22), where the Spirit is at work for the blessing and mutual edification of believers according to his will.

a. As the Spirit of adoption, he indwells each believer (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6).

b. As the Spirit of Christ, he indwells the whole body

enabling each member to contribute to the edification of the whole (Ephesians 4:1-16).

c. As the Spirit of truth, he has given through the apostles and prophets the completed revelation of Christ and continues to empower the church to bear witness of Christ to all nations (John 15:26, 27; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 2:20).

• 4. Being filled with the Spirit is not to be equated with the baptism with the Holy Spirit, but has reference to the continuing activity of the Spirit in the life of the believer (Ephesians 5:17-21).

• 5. The gifts of prophecy and tongues: observations on 1 Corinthians 12—14.

a. 1 Corinthians 14 is constructed in terms of a contrast between prophecy and tongues (verses 2 and 3, 4, 5, 6, 22, 23 and 24, 26-28 and 29-32, 39). What makes this contrast possible is the fact that prophecy and tongues have in common that they are Word-gifts.

b. Interpreted tongues are functionally equivalent to prophecy (verse 5).

c. The function of New Testament prophecy is to bring God's verbal revelation (verses 30, 26; cf. Acts 11:27, 28; 21:10, 11). Therefore, tongues are a revelatory gift (cf. verse 5).

d. Tongues are also a temporary judgment-sign against Israel (see Paul's use of Isaiah 28:11, 12 in verses 20-22).

e. 1 Corinthians 14 does not support a private, devotional use of tongues; verses 2, 4, and 28 must be interpreted in the light of the norms expressed in verses 13 and 27.

f. 1 Corinthians 12—14 does not teach that a function of the gift of tongues is to create deeper love for God and for others, or a more intense desire to pray and witness. In fact, it teaches that matters such as even the greatest of these, which is love, are not dependent on these gifts (13:1-3, 8, 13).

g. The gifts of prophecy and tongues are concomitant in the church with the gift of the apostolate (12:28; Ephesians 2:20; Hebrews 2:3, 4), and therefore ceased with the close of the apostolic age.

h. The view that the tongues in Corinth as well as on the day of Pentecost were genuine languages finds its support in the requirement of interpretation into the language of those present (14:5, 27, 28). There is no evidence that modern glossolalic utterances are language.

• 6. The gifts of healing and other miracles

In addition to the revelatory gifts, there were other spiritual gifts that served as attestations of Word-revelation (1 Corinthians 12:9, 10, 28; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:4). These signs were themselves revelatory, serving as demonstrations of God's saving power (e.g., Acts 4:8-12). Although these gifts also ceased with the close of the apostolic age (2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:4), God continues to heal according to his sovereign will (James 5:14, 15).

Thornwell's View —

(Continued from page 93.)

of Presbyterianism that Thornwell taught and instituted in the Southern Presbyterian Church. For the first half century of her life, the Southern Presbyterian Church was marked by these distinctives, and the Lord richly blessed that denomination far beyond her strength, either numerically or financially, to become a great instrument in carrying forth the gospel both at home and abroad.

With the decline of that grand old church, what is desperately needed in America today is a true Presbyterian Church that will set forth afresh these great principles, and using the instruments that God has ordained, carry forth the gospel even more effectively than it has ever been done before. May God enable this new denomination, and all other truly Reformed denominations, to seek constantly to reform themselves according to the Word, to examine themselves and move to a fresh stand upon the Bible, not just as the rule of faith, but also as the rule of practice. If this were truly done, then surely we would see the church in the twentieth century revived with the power of the church of the first century, going forth to conquer in the name of Christ.

Dr. Morton H. Smith is a professor at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, and is also serving as Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America. Dr. Smith is a foremost scholar in the history of American Presbyterianism, particularly as that came to fruition in the Southern Presbyterian traditions.

Reprints on Thornwell article

Reprints of Dr. Morton H. Smith's study of "Thornwell's View of the Exercise of Church Power" are available in quantity to interested readers. This subject will be of major concern at the forthcoming General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America. Copies for distribution to elder-commissioners or others may be obtained, at a cost of 20¢ each, or \$1.50 for ten copies, postage included. Order from: The Presbyterian Guardian, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia, PA 19126.

June, 1975

A Retraction and an Apology

In the April 1975 issue of the *Guardian* there appeared a report on actions of the Presbytery of California of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, in receiving the Rev. Lawrence G. Andres and permitting him to minister to the Westminster Chapel in San Jose.

Several statements in that report have been challenged as inaccurate. The best information available now indicates the need for these corrections:

1. Contrary to the report in the *Guardian*, the Westminster Chapel had *not* applied to the R. P. Presbytery of California, nor was the presbytery investigating the group "with a view to its possible reception as a congregation of the presbytery." No such application had been made.

2. The R. P. Presbytery of California did *not* "approve" of Mr. Andres' "ministry in the Sunnyside-San Jose area." It did examine and receive Mr. Andres as a ministerial member of presbytery and so in effect "approved" him. It did not, however, endorse the Westminster Chapel but is conducting an investigation into the work itself.

3. The elder in the R. P. Presbytery who voted against the majority action did ask for dismission to an Orthodox Presbyterian congregation. Contrary to a possible impression from the report, this decision had been made in advance and was not a result of the presbytery actions.

Other aspects of the situation seem to call for some clarification:

1. The R. P. Presbytery, while neither approving nor disapproving of the Westminster Chapel, did in fact permit Mr. Andres to minister to the group while further investigation of the work is being done.

2. The *Guardian* report did not actually say that these actions of the R. P. Presbytery constituted "approval of a schismatic movement" (but rather that this would be the judgment of many), but that implication is suggested by the report.

The editor of the *Guardian* sincerely appreciates those who have called these errors to his attention. He particularly regrets that errors of fact were published and would express his apology to the elder mentioned above for any harm caused him by the report's impressions. The editor further hopes

this statement, which was circulated at the O.P.C. General Assembly and the R.P.C. Synod meetings at Geneva College, may alleviate some of the damage done by carelessness in ascertaining the facts. He would ask forgiveness of anyone hurt by these errors.

—J. J. Mitchell

Report on Assembly

Though this issue of the *Guardian* will reach the readers after the conclusion of the simultaneous meetings of the highest judicatories of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church/Evangelical Synod, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, publishing schedules made it impossible to include any report of actions taken there.

A full report of these meetings, and particularly of the decisions in regard to merger of the OPC and the RPC/ES, will be given in a special July issue of the *Guardian*. Readers will receive an extra issue this year, an increase we hope can be continued or even enlarged in future years.

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Letters

Letter from the editor

Dear Reader:

Every so often the desk of the editor begins to overflow with letters. It happened again recently, particularly in regard to the article "Without the Camp" by Les Cover, in which he described his situation in an area without a Reformed church and asked some probing questions. We appreciated his original article, and we appreciate the answers that have been suggested.

We certainly don't plan to print every letter we get—especially like the one that came recently and would have filled at least three pages alone. But we do appreciate the comments of readers; often they are as interesting as anything in a given issue! Let us hear from you.

John J. Mitchell

A parallel experience

"Without the Camp" (in the January 1975 *Guardian*) so exactly described our own experience when we moved to Polson, Montana, that I could almost believe I had written it!

There were a few differences: We did not try as hard as you to start a Reformed work. But the hungering for the "whole council" of the Word was just as strong.

One thing we were aware of—no one in the family had ever been immersed and the only churches in the area where our "sprinkling" would have been acceptable were liberal in theology. I never cease to be amazed at a church that will grant you can be saved and go to heaven without immersion but still refuses you church membership on that ground (or water?).

Then one day the telephone rang and we learned from Mrs. Fred Malroy that a group was meeting on Sunday afternoons to listen to taped sermons from the Rev. Albert Edwards of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Portland, Oregon. You may remember our story from the May 1974 issue of the *Guardian*. Since then the Rev. Russell Piper, retired pastor from Lincoln, Nebraska, is serving the group while Pastor Kellam finishes his work at the university.

I'm relating all this just to encourage you. I joined the Orthodox Presbyterian Church thirty-four years ago and have yet to attend a large church.

Yet over those years we have heard the fullness of the Word preached. Those pastors have been dedicated, Christian men, striving to live the life they preach. So, why don't our churches grow with this kind of leadership?

One reason might be that itching ear problem Paul mentions in 2 Timothy 4:3, 4. We've been intrigued by how much time is spent in some churches on prophecy and the Rapture. People seem to be afraid, not to the point of seeking true reformation in their lives, but just to the point of being removed from the tribulation.

Another reason for slow growth may be because God wants us to be missionaries. Perhaps we're not so much "without the camp" as supposed to start a camp of our own. We know you have tried. But have you tried among the unchurched? Have you gone seeking that which is lost?

Please don't suppose that I think *we* have to save people. But even so, you are where you are for a reason, and perhaps that is for the establishment of a Reformed testimony in your area.

I am putting this on my prayer list, praying that God will bring another family to the Los Alamos area so that two Reformed families can unite in fellowship and undertake a real work for the Lord.

Finally, I would urge the use of a cassette recorder. It is really wonderful to listen to a good sermon on tape, to stop it when the phone rings, to rerun portions you might want to hear again. And would you believe? Our ministers feed us so well that we can listen to most of their sermons more than once and still be surprised at what slipped by us the first time.

A church is not born in a day. God's time schedule is not ours. It took years before anything really promising came to pass in Ronan. But our God is always faithful and just to reward the faithful servant.

Mrs. Dorothy F. Stukey
Polson, Montana

Choices for Reformed people

In his article "Without the Camp" Mr. Cover certainly puts the pressure on a sore spot for our Reformed churches. I would suggest three solutions, one of which Mr. Cover himself hints at.

First, Christian families could refuse transfers to places where no Reformed church exists. This requires consider-

able spiritual maturity and a strong sense of the priority of spiritual values over material ones. If the family itself lacks this maturity, the elders should present them with the problems raised in Mr. Cover's article and counsel them against such a move. Perhaps the church needs to deal more comprehensively with the whole problem of transiency today.

Some, however, have no choice but to be transferred. I am thinking of military personnel or those, like the Covers, who move believing that they will have no serious problem finding a suitable church home. If the situation does turn out to be irremediable, such families should move on as soon as possible to a place where they are certain to find a suitable church home. God must take precedence over mammon, even the mammon of well-paying employment. The promise of God to provide our temporal needs is given to those who seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Another solution may well make moving unnecessary. The circuit rider is a time-honored solution to ministering to isolated Christians. A single pastor, or a minister and wife with children grown up and gone, or a semi-retired minister could have a circuit of perhaps four stations, each receiving a due proportion of time during the month.

Once a small group or family accepted the circuit-rider solution, however, they would have to commit themselves to some degree of permanence and to tithe faithfully for their pastor's support. In fact, a definite time commitment for both people and circuit rider seems to be necessary as well as definite financial arrangements.

Where would circuit riders come from? God will raise them up as needed, hopefully from among our own pastors now regularly settled in churches.

James E. McFarland, pastor
Knox Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Oklahoma City, Okla.

A joint effort to serve?

The article by Les Cover in the January issue of the *Guardian* has been a burden on my heart ever since I read it. I served the Lord in New Mexico and know the problem of which Mr. Cover speaks.

When leaving the area, I often wondered about the people in the outlying areas of the state, many of whom

never have the opportunity of hearing the Reformed faith proclaimed, to say nothing of having the sacraments ministered to them.

My thought is this: Why can't the Home Missions Committees of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church/Evangelical Synod, and the Presbyterian Church in America work together in supplying a home missionary to the two states of New Mexico and Arizona? This person could not only be used to provide services for people in outlying areas and to administer the sacraments, but could also make recommendations to the mission committees involved whenever a particular area had reached the place where establishment of a church was possible.

I see nothing in Reformed church polity against such an approach. The area involved has a great need for the Reformed faith to be proclaimed and practiced, as the so-called Bible churches have made great inroads there. Knowing the area as I do, I think it would be far better if the person doing this work was a mature minister and one that had some insight into the cultural traditions and practices of the area. I believe there is a real need and I think Mr. Cover has brought it forth in a clear way.

Leonard T. Van Horn, pastor
First Presbyterian Church
Centreville, Alabama

The need to reach out

Being "Without the Camp" is the experience of most folks of deep Reformed conviction who find themselves displaced to the great Southwest in these United States. Modernism and a shallow fundamentalism are quite prevalent there. And the Reformed faith can only stand opposed to the Arminianism, dispensationalism, and neo-pentecostalism by which modernism and fundamentalism often present themselves. Only the Reformed faith maintains a balanced view of God's sovereignty and covenant dealings with his people.

The modernists neglect Scripture entirely and move to the logical extreme of the Arminians, to Pelagianism where original sin is rejected, man is seen as good in himself, and there is no need for the salvation wrought through Christ. A rational moralism is the result. Violence is done to the concept of God's sovereignty and the covenant has no meaning. Evangelical Methodism does not go to this extreme, but does

prefer to see man's will as the first step in the process of salvation.

The fundamentalist churches are mainly baptistic and dispensational in character. The emphasis on "believer's baptism" also reveals a semi-Pelagian flavor where the first steps of salvation are again taken by the will of men. The same synergism is evident in Arminianism where the human will is seen as one of the causes of regeneration. In some fundamentalistic churches, salvation is seen to be two-sided: First there is the work of God in Christ, and then comes the work of man in accepting God's work. Sovereign grace is thus totally unknown.

Dispensationalism "divides" Scripture, rupturing the flow of redemptive history as set forth in Scripture, and disallowing the outworking of the covenant of grace. Since no feeling for the covenant is achieved, the seal of the

emphasis on the individual rather than a sovereign God, tend to be Arminian, baptistic, and dispensational in character. The number of those who have entered neo-pentecostalism, leaving behind the basics of the Reformed faith, is not small. In many cases they have been rebaptized, thus denying the covenant of grace. And they have subscribed to a theology centered in man, majoring in evangelical good works.

A full-orbed understanding of Calvinism is essential if the church is not to be further warped by modernism and a shallow fundamentalism. Men and women in our churches need to become self-consciously Reformed. Doctrine must not only be known, it must become a part of life itself. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

"The truth of the matter is that the Reformed faith is the Christian faith

WITHOUT THE CAMP?

Since writing "Without the Camp," we find ourselves in the process of gathering together a group of believers who are concerned for the Reformed faith. We hope to establish a mission church in Sante Fe, New Mexico. The Christian Reformed Churches in Albuquerque are assisting us in this venture.

If you have people on your mailing

lists (or if readers know of any) in the Sante Fe area, we would appreciate your letting us know about them so that we can get together.

Thank you for your help!

Les and Bobbie Cover
718 Meadow Lane
Los Alamos, NM 87544

covenant is lacking among children. Because the Old Testament is broken off from the New, baptism thus becomes a testimony to man's acceptance rather than a seal to God's faithfulness to his covenant. The obedience of faith and evangelical good works take on great importance for dispensationalism, and the dangers of Arminianism and semi-Pelagianism are immediately present—even to the extreme of holding that baptism is essential for salvation.

Re-baptism is not uncommon and is seen as essential by most Baptist groups. Those who submit to re-baptism are thus denying the covenant of grace and the promise given to believers and their children. Emphasis is placed on the individual and his believing acts, not on God and his faithful promises.

Similarly, neo-pentecostalism and traditional pentecostalism, with an em-

phasis on the individual rather than a sovereign God, tend to be Arminian, baptistic, and dispensational in character. The number of those who have entered neo-pentecostalism, leaving behind the basics of the Reformed faith, is not small. In many cases they have been rebaptized, thus denying the covenant of grace. And they have subscribed to a theology centered in man, majoring in evangelical good works.

A full-orbed understanding of Calvinism is essential if the church is not to be further warped by modernism and a shallow fundamentalism. Men and women in our churches need to become self-consciously Reformed. Doctrine must not only be known, it must become a part of life itself. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

"The truth of the matter is that the Reformed faith is the Christian faith

in its most comprehensive and consistent formulation and that Calvinism is Christianity in its purest and most precise expression" (R. B. Kuiper in *To Be or Not to Be Reformed*, p. 29). We have an obligation to reach out to those "without the camp" and to penetrate the great Southwest and other areas. Those "without the camp" nearly overcome by modernism and shallow fundamentalism are crying out, "Come over to Macedonia and help us" (Acts 16:9).

Our churches must begin to consider the urgent need and opportunity before us to proclaim the truth, to teach the covenant faith of our fathers, and to embrace all those who are "without the camp."

Dennis J. Prutow, pastor
Westminster O. P. Church
Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Genesis 2:22

What are we meant to be?

This is in response to the review of *All We're Meant to Be* by Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty in the May issue of the *Guardian*.

We can learn much from *All We're Meant to Be* and the book gives us much to think about. But it does not have all the answers.

First and foremost there is a latent, and perhaps unconscious, inadequate view of the authority of Scripture. For instance: Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote in 1 Timothy 2:13 that women should not teach or exercise authority over men because "Adam was formed first, then Eve." The significance of this "creation order" is dismissed by Scanzoni and Hardesty because it does not make sense: "And how order of creation relates to abilities in teaching is not explained" (p. 28)—despite the New Testament interpretation of those creation events (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:3, 7-9).

Paul's understanding of woman's place is labelled "rabbinic" by the authors; that is, his view is conditioned by his Jewish training, and so is questionable, though it is part of the Word of God.

Another example is the authors' limiting passages, such as Titus 2:4-5 and 1 Timothy 2:14 to Paul's time and culture (pp. 109f.). The very reasons given in the book for the passages' appropriateness then (to preserve the Christian home) make them appropriate now.

The treatment of the Old Testament comes close to being critical. Discrepancies are noted between Genesis 1 and 2 and, though the two chapters are said not to contradict one another, no clear harmonization is presented in the book. Little attempt is made to understand Old Testament laws concerning women, such as laws regulating vows and unclean laws, in terms of God's purpose in giving them to his people.

In addition, there is some confusion of God's Word which is authoritative, and man's word which is not. The study of comparative cultures, apocryphal writings and Jewish writings (the Talmud, etc.) may be interesting or even

give us insight into God's Word; but these are not inspired and therefore have no authority over us.

For example: Ecclesiasticus is cited (p. 131) to show why Hebrew men preferred sons to daughters; the reason given is that daughters cause more anxiety, that a man's wickedness is better than a woman's goodness (Ecclus. 42:9ff.). In contrast, the Old Testament gives no such picture of the difference between sons and daughters.

In another instance, the authors, in their description of patriarchy in the Old Testament, cite another author (Pedersen) who says a wife should sacrifice her life for her husband's because his life was more valuable than hers (p. 92). The idea that a woman's life is worth less than a man's has no basis in the Old Testament, though the idea may have been present in surrounding cultures.

Another problem with *All We're Meant to Be* is somewhat superficial exegesis of crucial passages dealing with women in the New Testament. The Greek word for "teach" in 1 Timothy 2:12 is said to be the word for "formal instruction" (p. 70) and many women are said to possess this gift. However, *didasko* is the usual word for "teach"; it may mean formal teaching but not necessarily. And it is not the word used for Priscilla's and Aquila's expounding the word to Apollos (if that is significant).

In 1 Corinthians 14:34 the authors write that "speak" means "chatter" or "idle talk" (p. 68). *Laleo* can mean a formal lecture as well as idle talk; it has as wide a range of meaning as the English "speak" does. There is no contextual reason to prefer "chatter."

One wonders on what basis "law" in 1 Corinthians 14:34 is interpreted as social custom rather than the law of God as it is in verse 21. Even without Genesis 3:16, there is ample evidence in the Old Testament to indicate the wife's "subordination" to her husband.

In response to Galatians 3:28, which is the cornerstone text of those who seek absolute equality for women, one must note that the context is one of

baptism and our union with Christ. In addition, the oneness (which is not the same as equality) of believers was a fact when Paul wrote Galatians (note present tense). The verse does not indicate all distinctions are gone. The institution of slavery has been abolished, and so there are no masters or slaves; but slavery is a purely social creation and so all trace of it can be done away with. However, racial and sexual distinctions still exist; and God still deals with Jews as Jews as Romans 9-11 indicates. The categories of male and female still exist as does the institution of marriage, which is not a purely social invention but is a divine ordinance.

So the commands to husband and wife still apply. It is true and noteworthy that in Ephesians 5:25 husbands are told to love their wives, not rule over them, and that love is to be self-giving, upbuilding and cherishing for their wives, as the authors beautifully point out. However, the command to the husband does not nullify the command to the wife, as the authors seem to suggest. They say, "Equality and subordination are contradictions" (p. 110).

This sounds logical, but God's logic is better and he presents both in his Word. Christ is both equal to the Father (Phil. 2:6) and subordinate (John 14:28; 1 Cor. 11:3; 15:28). We do not need to "evolve" Ephesians 5:21ff. into God's ideal; God's Word is perfect as is, though we may misunderstand parts of it. The husband's Christlike love for his wife enables her to obey him as her head and makes this headship a light and easy yoke (as it was before the fall).

Finally, the bias of the authors is clear, and for that reason their exegesis should be carefully checked and each Scripture text diligently looked up.

I do hope this answer-to-a-book-review can be used somehow. *All We're Meant to Be* has many merits, but I think the almost uncritical praise it received in Mrs. Sibley's review should be tempered by bringing out some of book's problems.

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The Presbyterian Guardian

Women in the Church

GEORGIA SETTLE

Since the beginning of history, there have been the Sarahs, the Deborahs, and the Hannahs, to serve the Lord. Certainly since the days of Mary and Martha of Bethany, women have been worshiping and serving Christ in his church.

In many Presbyterian churches today there is an active organization of women serving their Lord together. In the Presbyterian Church in America, the Christian Education Committee's concept of such an organization can be described with four words. It should be *Scriptural, Supportive, Submissive, and Spiritual.*

A scriptural organization

Women's church groups should be based on Scripture and should never conflict with Scripture in any activities. Organization for the sake of organization is never scriptural and should be avoided. The ordination of women to any position of authority in the church is against the teachings of Scripture and is, therefore, not a proper objective of women.

On the positive side, Scripture teaches that women are a part of the church. Women followed Christ and rendered service to him. They planned ways that they might serve him. In Romans 16, several women are mentioned who served the Lord and the church. Phoebe is particularly mentioned as a servant of the church. In Titus the older women are told to instruct the younger women in the church.

Scripture teaches, as does all of creation, that God is a God of order and not of confusion. The women in the church should have enough organization to prevent confusion and conflict with the total church program. All planning should be coordinated with the Session's plans and goals for the church family. Some small churches may need no more organization than a woman designated by the Session to receive and pass on information to the other women and to organize any service that the women might render in the church.

A supporting help

The women in the church are not to usurp authority from the men, but are

in every way to support the authority of the men. The ordained officers of the church are responsible to God for all the policies and programs of the church. The women can support these programs by keeping informed and by praying diligently for the members of the Session, for those in authority throughout the denomination, and for the church's ministers and missionaries.

In September 1974, Mrs. Francis Schaeffer spoke to a group of women in Macon, Georgia, on the subject of "Women in the Church." She pointed out that whereas women do not rule in the church, they do play a very important part in setting the tone of the church. She said: "At every meeting every woman should feel it her responsibility to help set the tone."

This is positive support. Thinking of this negatively, there are so many times when the tone or spirit of a meeting has been destroyed by one critical or complaining remark. One goal of the Women in the Church organization should be to encourage each woman to help establish a warm and positive atmosphere in every meeting of the church.

Women should also be encouraged to sing in the choir, to teach Sunday school, to serve in the kitchen and nursery, to visit the sick, to pray for the church family, to witness and to encourage participation in missions. All of these and many other activities are a part of the *supportive* ministry of the women in the church. In the Presbyterian Church in America, the WIC is not an organization separate from the church, but an organized way for women to serve *in* the church.

A submissive role

As individual Christians, women are submissive to those men who are in positions of authority over them. As an organization in the church, the women are *submissive* to the authority and guidance of the Session. As obedient children, our wills must conform to that of Christ, and he has clearly revealed that his will is to rest the authority of the church in the hands of godly men. He has given to them the power to guide and the responsibility for all phases of the church's ministry.

If we women are truly, scripturally submissive to this authority, then we will pray for these men faithfully; we will uphold them in their decisions before the youth and other members of the church; we will seek to support them in every way possible in their responsibility; and we will seek their leadership and follow it as we follow Christ.

A spiritual organization

Finally, the women's organization in the church should be primarily a *spiritual* organization. The primary activities carried on are Bible study and prayer. The goal of the organization should be to encourage every woman in her growth to maturity in Christ. Every planned activity should be evaluated in the light of this goal.

The organization of women in the Presbyterian Church in America is called the Women In the Church, with the initials WIC. The symbol of this organization is an old-fashioned oil lamp with a wick. The wick illustrates the believer's position in Christ. In order to give light, the wick must rest in the oil; the oil must saturate it and flow through it constantly. At the same time, it is necessary for the wick to be trimmed and regulated properly to keep it from smoldering and smoking.

So in the Christian life, we must rest in the oil of the Holy Spirit until he saturates us and flows through us. At the same time, our lives must be regulated in obedience to the Word of God in order that we may shine as clear lights in the world. This is the goal of a spiritual organization of women, that each woman through faith and obedience to Christ may realize *his* light shining through her in her home, her church, and her community.

The task of the women is to pray, teach and serve in the church under the authority and guidance of the Session, that the salvation of Christ may shine forth from that church as a "lamp that burneth" (Isaiah 62:1).

Mrs. Georgia Settle has been active in developing materials for and organizing the Women In the Church of the Presbyterian Church in America. Information about available materials, including suggested constitutions for local and presbyterial organizations, may be secured by writing to the Committee on Christian Education, 1020 Monticello Court, Montgomery, AL 36109.

Here & There

Cedar Falls, Iowa— Formerly known as Christ Church of Cedarloo, the Orthodox Presbyterian congregation here has adopted the name, Cedarloo Presbyterian Church.

Camden, Maine— Since last September four new families have joined the Orthodox Presbyterian chapel here. The chapel also has a telephone ministry with a recorded message and opportunity for callers to record a brief response. Opportunity to purchase a building site gives the group hope for a future home. Except for Elder Tom Eesley and Supply Pastor Roger Ramsey, all the members are new to the Reformed faith and growth in grace and understanding has been encouraging.

Aurora, Col.— On April 13, 1975, Mr. HuiBERT J. Vandebroek was ordained to the gospel ministry as an associate pastor of the Park Hill Orthodox Presbyterian Church. His labors will continue to be with the Grace Chapel in Aurora.

Lincoln, Neb.— On April 19, 1975, Mr. Richard G. Mitchell was ordained to the gospel ministry and installed as pastor of Faith Orthodox Presbyterian Church. With these two ordinations, the Presbytery of the Dakotas now has ordained ministers serving in every congregation.

Valdosta, Georgia— The Westminster Presbyterian Church, for twenty years a congregation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, has been received into the Central Georgia Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America. (The West Hills Presbyterian Church in Harriman, Tenn., is considering a similar move.)

Fort Lauderdale, Fla.— The Rev. Donald H. Taws was installed as pastor of the Bethel Orthodox Presbyterian Church on May 22, 1975. Mr. Taws had been serving as a teacher in the local Christian school.

Greenville, Tenn.— The Rev. Robert G. Valentine resigned his pastoral post here in order to accept a call to labor in the Presbytery of North Georgia of the Presbyterian Church in America.

Denver, Col.— The Rev. Glenn T. Black has accepted the call of the (OPC) Presbytery of the Dakotas to serve as the presbytery's missionary-at-large. He will continue to serve the Redeemer Chapel at Golden, Col., and to develop other new works as possible.

SUMMER BIBLE CONFERENCES

The following announcements of Bible conferences are those available to us at press time. We would be glad to report others also.

Washington - Oregon

Operated by the O. P. Presbytery of Northwest
Family Camp— July 3-5 and August 30 - Sept. 1.
Youth Camp— Tenting for grades 7-12,
July 21-28.

Contact: Leonard Schmurr
14639 S.E. Rhine St., Portland, OR 97236

Penna. - Delaware - New Jersey

French Creek Bible Conferences

Junior High— August 4-11
Middle High— August 11-18
Juniors (grades 5, 6) — August 18-22
Post High— August 22-25
Senior High— August 25-Sept. 1

Contact: See local church pastors for information about individual conferences.

Southeastern States

Operated by the O. P. Presbytery of the South
Family Camp— August 29-Sept. 1, at Roosevelt
State Park, Pine Mountain, Georgia

Contact: Rev. Tom Champness
2907 Townley Circle, Doraville, GA 30340

Rocky Mountain - Great Plains Area

Camp Elim (O. P. Presbytery of Dakotas)
Youth Camp— July 21-28

Contact local pastor or Rev. James Bosgraf
2374 Dahlia, Denver, CO 80207

Table decoration, showing a cabin in the woods at French Creek State Park, on display at French Creek Banquet on March 15 in Wilmington, Del.

