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Can Christianity Face the Crisis?

By W. STANFORD REID, Ph.D.

Westminster Theological Seminary, Class of 1937

IF ONE could take his stand today upon a high tower which overlooks the whole world, wherever he might look he would see smoke rising: either the smoke of preparation for war, the smoke of battle, or the smoke of cities and homes devastated by bombs and shells. East or west, north or south, to whatever point he might turn, there would be traces of war, and he would probably descend from his vantage point with a heavy heart, believing that the world of man is as close to destruction today as it has been since the days of Noah. It is this situation which we face, and must face today no matter which way we turn, for we have reached a crisis in the history of our race, and to its resulting problems Christians must prepare to address themselves in the very near future.

We must beware, however, that we do not gain the idea that the present war is the crisis, nor that it is the most essential part of it. God in His providence governs the world through many lines of development, and no single event nor series of events is the ultimate explanation of any historical movement. Therefore, when we look at the present struggle in Europe, let us realize that it is but the manifestation of something which is not limited merely to Germany or France, nor even to the eastern hemisphere. It is the result of a universal disease: an irrationalism which has laid its grip upon all thought and action of men throughout the civilized world. Chance is now regarded as the governor of all

things. The laws which God established in the universe have been laughed out of court, while man believes himself to be the victim of a whirling maelstrom which takes him nowhere, except downward to his death.

The Origin of the Crisis

We cannot understand this situation, however, unless we understand its roots. So we must turn back the pages of history to discover, if we can, the reasons for and the causes of this terrible blight which has fallen upon the soul of man. In this way we may be better able to find some means of meeting and solving the problems which face us today.

When we look back some two thousand years, we find that at the time of the apostolic church there were current throughout the world, in addition to Christianity, pagan world- and life-views which were based, not on special revelation, but upon the work of unaided human reason. The most important and most dominant of these philosophies with which Christianity came into contact was Stoicism, the roots of which went back into the thought of Aristotle and Plato. Although the Stoics had at first emphasized the dignity of man and of natural law, having virtually ruled God out of the universe, they at length came to deny all law, and to accept life as entirely meaningless. In this they were by no means alone. Other philosophies of various brands had come to the same conclusion, and despair

was spreading throughout the intellectual world of the Roman Empire. Therefore, to this world, Christianity came as a God-breathed revival of faith, for it brought both the news of redemption through Jesus Christ and an insistence upon the sovereign power of God over creation. By this means, the idea of law and the interpretation of creation were given to the world as something established by God, the creator.

But in spite of man's need for the gospel of grace, many were not willing to accept its demand that man submit to God in humble dependence upon Him for salvation and for the true interpretation of the universe. The result was opposition. There were, first of all, persecutions by those who refused to submit; but as that accomplished little, Satan tried his next weapon—heresy. Paganism first tried to destroy faith in the humanity and divinity of Christ. When that failed, the doctrines of grace were attacked, Augustine's predestinarianism being rejected in favor of his doctrine of the church. This resulted in such a perversion of Scriptural teaching that it was, to a large extent, responsible for the development of the mediæval papacy and the idea of the church as the repository of grace which man could take or reject as he pleased. These tendencies were further strengthened by an attempt to reconcile the pagan humanistic teachings of the Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, with Christian doctrine. Reason, unaided by grace, it was said, taught certain things; revelation taught others. Thus, since all truth was contained in these two categories, Aristotle and Christianity were completely reconcilable, and could be united in one great system.

An Impossible Compromise

This unnatural union, however, did not exist for long. It was soon found that Greek and Roman philosophy, which started with a belief in the ability of man to understand all things, did not agree with the Christian view of man as not only finite but also sinful, and therefore in need of salvation. The attempt at compromise failed, for men found that purely human, unregenerate reason and the Scriptures did not really teach the

same views of man and creation. Therefore, men began to declare that God's revelation was one source of truth and human reason another. They might even contradict each other, but they were at the same time equally true. God revealed that one thing was true; Aristotle said the opposite. Therefore, both positions were correct.

Such a concept as this could not be held for any length of time. Men either had to serve God or serve man; they could not serve both, especially when they were mutually contradictory. Some men, therefore, turned away from revelation in the belief that, after all, the human reason was the final authority. To support them in their view there came at this time a considerable increase in human knowledge of the universe. Men began to make discoveries in the material world, which only increased their self-confidence. But what was of equal importance and effect, new documents and manuscripts of classical antiquity were being resurrected. Men began to delve deeper and deeper into Greek thought, with the result that they were completely overcome by the grandeur of the capabilities of men's minds. This proved their contention, they felt, that human rationality was to be the final test of truth. Therefore, Christianity and the Scriptures must submit to human wisdom, with which they must agree or be rejected as impossible and false. This could

not but lead to a complete denial of the sovereignty of God, and to an exaltation of man as the master and only interpreter of reality. Such "pagan humanism," which claimed that humanly-discovered truth was alone true, was the dominant note of the Renaissance.

In opposition both to those who would fuse Christianity and pagan philosophy and to those who set up the human intellect as the final judge of all truth, there were men who declared that God's revelation in the Scriptures was the only true and final interpretation of the universe. These men taught that the only ultimate truth was in the Scriptures, to which reason must conform or be rejected as false. This was the contention of Wycliffe, Huss and others who, by their insistence on the sovereignty of God, began the battle which eventually brought about a breach both with Rome and the Renaissance, in order that man might acknowledge God's place in the universe.

The Reformation

When the great religious revolution finally took place, Luther, Zwingli and Calvin all asserted the absolute authority of the Scriptures and the sovereignty of God over all men and nature. Yet even here there was the danger of compromise, for Luther desired to retain all those practices of the mediæval church which he could not find explicitly forbidden in Scripture. This meant that his testimony to the pure gospel was, to a certain extent, weakened. Calvin, on the other hand, maintained the principle that God's Word alone must be regarded as our guide, and thus all things must be brought under His authority. This view of life, temporarily driving paganism under cover in certain quarters, spread rapidly over Switzerland, France, The Netherlands, western Germany, Scotland, and even England. Christianity in its fullness, without the influence of pagan thought, began to dominate the scene and it looked as though, for the first time in history, a truly Christian world- and life-view would be spread throughout at least the western half of Europe.

This was particularly true in the field of politics. Wherever Calvinism (Please Turn to Page 42)

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Praise Amid Peril in the Far East

By the REV. BRUCE F. HUNT

Orthodox Presbyterian Missionary to Manchukuo

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed (II Cor. 4:8,9).

ON TUESDAY, April 29th, I arrived home from my sixth country trip since February 8th, having spent a total of forty-four days among the country churches. I started out on a seventh trip, but came back when I was informed at the bus station, an hour and a half by train from Harbin, that parts of the road which I must traverse on a two-day trip to reach my destination were buried a couple of feet under water by the melting snow and would not be passable for more than a week. Except for the two out-of-the-way places on this bus line, which I still intend to visit, I have been able already this spring to visit all of the groups for which I am responsible that hold regular meetings. There is a district north of Tsitsihar, to which I have made several trips, where there are individual Christians in good-sized Korean communities, but no groups as yet. There are also localities near Harbin which I hope to visit.

Altogether this spring I have visited twenty groups which hold regular meetings. They show steady growth since my last visit. In the southeast field, which took on a Bible woman last fall, an additional evangelist was employed this spring, making three full-time workers on native pay in that field alone; with the one in Harbin and one in the northeast, there are five full-time workers on native pay.

Two small groups on the railroad southwest of here, in addition to renting places of meeting last fall, employed an evangelist between them for one month this spring, and are looking forward to employing one permanently in the near future. Another group, northeast of here, only a year old, employed the same evangelist for a month.

Recently I have taken on as a helper one of the young men who studied in our Bible Institute, and have found him most satisfactory. He teaches Japanese six hours a week to the children in the Russian orphan-

age, teaches Bible twice a week to the lame, halt, and blind Koreans in the charity ward of the city hospital, teaches Bible twice a week to the children in the city poor-house (the adults have recently begun to show an interest also), and makes a trip once a month to the group at Chu Yuan Ch'ang (the first country community I visited after coming to Harbin). The work at Chu Yuan Ch'ang, which has always seemed just on the verge of getting started, really seems to be progressing now, and the helper's regular visits have given them great encouragement. He also leads services in the city as opportunity and necessity demand, and is doing well among the children. Having him here helps me to get my growing Korean correspondence answered in reasonably prompt order, and he does countless errands—a true evangelistic helper.

These new helpers give evidence of the progress in establishing the work more solidly, and promise much for the future growth of the work. Word has just come that one of the evangelists on native pay has recently been imprisoned in Korea, where he had gone on a trip. Including the one in the city here, that means that two of those on native pay are in prison, besides the Bible woman in our employ who is still behind bars. But we feel that they are preaching where they are, as much, if not more, than if they were free.

In examining the records of the churches which I visited I found 687 names (children and adults) on the rolls of the twenty groups; adding those in Harbin it comes to well over seven hundred. The rolls show an

average attendance, since my last visit, of 450; the Harbin figures bring this close to five hundred. Including the Harbin figures, during the spring, I have baptized forty-one adults and nine infants, and admitted five to the communion who were baptized in infancy. Twenty-six were examined and taken in as catechumens. Forty-one baptized persons were received into communicant membership upon their acceptance of the covenant. And the financial report of the twenty-one groups, including Harbin, for the past year is equally encouraging.

This report shows that we are not distressed, that though perplexed, it has not been unto despair, that we have not been forsaken or destroyed, that, on the contrary, the work has leaped forward beyond what it had been in any previous year.

Since my last quarterly report we have been saddened by the imprisonment again of our local evangelist and the one, mentioned above, imprisoned in Korea. Our local evangelist was not yet well from the hardships endured during his last imprisonment, when he was taken again. On the other hand, we have been greatly rejoiced by the uncompromised release of the three laymen and Mrs. Byram's Bible woman. The latter was in a terrible condition but, we rejoice to say, is making a steady though slow recovery. We have been saddened by the expulsion from their land and homes of some of our people because of their Christian stand, but we rejoice that they have been led to places where their witness has strengthened weak groups. We have been saddened by the threats which have caused fear and the consequent falling off in the numbers of those meeting in some of our groups, but we are rejoiced to see the strengthening of the faith of those who, having been so tried, have nevertheless continued.

During our spring work, we have been threatened with assassination and imprisonment. We have been urged by friend and foe to leave the country. We have been followed by the police and have been called before them. We have seen some of our

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people put out of houses and lands, and others forced to leave school and jobs, for Christ's sake. We have seen some of our workers imprisoned and others called before the authorities and threatened. One of our former missionary colleagues in Korea and a fellow station member of his are serving prison sentences in Korea, and Mrs. Hunt's uncle was in the hands of the authorities for nearly two weeks. Another missionary lady in Korea whom my wife and I have known from childhood has just been released after spending a month behind bars, and others there have had their houses searched and their freedom curtailed. We have seen many of our British, American and Russian neighbors, business folk and missionaries, leaving singly and in groups. Yes, "we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

(EDITOR'S NOTE: About a month after this report was written, Mr. Hunt sent the following brief word of additional persecutions.)

We just had word that the sixteen-year-old son of Evangelist Lee has been imprisoned. Lee himself has been in since April. He had been on a trip to Korea and was holding very successful cottage meetings in different parts of a large city. The police heard of the meetings and one night surrounded them. Lee was in the midst of preaching when a policeman interrupted. Lee called on the group to unite in prayer. "What do you mean, 'prayer?'" said the policeman, and slapped him across the cheek. A deacon called on the group to unite in song. The commotion of the singing excited the police who were guarding the gate and the door, so that they rushed in, making it possible for some of those who had gathered to escape, but in all about eighteen were taken. Of these, about half have compromised and been released, but the others still remain in prison. Our local evangelist and Bible woman have been taken bound to the border of Korea. There they are being given much better treatment than they had here. Outside food and changes of clothing can be sent to them, and friends are allowed to visit them. There are none of our Christians in bonds in this city at present, though four of our people are not yet released.

Faith at Pittsgrove

By the REV. ROBERT S. MARSDEN

General Secretary of the Mission Committees of
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

PITTSGROVE, New Jersey, is but a crossroads, nearly equidistant from Woodstown and Elmer; it is certainly not a place where one might expect to find a flourishing church. The organization of a church at such a spot violates most of the best-established tenets of church management: it is not at a center of population, nor was there a sizable group of people interested in its organization from the beginning. Yet within five years a good congregation has been built up and the people of the Faith Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Pittsgrove have begun the erection of a house of worship.

The beginnings of the Faith Church were meager. On Sunday morning, June 14, 1936, three women gathered at the home of Miss Elizabeth Reading in Woodstown to pray. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church had been constituted as a denomination three days before, and these women hoped to be united with it but saw no way by which they could belong to a local congregation of the new church. There was no church in the vicinity from which a pastor had withdrawn to enter the new denomination, nor was there any group of people who had determined to withdraw in a body from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Yet these humble women prayed that the Lord would raise up a testimony at that place, and their prayers were answered. The second Sunday there were six at the meeting which they held, and the following week eleven. In faith they applied to the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension for a missionary, and the committee appointed the Rev. Edward B. Cooper. Mr. Cooper's home had been in Bridgeton, N. J., and he was familiar with the neighborhood near Pittsgrove. Since but few of those who were interested in the new congregation lived in Woodstown, it was decided to rent a hall at Pittsgrove as the more central spot for a church, and the Township Committee of Upper Pittsgrove made available the hall which is now occupied.

The group was constituted as a church on October 12, 1936, and was admitted to the Presbytery of New Jersey. A Sunday school was organized and, in due time, a missionary society and a senior and a junior Machen League. Under the leadership of Mr. Cooper the congregation has grown until it now has fifty-two communicant members and a Sunday school with an enrollment of sixty-five. Four able elders have been elected and they have done much to strengthen the testimony of the church.

The congregation has adopted plans for a modest building which will be erected at a total cost of about \$4500. Of this amount nearly \$2500 has been secured in cash and \$2000 has been borrowed by the congregation. The ground-breaking service was scheduled for July 6th, but a heavy rain prevented it from being held outdoors so the congregation gathered in the hall for the service of worship and praise. The building will be of frame construction, fifty by thirty feet. The auditorium will be completely finished, and provision will be made for modern Sunday school rooms in the basement, which will be completed later.

The congregation, begun with so small a group, has been striving toward self-support in a remarkable way. During the first years it was able to contribute only a small portion of the pastor's salary, but within the past year it has contributed seventy-five per cent. of his salary, and is looking forward to complete self-support in the near future.

Undoubtedly much of the success of the Faith Church has been due to the unremitting labor of Mr. Cooper. The Coopers are truly loved by the people of the church, for through Mr. Cooper's ministry many who are now members of the church have come to know the Lord. The Faith Church was indeed begun by faith, and has continued to grow by faith in Him whose promises never fail, whose faithfulness is eternal, and who will honor His gospel when it is faithfully proclaimed.

Cutting the Gordian Knot

The Seventh in a Series of Articles on the Crisis in Evangelism

By JOHN C. HILLS, JR., and WILLIAM E. WELMERS

THE Greeks had a word for it. In fact, they told quite a story about it. Once upon a time, there was a certain Gordius, who was king of ancient Phrygia. Now, it seems that this Gordius spent his spare time in tying knots; as a matter of fact, he became so proficient at tying knots that one day he achieved a masterpiece. He tied a knot which nobody could untie. This knot was never untied by orthodox methods, but one day Alexander the Great cut it with his sword. After that, anyone who avoided a real difficulty in favor of a somewhat shady shortcut was said to be guilty of "cutting the Gordian knot."

The champion Gordian knot-cutters of our day, religiously speaking, are the Modernists; for the method which the modernist wing of the Christian church uses to meet the rising tide of unbelief is strikingly similar to Alexander's wily trick of cutting the Gordian knot. The Modernists have never seriously faced the difficulty presented by consistent paganism; they have simply slashed it into non-existence.

This is precisely what we should expect, for Modernism is not Christianity at all. We can hardly look for a Christian method of evangelism where Christianity itself does not exist. It is inconceivable that the gospel should be properly and consistently preached by those who do not preach the gospel at all. Unbelief can never successfully be conquered by unbelief itself. Can Satan cast out Satan? How can there be any real evangelism where there is no gospel to be preached?

Nevertheless, we must investigate thoroughly this "evangelism" of the Modernists; for, although Modernism is not Christianity, it has at least the outward appearance of being Christianity. Modernists insist that they are preaching Christianity, and that they are opposed to outright materialism, to consistent paganism. Furthermore, Modernism is today the religion of a discouragingly large part of the church; and, what is worse, many sincere Christians have, by the sub-

tlety of Modernism, been duped into adopting modernist attitudes and methods. Because Modernism looms so large in the battle against unbelief, let us examine carefully the ingenious but completely unscriptural and equally futile weapon it has been using against modern paganism.

Now, the consistent unbeliever pretends to be entirely unconcerned about spiritual and religious matters. He confines himself, so he says, to the outward world of facts. True Christianity, on the other hand, maintains that the unbeliever has no right to say such a thing. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," and hence the unbeliever denies God when he attempts to separate the world from God. Figuratively speaking, the unbeliever wants to put God and Christianity into one little house, and the world into another; and then he wants to live exclusively in the second house and pay no attention to the first. This condition of things, however, exists only in the imagination of the unbeliever, for the Bible teaches us, still figuratively speaking, that the world is one big house which God has planned and created; and the Bible further teaches that God is the owner and landlord of that house, and the ever-present master of every part of it. Of course, the unbeliever may dwell in that house and ignore for the time being the God who has created it and who rightfully demands that every part of it be used to His glory. But it logically follows that if the unbeliever wants to know the truth about that house, he must examine its blueprint and deed—the Bible. It is therefore the first duty of the church, in preaching the gospel, to make the unbeliever see that life does not consist of two small houses—God and the world—which have nothing to do with each other, but rather that life consists of a house which God has created, and which He owns and upholds and pervades, and that we cannot know where this house has come from, what it is here for, and what will be its end, unless we heed the

revelation which God has given concerning it. The church must show the unbeliever that the world is not independent of God, although God is quite independent of the world. This is the great issue between Christianity and paganism, and this is the Gordian knot which the Modernists have unscrupulously cut. They have attempted to hold on to some sort of Christianity, but they have denied that there is any real opposition between them and the pagan world. They have made peace with the enemy on the enemy's terms.

Modernism, like the blatant paganism it seeks to oppose, willingly divides life into two parts, the spiritual and the material, and freely admits that paganism is right in saying that these two have nothing much to do with each other. Let science do what it will with the world of facts, say the Modernists; but let us seek "higher spiritual values." This reminds us immediately of that great German philosopher, Immanuel Kant. You will remember that Kant divided the universe into an island and an ocean—the island of human experience and knowledge, floating in an ocean of Mystery. Modernism has done exactly the same thing. Now, to the God of the Bible there is no mystery, and the things which we can see and know are firmly anchored in Him. Instead of proclaiming that God, however, the Modernist teaches the philosophy of Kant in a streamlined and pious-sounding form. From thousands of pulpits and in countless books by church leaders, the pathetic appeal of Modernism to the pagan world is stated somewhat like this: "You say that man has become what he is because of evolution. You are probably right. You say that everything happens by mere chance, and that 'sin' is only the struggle of evolving man to rise above his old bestial nature. We shall take your word for it, because you have studied those things. What you say is not exactly what the Bible says, but that makes no difference, because the Bible too must be part of the evolution of man's

mind. We hope that you will continue the fine work that you have done in your field, and we won't interfere at all. However, wouldn't you like to leave your work on Sunday morning, and come with us into our stately Gothic church to seek for 'higher things'? Your work will take on new meaning if you will but share with us the mountain-top experience of worship. You will forget the worries of this life as you commune with the Infinite in the beautiful and mysterious garden of Prayer. You will catch a new glimpse of the universal brotherhood of man from the humble Carpenter of Nazareth. By all of this, you will be uplifted from the sordid touch of everyday life." Thus the Modernist invites the materialist to leave his little island, and together they will grope their way along in the darkness of the surrounding Mystery. Seldom has the Modernist's caricature of Christianity been more aptly described than it was some fifty years ago by Dr. Abraham Kuyper: "Almost sensuously, modern mysticism gulps down intoxicating drafts from the nectar bowl of the Infinite." The "evangelism" of the Modernists consists simply of seeking to introduce the pagan world to this vague and misty feeling of universal benevolence.

It is this sort of evangelism which is practiced by the National Christian Mission, by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and by countless ministers who are more concerned about "building a better world" than about their ordination vows and the truth of God's Word. This is the evangelism of the "social gospel." Even the missionary program of many large denominations has been invaded by it. The attitude of Modernism is not that the heathen need the gospel of Jesus Christ to save them from sin and the ultimate pangs of hell, but rather that their religious experience and their daily lives would be uplifted by "the spirit of Christianity." No attempt is made to change the attitude of the pagan world toward God and the Bible, toward historic Christianity. The Modernist contents himself with the timid suggestion that a little attention to "higher values" will make for a "more abundant life."

A particularly subtle and dangerous form of Modernism is found in the increasingly popular theology of Karl Barth and his followers. Claiming to be a revival of the Reformed theology

of Calvin, Barthianism has received an open-armed welcome from many people who are somewhat afraid of the extremes of Modernism. Under the influence of this new theology, the words of the Bible and of the Reformed doctrinal standards are again resounding from many pulpits. When we look more carefully, however, we see that this is nothing but a wolf in sheep's clothing—the same old Modernism deceptively clothed in the phrases of historic Reformed theology. The same fault lies at the bottom of both Modernism and Barthianism—our world, with its time and space, its experience and knowledge, is separated from God and His Word. The outward world, history, and experience are put into one compartment; and God, who is confined to another compartment, has nothing to do with any of this. The experience of the Eternal—deceptively described in the old terms of the sovereignty of God, the virgin birth, miracles, the resurrection, regeneration, conversion, and even the Second Coming of Christ—drops down upon us without disturbing the course of this world, telling us that there is Something "out there." For all practical purposes, Barthianism differs from Modernism only in the words it uses—what the Modernist vaguely calls "worship," Barth impressively calls "the revelation of the Sovereign God." In spite of the fine language, however, Barthianism is not founded on the Bible as God's Word; the God of Barthianism is not the God of the Bible; and Barthian theology and Barthian evangelism are not the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If we were to judge by outward appearances, it would seem that the evangelism of the Modernists is just what we need. Not a few books and magazine articles have lately been written by men who had despised the church until one day they happened to learn the satisfaction of "the more abundant life" through "meditation and prayer" in worshipful surroundings. In offering an escape from the sordid materialism of the everyday life of the laboratory, the office, or the store, Modernism has attracted many to its pillared temples, or at least to the "worship of God in nature."

Yet this is a far cry from true, Scriptural evangelism. Modernism has not even begun to answer the problem of paganism. It has merely cut the Gordian knot. It has left paganism exactly

as it was; it has made no effort to present the Bible's claims that God is the creator and sustainer of this world, that He demands that we recognize and glorify Him in all our thoughts and actions, that we have sinned against Him, and that we need forgiveness and redemption through Christ. The Modernists have reserved the field of religion for themselves, but they unhesitatingly leave everything else for men to use as they please. In other words, the Modernists say that the universe is on exactly the same level as God. Let others talk about the universe, they say, and we will talk about God—the universe does not interfere with God, but neither does God interfere with the universe. With that as their foundation, the Modernists seek to retain some sort of religion. They have succeeded in doing exactly that—they have retained some sort of religion. Their religion, however, is not Christianity. In an effort to "evangelize" the pagan world, they have given up Christianity itself and have embraced paganism. They have forsaken the foundation of Christianity's essential truths—the inspiration of the Scriptures, creation and providence, the doctrine of sin and total depravity, the eternal plan of salvation, the virgin birth of Christ, His miracles, His sinless life and atoning death, His bodily resurrection, the work of the Holy Spirit in applying salvation to the elect, and the promise of the glorious return of Christ to judge all men and glorify His saints. All of this is of no importance to the Modernist. He gladly dispenses with all that is essential in order that he may win the unbeliever. We confess that he has often won the unbeliever—to what? To a slightly more respectable form of unbelief.

A true Christian, of course, would never be guilty of denying his faith in order to preach it. Yet we must regretfully point out that sometimes a sincere Christian will tread on dangerously thin ice in an effort to evangelize the pagan world. Many churches which pride themselves on their orthodoxy will eagerly and blindly cooperate with the compromising "evangelism" of the National Christian Mission or the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Even those of us who would never think of taking part in such a surrender are often tainted by the same impurity.

Whenever we fail to apply the principles of Scripture to some phase of our life or thinking, we are guilty of taking that phase out of God's hand and putting it into man's control. Do we insist on recognizing the sovereignty of God in our evangelism? Do we apply the principle of God's sovereignty to our daily practices, to the education of our children, to the services of worship in our church? Are we not rather content all too often to let the opinions of men be our moral standards, to allow our children to be educated on pagan principles, and, in our church services, to think of entertainment rather than the true worship and glory of God? All of this has a great deal to do with our evangelism; for, if we will be inconsistent in these things, we are likely to say to the pagan world in our evangelistic services: "We don't want to argue about the more subtle teachings of pagan philosophy and science, although Darwinian evolution is really dangerous. It makes no difference whether or not you can defend the Bible against the intellectual scorn of professors and modernist preachers. We are not concerned about the theology you choose to accept. All we ask is that you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, and then 'testify'; we don't care about anything else." May God grant that we shall not so compromise the Reformed Faith! Even though God may occasionally be pleased to strike a straight blow with a crooked stick and convert one to whom we preach so carelessly, let us not be fooled into thinking that this is Scriptural evangelism. If we preach this way, we shall deny the Lord who bought us.

We have traced the sad history of the decline of the once-faithful Christian church through dead orthodoxy and pietism into Modernism. We have also seen how unsuccessful the modern forms of these errors are in their war against fortified paganism. Again the question arises, What about the faithful remnant? What about those Christians and churches that still uphold the whole counsel of God? Is not their evangelism Scriptural? Sad to say, even here we do not find the encouraging consistency that is necessary in this day of militant unbelief. We must now turn to that faithful wing of the church, to see the fatal weakness of even the best weapon commonly used today against paganism.

Prayer

By the REV. JOHN H. SKILTON

Instructor in New Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary

THE eighth lesson in the current series of young people's studies in the Epistle of James deals with "The Purpose and Power of Prayer." It would be profitable for us to supplement our examination of the specific passage assigned as the lesson text (James 5:13-20) with at least a partial review of the teaching of our subordinate doctrinal standards, and of the whole Word of God on the subject of prayer.

Prayer is defined by the *Shorter Catechism* as "an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies" (Question 98). It is a means of grace through which we are brought very near unto God. Through it our gracious Father in heaven imparts benefits to the souls of His people and in response to it works out providences for His glory and the good of His church. God, of course, does not change. He is "the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). His eternal all-embracing purpose can in no respect be altered. But He has established means and secondary causes, as well as ends. He has from eternity decreed prayer as a means of

grace and determined the answers to be made to prayers that are acceptable to Him.

We are to pray, not to lifeless gods of human manufacture or imagination, to dead saints, or to any living created beings, but only to the one living and true God. As the *Larger Catechism* says, "God only being able to search the hearts, hear the requests, pardon the sins, and fulfill the desires of all; and only to be believed in and worshipped with religious worship; prayer, which is a special part thereof, is to be made by all to him alone, and to none other" (Question 179). Prayer may be offered to God absolutely or to Persons in the Godhead (I Tim. 1:12; Rev. 1:5, 6; 5:13; Acts 7:59, 60; II Cor. 12:8, 9; Eph. 1:17; 3:14; I Thess. 3:11).

We should pray only for such things as are lawful (*Confession of Faith XXI:IV*); for things which God indicates in the Scriptures He is pleased to grant to His children; and which tend to His glory, the welfare of the church, and the good of ourselves and others (*Larger Catechism*, Question 184). We are not to ask God, for example, for new revelations of the Spirit today. Our *Confession of Faith* rightly says, "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from scripture: unto which nothing is at any time to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men" (I:VI).

We are to pray for ourselves (Matt. 6:9-13; Gen. 32:11; Luke 18:13) and for others, even our enemies (Matt. 5:44), indeed for "all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter" (*Confession of Faith XXI:IV*; and see I Tim. 2:1, 2; Eph. 1:16, 17; 3:14-17; 6:18; John 17:20; II Sam. 7:29). We are not to pray, however, "for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin unto death" (*Confession of Faith XXI:IV*; and see I John 5:16) or for the dead (Luke 26:25, 26; Rev. 14:13).

Petitions bearing particularly on our

Young People's Topics

August 3rd—THE POWER OF THE TONGUE.

August 10th—THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE WORLD.

August 17th—TWO VICES AND TWO VIRTUES.

August 24th—THE PURPOSE AND POWER OF PRAYER.

THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN regrets that unforeseen circumstances make it necessary to omit, for the next two months, the usual series of articles supplementing the lesson material for young people issued by the Committee on Christian Education of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Supplementary articles will be resumed in the issue of October 25th.

own needs and those of others have a very important part in prayer. But prayer is not to be limited to them. In I Samuel 2:1-10 we are given the words which we are told Hannah prayed. They are devoted to thankful acknowledgment of God's mercy and to magnifying the divine name. The Lord had previously heard a prayer of petition that Hannah had offered; now she renders to Him a prayer full of praise. She relates her present felicity to Him; celebrates His attributes; acknowledges His sovereignty; bears testimony to the judgment which He will bring upon the wicked, and to His preservation of His saints; and, rising to a prophetic eminence, envisions the day when He will give strength unto His king and exalt the horn of His anointed, His Messiah. This is true prayer. We too must not omit thanksgiving and praise from our prayers.

Another element proper to prayer is confession of sins. In the Lord's Prayer we petition God to forgive us our debts. The publican has provided us with a good example of confession. Standing afar off, he "would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). See also Psalm 32:5; 51:4; and Daniel 9:4ff.

We are to pray in a reverent manner, being mindful of the majesty, the infinite exaltation, and illimitable glory of our Father in heaven (Psalm 33:8; 95:6). No vulgar familiarity is permissible as we approach the creator and ruler of the whole earth, who is full of perfections. With holy fear we should come before the supreme excellence of the eternal sovereign who condescends to hear us. Nevertheless we draw near to God with "confidence of his fatherly goodness, and our interest therein" (*Larger Catechism*, Question 189) and "as children to a father, able and ready to help us" (*Shorter Catechism*, Question 100). See also Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:7; and John 14:13, 14. We come to a Father far superior to any on earth. Our Lord has said, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask them?" (Matt. 7:11).

We are to pray sincerely, not using words to which we do not give conscious assent in our minds and state-

ments not expressive of our real state of heart. In social or public prayer, when we appear to be uniting with others, we should be participating in spirit with them.

We should pray with true faith in God and we should believe that He is able and willing to answer the prayers of His people, and that He actually will do so if the requisite conditions are met (I John 5:14).

We are further to pray with *importunity* (Matt. 15:22ff; Luke 18:5-8; 11:5-8); *submissively* (Matt. 26:39); in *humility* (Psalm 130:3; Luke 18:13); and with *penitence* (Psalm 51:17), *understanding* (I Cor. 14:15), *fergency*, and *love* (see the *Larger Catechism*, Question 185).

We can come unto God in prayer only in the name of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, mediator of the covenant of grace. If it were not for the merits of our Saviour, we would be forever excluded from the presence of God because of our sin. But, united to the Lord Jesus Christ, who continually makes intercession for us, we ask to be heard for His sake, pleading His perfect righteousness. The *Larger Catechism* says that "to pray in the name of Christ is, in obedience to his command, and in confidence on his promises, to ask mercy for his sake; not by bare mentioning of his name, but by drawing our encouragement to pray, and our boldness, strength, and hope of acceptance in prayer, from Christ and his mediation" (Question 180).

Prayer is to be addressed to God, when we are alone (Dan. 6:10; Matt. 6:6), in social groups, as the family, and in public, in the church (Isa. 56:7; Acts 2:42; I Cor. 14:14-16). Our prayers should be offered constantly and with regularity. We are to pray with, as well as for, others (*Shorter Catechism*, Question 100).

No one posture is required by the Scripture for praying (II Chron. 6:13; Mark 11:25; Luke 5:8-12; Gen. 24:26).

The whole Bible is of aid to us in prayer, but in the Lord's Prayer we have a special rule for our direction.

Grace truly abounds to us. Not only has God provided prayer for us as a means of grace and given us infallible directions for praying, but also He actually assists us in the exercise of prayer. The *Larger Catechism* witnesses that "we not knowing what to pray for as we ought, the Spirit help-

eth our infirmities, by enabling us to understand both for whom, and what, and how prayer is to be made; and by working and quickening in our hearts (although not in all persons, nor at all times, in the same measure) those apprehensions, affections, and graces which are requisite for the right performance of that duty" (Question 181). See also Rom. 8:26, 27; Psalm 10:17; and Zech. 12:10.

As recipients of the marvelous grace of God, as those on whom our Father in heaven has multiplied His benefits, we are impelled to cry, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

LABOR DAY CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT QUARRYVILLE

A GENERAL Bible conference for adults will be held on the fifteen-acre conference grounds of Faith Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Quarryville, Pa., from Friday evening, August 29th, to Monday afternoon, September 1st. Speakers for the three-day Labor Day week-end will be the Rev. Robert H. Graham of Middletown, Del., the Rev. George W. Marston of Philadelphia, the Rev. Cary N. Weisiger of Charlottesville, Va., and the Rev. Professor Edward J. Young of Westminster Theological Seminary.

Mr. Marston will conduct a course on "Modern Cults and Isms"; Mr. Weisiger will speak on "The Vine and the Branches"; Professor Young will lecture on "How to Study the Bible"; and Mr. Graham will conduct the morning devotional hour and the campfire service, and will have charge of the musical portion of the program.

The Quarryville Bible Conference Association extends a cordial welcome to delegates from all churches and denominations. The total cost, including the registration fee and board and lodging in the regular dormitories, is \$5. There is a slight additional charge for lodging in the new dormitory or in private homes. Registrations should be sent now to the Rev. Franklin S. Dyrness, Executive Director, Quarryville, Pa., and additional information concerning the conference may be obtained from him.

The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITORIAL

The Reformed Church in America on Trial

IT IS customary for the president of one year's General Synod of the Reformed Church in America—formerly known as the Dutch Reformed Church—to report to the General Synod of the next year on *The State of Religion* in the denomination. Accordingly, Dr. E. F. Romig presented certain observations on this theme to the 1941 synod. They were published in the June 13th issue of *The Intelligencer-Leader*, the official denominational weekly.

Dr. Romig recommends a revision of the church's liturgy. In the office for Holy Communion, for instance, he feels that "certain phrases, particularly those having to do with 'wrath of God' should not be retained." To be sure, he is careful not to deny the reality of the wrath of the Almighty, his reason for the suggested elimination being that such phrases are "stumbling blocks to the lay mind not versed in theology." That it is the church's duty to see to it that its members become versed in theology does not seem to occur to him. However, in dealing with the office for Holy Baptism he waxes bold. "Traditionalist that I am," says Dr. Romig, "I could no more in the Baptism Office ask parents to subscribe to the question, 'Do you believe that our children are sinful and guilty before God?' than I could ask them to believe in Mohammed. For I cannot find warrant in Scripture for any doctrine that children whose wills have not yet been formed and who therefore cannot exercise the power of moral choice are guilty before God."

Thus flatly does the president of a General Synod of the Reformed Church in America deny the Reformed doctrine of original sin.

That he cannot find this doctrine in the Bible is no proof that it is not there. Perhaps he has not searched diligently. For just a bit of Scriptural

evidence, it is Paul who teaches that "through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all sinned"; that "death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression"; that "the judgment came of one unto condemnation"—Romans 5:12, 14, 16. And David confesses: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5).

Every student of the history of doctrine should know that the doctrine of original sin has been confessed by the Reformed churches throughout the centuries. When the arch-heretic Pelagius denied it, the great Augustine had risen to its defense by appealing to inspired Paul. And the churches of the Reformation followed Paul and Augustine when they took pains to formulate this truth in their creeds. The Westminster Confession of Faith teaches that, since our first parents were the root of all mankind, "the guilt of this sin [eating the forbidden fruit] was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity" (Chapter VI, Section III). All three of the doctrinal standards of Dr. Romig's church teach original sin. The following citations are offered in evidence: *The Confession of Faith*, Article XV; *The Heidelberg Catechism*, Questions 7 and 8; *The Canons of Dort*, Third and Fourth Heads of Doctrine, Articles II and III. The last of these references states succinctly that "all men are conceived in sin, and are by nature children of wrath."

Since original sin is taught in both the creeds and the liturgy of the Reformed Church in America, it may seem strange that Dr. Romig would

remove this doctrine only from the church's liturgy. But his reason is readily surmised. With the liturgy he has to deal frequently. Every time he is called on to administer Holy Baptism, he is supposed to employ the Baptism Office. The church's doctrinal standards, on the other hand, he may usually ignore. To be sure, he did subscribe to them when he was admitted to the ministry in the Reformed Church in America. But what of that? Is there not tacit agreement among the leaders of most Protestant denominations that the creeds of the Reformation age are by this time largely outmoded and may therefore be regarded in considerable part as a dead letter?

Beyond dispute there is room within a Reformed church for differences of opinion on certain points of doctrine. Is it possible that the doctrine of original sin falls within that category? To answer that question is not difficult. On some detailed aspects of this doctrine various views are held among Reformed theologians. But the teaching that, in consequence of the first sin of man, every child is born guilty before God and with a corrupt nature may unhesitatingly be declared to be an integral part of that system of doctrine which is known as the Reformed Faith. The fact, for instance, that the imputation of the guilt of the first Adam to his descendants is linked inseparably with the imputation of the righteousness of the last Adam, Jesus Christ, to believers, makes that patent. "For as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous" (Romans 5:19). In that light the denial of original sin becomes extremely serious.

By boldly rejecting an essential teaching of the Reformed Faith, Dr. Romig has put the Reformed Church in America in a strange position. It is no exaggeration to assert that he has placed his denomination on trial. No truly Reformed church will tolerate in its pulpits deniers of the Reformed Faith. It will demand that deniers either retract or depart. Nor does such a demand constitute a violation of religious liberty. Rather is it a recognition of religious liberty. A Reformed church does not seek to force its faith on any one. It asks voluntary

Your Summer Contributions

DO NOT neglect to send your contributions for missions during the summer months, for the need is very great! Gifts should be sent to the Rev. Robert S. Marsden, general secretary, 514 Schaff Building, Philadelphia, Pa.

acceptance of its faith. He who does not and cannot accept may leave. He also must leave, for a Reformed church will insist on remaining Reformed.

What is the Reformed Church in America going to do about the case in hand? If history is to repeat itself, it will do nothing or next to nothing. This is not the first time that that denomination is confronted by a brazen denial of original sin. In 1923 the General Synod was considering the election of Dr. Edward S. Worcester, a Congregationalist minister, to the chair of Systematic Theology at the New Brunswick Theological Seminary. Some members of synod questioned Dr. Worcester's doctrinal soundness. Well might they, for in a memorandum he had described the Reformed doctrine of original sin as "a bit of the fanciful and allegorizing theology of the Rabbinic period of Judaism and similar schools in Christianity, which is worse than meaningless." And yet, believe it or not, Dr. Worcester was elected. Today it is altogether likely that several deniers of this doctrine occupy pulpits in the Reformed Church in America, and doubtless doctrinal indifference has made such headway among the ministers of that communion that a great many applaud Dr. Romig's pious vaporizings: "Our denomination is going to take a great stride in the direction of vital spiritual growth, if while holding to the real essentials of evangelical Christianity, we get beyond the perverse tendency to set up rules of orthodoxy that our Saviour would have found confusing and in brotherliness toward one another, respect for diverse interpretations of the Gospel, and oneness of devotion to Christ, address ourselves to the actual plight of this sin-sick world."

And yet a cloud has appeared, the size of a man's hand, which gives some promise for the future. Hardly had Dr. Romig's address appeared in print when protests began to arrive at the office of *The Intelligencer-Leader*. Only one of them, the first received, was printed. It was an able refutation of Dr. Romig's position by the Rev. Leonard Greenway, pastor of the Eighth Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Such protests are heartening, but they are not enough. The cloud the size of a man's hand must grow. If it does not, it is certain to evaporate

presently. May the Reformed Church in America not be a church which has in its midst a number of Reformed preachers and laymen but has nonetheless as a denomination forsaken the Reformed Faith. If that is not to be the case, those ministers and elders and other members of the church who adhere to the Reformed Faith will have to band together, bring issues such as that raised by Dr. Romig's address to a head in the judicatories of the church, and press their fight for the faith to a finish. Not only must they do this, but if they love the Reformed Faith passionately, they will.

—R. B. K.

Can Christianity Face the Crisis?

(Concluded From Page 34)

went, it resulted in the rise, or the attempted rise of democracy. It showed itself in the struggle of the Dutch against their Spanish oppressors, in the battle of the Huguenots against the absolutist French monarchy, the struggle of the Puritans against both Tudor and Stuart despotism, and the rebellion of the Scots against an Arminian and arbitrary prelacy. Much more might have been accomplished in the economic, artistic and literary fields, had it not been for the rise of heresy within the church. Arminianism and prelaticism were the two great foes which had to be destroyed, and this was done at Dort and Westminster. However, when this work had been accomplished, the Reformed churches seem to have forgotten that they had the work before them of bringing the whole world under the banner of Christ. Political freedom had been obtained, so the Calvinists turned more to theological controversy, forgetting about all other phases of our earthly life. Therefore, before they realized what was happening, the paganism of the Renaissance, aided by a revived Roman Church, had laid hold upon so-called secular thought and was in complete control of everything but Reformed theology.

This appears most clearly, perhaps, in the philosophy of a Hobbes, the legal theory of a Grotius, the scientific attitude of the Royal Society, the dramas of Beaumont and Fletcher, and the reasoning of John Locke. God was pushed completely out of His universe for, although on occasions

lip-service was paid to Him, He was usually ignored as relatively unimportant. The human intellect was declared to be its own lord and master, with capacity to find out all truth independent of revelation or regeneration. This theory was so emphasized in the following century that men believed themselves capable of attaining almost to the status of deity. Voltaire, Diderot, Hume, Adam Smith, Benjamin Franklin and others looked not to God but to the human intellect for salvation, and in the early stages of the French Revolution, reason was worshiped as the supreme being in the universe. This is the era from which comes our modern world, our scientific, skeptical and disillusioned twentieth century.

Man as Sovereign

One of the most important elements of the eighteenth century rationalism was its philosophy which forms the basis for modern thinking. Kant and Hegel, the two dominating influences of nineteenth century philosophy, both adopted the view that the human intellect could find out all truth necessary to man. Experimentation and interpretation could both be done by the human mind, so that any desired truth could be discovered. This resulted in scientific discoveries which have brought to us a knowledge of the world much greater than ever before, but God has received no praise for enabling man to increase his knowledge. Man took all the credit to himself. From this source came Darwinism and the evolutionary hypothesis, with its emphasis on the survival of the fittest and the concept of self-existing natural law. But the human mind could not rest there, for it had to acknowledge that if there were no God but nature, nature itself might change without notice and, in doing so, would destroy all existing laws. Therefore, in both the philosophical and the scientific fields, there has been growing up for the past fifty years a distrust of law. This has resulted today in the irrational physics of Jeans and Eddington, who tell us that chance governs the physical universe. It has given us modern irrational philosophy which tells us that "eternal novelty" is the keynote of our existence. We can believe nothing and do nothing with any certainty, for there is no beginning, no end, no middle to anything, and

chance is all and in all.

The same forces and ideas have dominated our artistic development for the past century and a half. When we go back to the early part of the nineteenth century, we find the poets of the Romantic Revival setting forth, in regular and symmetrical form, the essential goodness and beauty of man; the musicians writing great symphonies and concertos according to "natural" mathematical laws; and the artists painting and drawing on rational principles. This, however, has all changed. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the idea that "there is a destiny which shapes our ends" was thrown overboard in favor of an evolutionary concept of life. This has led to the representation of reality as completely irrational and subject to no laws. We find, for instance, our magazines publishing bursts of completely irrational "free verse" which, like much of Walt Whitman's work, mean nothing rational. The novelists have followed the same road through Joyce, James, and Sinclair Lewis, until they have reached their culmination in Gertrude Stein's *Ida*, which portrays life as entirely irrational. Music has gone the same way, so that we now have, as typical of our age, the atonal, dissonant productions of such modern composers as Stravinsky and Antheil, who claim to be a law unto themselves. The height or depth (it all depends upon our point of view) has been reached by the modern surrealist painting of Picasso, Dali and others who, in their artistic expression, have consciously sought the borders of insanity. Indeed, one of the surrealists, in advocating this form of expression as that closest to the truth, tells us with considerable pride that all such paintings are "associated with the mechanism of paranoiac interpretation. Bringing the world of delirium on to the plane of reality . . . they bring into question our existing conventional reactions to dreams, obsessions, hallucinations, diurnal fantasies, love, fear, insanity and hysteria." Another advocate of surrealism frankly declares that irrationality is the essence of the meaning of modern art. Here, it would seem, we have reached the ultimate and logical end of human self-sufficiency.

Fruits of Irrationalism

Yet these phases of life are by no

means the only ones which have been affected by irrationalism. Besides the declaration of philosophy, science and art that life is the plaything of chance and has no meaning, economics and political science have practically reached the same conclusion. With the opening of the last century, we saw the beginning of a completely materialistic conception of the nature of man. It was felt that man could live by bread alone. Therefore, the satisfaction of man's material needs was placed at the head of the list of man's objectives in life. Since Adam Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, asserted that each man endeavoring to satisfy his own needs would help to satisfy the needs of all, complete economic freedom to do as one pleases has been man's highest ambition. Economic law became mechanized, and man's responsibility to God for the welfare of his fellow men was ignored, with disastrous effects on all classes. Capital has largely acted as though it had the right to do just as it pleased in gaining wealth. It mattered little whether the poor were oppressed or the country impoverished. Labor, on the other hand, has tended to feel that it itself is the only party to be considered, and that, as long as its economic needs are satisfied, all is well. The results have been bad for both sides. There have been labor disputes, monopolies, trusts, business crashes and depressions, until men have begun to lose all faith in the existence of any economic laws, and are demanding, in the name of economic security, that a dictator be set up to govern all phases of the nation's economic life.

Along with this development, political theory has tended in the same direction. With the rejection of Christianity in the eighteenth century, the rationalists had to formulate new principles upon which to base the results obtained by their Christian predecessors. Thus we find that the constitutions of the era of revolutions all commence by asserting that every man is good and naturally able to govern himself for his own profit and that of the community. The state, therefore, is to do as little as possible to restrain people, and itself is subject to no law but that of its own making. From this developed the idea that all law and government was for the purpose of social control and benefit, and the concept of God's law as supreme

was forgotten. The result has been national and international lawlessness, class warfare, the exploitation of one group by another for its own selfish ends, and the domination of the state by one group or another to gain advantages for itself. The will of whatever faction is dominant is law, for all factions are responsible only to themselves. This has led to complete hopelessness in the field of political theory and practice, for the state is under no higher rule, nor is it subject to any but its own arbitrary authority. For this reason, men are beginning to deny man's rights to freedom, substituting instead the supremacy of the state—and that, ruled by a dictator!

Even in the sphere of religion the same story is true. As early as the eighteenth century, Christianity came largely under the influence of rationalism, with its insistence on man's perfectability and rationality. The result has been that, more and more, official Christianity has tended to become a kind of anæmic humanitarianism, with all elements of the supernatural scrupulously excluded. Higher Criticism has destroyed the faith of many in the Bible, and modern philosophy has killed what was left by modernist anti-supernaturalism. Irrationality is the only refuge to which one who has followed these false prophets may flee. Therefore, we have many turning today to Theosophy, Christian Science, I Am, Buchmanism and the National Preaching Mission, while the theologians are turning with great joy to the paradoxes of Karl Barth. Irrationality has conquered its last enemy.

The Crisis of Today

Today's crisis consists, therefore, not in the threat of Hitler to overrun the world, bad as that threat may be. The crisis which faces us is that caused by the danger that humanistic irrationalism may gain the complete victory, Hitler being but a manifestation of this tendency. Above all other lands, Germany has stressed the human reason for, since the days of Leibniz and Spinoza, the German intellect has been striving more and more to maintain the autonomy of the human mind. Luther, failing to make a complete break with the mediæval compromise between Christianity and paganism, left room for human self-assertion which has, especially in Germany, been growing stronger from

generation to generation. Unfortunately, however, all the other nations of the civilized world have been not far behind. Germany reached the ultimate conclusion only a little more quickly than the others. When Nietzsche set forth his philosophy of the super-man, he actually rejected all law, and might became right. From that day forward, despair alone could be the lot of Germany, if it followed such ideals to their logical conclusion. This it did; and, in despair at the utter futility of the resulting human irrationality, it has cast itself into the hands of a dictator—one who gives it its marching orders so that, without thinking at all, it can live in spiritual and economic peace. Those who have refused to take this despairing attitude have either been imprisoned, liquidated or exiled, while the rest of the world which, through the grace of God, has not come to such a terrible situation, is being terrorized by the dictator who needs war in order to keep the people in their fear. If Hitler should win, we too will be reduced to slavery. We too will be forced to worship at the shrine of the God of irrationality or pay the penalty.

Believing, however, that the cause of freedom and rationality will prevail, we must also realize that when peace has come we shall face a task even greater than that of winning the war. We shall face the task of reconstruction. This nation and the other democratic nations of the world are being riddled with the irrationality which reduced Germany to her slavery. Unless law and rationality can be restored, and although Germany be defeated, men even in the democratic countries will begin to cry for dictators to solve their troubles and to protect them from the demons of the universe. This can but result in even more appalling wars in the near future, and all the other terrible experiences of which dictatorship and aggression are parts. At this moment, therefore, we face a stupendous problem. Is there anything in this world which can bring sanity, and once again establish order, bringing peace to the hearts of men? If there is, do we know the solution and in what does it consist?

The reply to this question has been given in three ways. In the first place, some urge us to submit to the rule of irrationality as the only road left open to us. Both Christianity and human

reason have failed, we are told, so we must accept the conclusion that there is no such thing as law for the human mind. We may as well admit our failure, say the protagonists of this view, and content ourselves with making the necessary biological adjustments to our environment. This is virtually what has been urged by some recent writers who have invited the democratic countries, and especially the United States, to admit the Nazi philosophy of the defeat of the human mind, and plunge into the sea in order to ride on "the wave of the future." Others, of the same point of view, attempt to persuade us to cooperate with Nazi ideology and appease it, the implication being that the irrationality of the human interpreter of reality can be counteracted only by means of the humanly-created authority which is found in dictatorship.

The second proposal offered to us as a means of overcoming the effects of humanistic thought which have resulted in irrationalism, is that of Roman Catholicism. It asks us to accept, not a revamped form of Romanism, but the revived mediæval teaching of Thomas Aquinas, the great apaiser between Christianity and paganism. But there can be no question as to the effectiveness of this view for, as history has shown, its ultimate end can be but one of two: either it will go completely pagan, or it will become completely Christian. In either case, it will no longer be Thomism, as its artificial reconciliation of two such opposing life- and world-views is impossible and cannot last.

Christianity's Solution

The third solution offered is that of true Christianity. By the use of this word we do not imply so-called "modern" Christianity, nor even that which contains merely a few of the fundamental doctrines. We mean the full-orbed Biblical Christianity set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, for such Christianity alone is truly Biblical and self-consistent. It is the Christianity which, after ten centuries of obscurity, came to light at the Reformation, when the semi-paganism of Rome was rejected and the Bible restored to its proper place of authority. In other words, it is Calvinism. This alone can solve the problems with which the world is faced at this time.

But, some may object, how can Calvinism be the means of bringing the world back from the brink of insanity? And to this we can but reply that Calvinism alone can accomplish this work, for it alone gives the true and Biblical emphasis to the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Men today have lost all idea of law, physical or social, because they have placed man at the center of the universe. Only by insisting that God is the ruler can the world's rationality be restored, and this Calvinism does in a unique way. It alone emphasizes that God is sovereign over nature which He established and has upheld from the day on which it was created. It alone declares that God rules over history and men whom He created and has preserved, establishing them in societies under laws, and enabling them, in spite of their sin and rebellion, to develop the gifts and faculties bestowed upon them. It alone makes God sovereign in salvation, whereby men are brought from their man-centered life to a realization that God alone is the source of law and rationality. Thus Calvinism is the sole interpretation of reality which can bring back order to man's understanding of the physical, social and psychical worlds. It is the only one which gives God His true place as the creator and upholder of the universe.

When, however, we speak of Calvinism or Christianity, we do not mean that we are to content ourselves with repeating the statements of such men as Calvin, Knox, Kuyper or Bavinck. We must continually re-examine their thoughts and teachings in the light of Scripture. We must realize that our faith has its content not in Calvin's *Institutes* nor any other such work, but in Scripture alone. Therefore, while using the teachings of these great men of the past, we must always be ready to test their views by the Scriptures, and at the same time work out and apply the Biblical principles which they enunciated more fully than ever before. If we are going to meet the needs, intellectual, spiritual and social, of the modern world, we must know our Bibles not in piecemeal character, but in their full systematic form as expressed by Calvinism, that we may be able to offer a Scriptural, and therefore divinely provided, solution.

This means that we must be realists. We must know the exact character of

those problems which face us, and not try to gloss them over or fit them into what we would like them to be. Too long have Christians been inclined to close their eyes to the world as it is, employing shibboleths and clichés of the past as answers to modern problems. This can no longer be done. It may be that, when reconstruction comes after this war, the old order will have changed radically, giving place to new, so new indeed that we shall hardly be able to recognize it. It will then be of little use to repeat some favorite political or economic saws to which we have been accustomed, pretending that, because they are old, they are thereby inspired. We who are Christians, as never before must apply the principles of the Scriptures with absolute ruthlessness to the world situation, if we are going to accomplish anything. It may require much revamping of our thought and many changes in our outlook, but it must be done if we are to be faithful to our duties as those who are the salt, the preserving element, in the world.

This duty, which is incumbent upon Christians and particularly upon Calvinists today, means that they must be prepared to present a Christian solution to every problem. It means that Christians must emphasize the "universality" of their beliefs. They must be prepared to meet and offer solutions for the economic, the sociological, the psychological, and the hundred and one other problems which will face, and even now are facing, the world. We cannot be satisfied to say that the Christian must be content to trust in Christ for salvation and let the world go to eternal destruction as fast as it has a mind. We must bring every thought into captivity to Christ. That means not merely in the sphere of religion, but even in the spheres of applied mathematics, surgery and economics.

But, some will object, how can we possibly solve all these problems? The answer is that in Scripture we have given to us the true and correct view of reality: existing by virtue of the created and continuing laws of God. Human rationalism, regarding itself as the only power capable of interpreting the universe, has at last come to the conclusion that it has failed, and can actually know nothing. Christians, on the other hand, taking the principles of reality, the laws of God,

laid down in the Scriptures, must strictly apply them to the world's problems, in an endeavor to bring man to an acknowledgment of the sovereign power and authority of God. By this means alone can man's desire for authority be satisfied, for only then will he be led to acknowledge the true and proper source of authority: the sovereign triune God.

America's Opportunity

In accomplishing this desired end, American Calvinism at this time has a special opportunity. In the first place, since the United States, as the arsenal for democracy, undoubtedly holds an extremely important place in the comity of nations, when reconstruction comes this nation will have a very large share in saying what shall be the character of the new world. Therefore, it behooves American Christians to do their utmost even now to influence American thought, that the truly Christian view of the universe, and of man's responsibility to God, may be impressed upon the minds of the people at large and of the reconstruction statesmen in particular. Even more important, it is practically impossible for any but American Christians to devote their thought to the problems which face the world and demand solution. In Europe, those who have been carrying on this work have either been put to silence or are so busy taking part in hostilities that they have no opportunity to continue their efforts. Therefore, today the Christians on this continent have an opportunity and a duty such as they have never had before.


How can this opportunity be met? Although it is true that we have no great Calvinistic universities or research centers which can assume the work, there are Calvinists in this country who should be able to take part in this necessary work. There are Calvinistic ministers, the professors and students of various Calvinistic theological seminaries and of the all too few Calvinistic colleges. If anything is to be produced in the way of a Christian world- and life-view, upon them will fall much of the labor of producing it. They must be the ones to continue the work of such European thinkers as Kuyper, Dooyeweerd and others. It will require much hard work, but, if present civilization is not to go down in complete destruction, it is their duty and privilege to bring

to the men of this age the Christian solution for the world's disorders. To their support all Christians should rally, in order that the Biblical view of reality may be spread abroad and that once more men may realize that they are not living in a world of chance,

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but one created and upheld by the providence of God.

The reply will be returned, no doubt, that this is impossible. How can the relatively few Christians hope to induce the world to accept the Christian view of reality, even though it would save the sanity of some scientists and philosophers? The question, however, is not exactly relevant. We are not to sit down and count our chances of success before taking action. Our duty is to bring every thought under captivity to Christ, not basing our efforts upon the probability of success, but upon our marching orders. This has been the view of all those who have ever accomplished great things for the kingdom of God. If Calvin had first of all counted the cost, or weighed the chance of his Institutes ever being accepted by any but a few people, we would probably still be under the bondage of Rome. Our duty is before us and the results are in the hands of God whose arm is not shortened that it cannot save. The world today is seeking an interpreta-

tion of reality which will make reality mean something. We believe that we have the answer, and even as God, the Holy Spirit, enabled Calvin to wield such a mighty influence in his day, it is possible that He will use us in the same way in our own age to restore rationality to the world. But if we who hold the solution to the

riddle of the universe refuse to give it to men, if we hold it to ourselves and do not try to show others that in the sovereignty of God alone can rationality be found, then we shall be held responsible by God for neglecting the souls of our fellow men, and for refusing to show forth His glory to the world.

Today in the Religious World

By THOMAS R. BIRCH

Smoking the Pipe of Peace

IT'S always fair weather when good fellows get together, and Auburn Affirmationist Robert Hastings Nichols is one man who knows how to wring the last ounce of burbling enthusiasm out of an old-fashioned, palsy-walsy reunion. Writing in the July issue of *The Chapel Bell*, semi-annual publication of Auburn Seminary, he tells how much the boys in the back room enjoyed a little love-feast between two one-time mortal enemies. Emotes Dr. Nichols:

Thirty Auburn alumni at the General Assembly in St. Louis had a lively reunion "in association with" eighteen Union alumni, wives of many adding numbers and pleasure. Before eating was finished Leo A. Gates, Auburn, 1912, as toastmaster, introduced Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin. His speech, in which he emphasized the success of the Auburn-Union relation, delighted everybody and raised the highest enthusiasm for him. Hardly had he left to attend the Princeton alumni dinner when Dr. John A. Mackay of Princeton came in, receiving a rousing welcome, and made a very happy speech, comparing interestingly the theologies of Princeton and of Auburn and Union. Professor Nichols described the work of Auburn in the Union association and spoke of further possibilities there. According to the custom of Auburn reunions, everybody around the tables introduced himself or herself. Then before we knew it time was up.

Brethren Join Federal Council

The modernist Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has cut another notch on its gun-barrel. The Church of the Brethren, meeting in general conference at La Verne, California, voted to become a member of the vast interchurch and inclusivist body. This is the third national denomination to sign up within the last nine months. The other two

were the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. The Federal Council now has twenty-four denominations officially federated in its membership, and claims a total membership of 25,964,082 persons.

The Church of the Brethren has 1,017 local congregations, with a total membership of 176,908.

"Christian" Endeavor

Five months of coast-to-coast celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Christian Endeavor Society, climaxed last month with the Rainbow Jubilee International Christian Endeavor Convention (sic) in Atlantic City, should have been sufficient to revolve the founders in their graves. The Christianity for the propagation of which Christian Endeavor was originally organized found no place on the program, and the only gospel featured was the social gospel of modernist unbelief. Speakers were Governor Harold E. Stassen of Minnesota, Dr. Daniel A. Poling, Dr. Ralph W. Sockman, Dr. Oscar F. Blackwelder, Dr. Louis H. Evans, and Dr. Norman Vincent Peale.

In a message to the convention sent by President Roosevelt, it was declared: "We, as a people of many origins and diverse cultures and spiritual allegiances, can in full loyalty to our individual convictions work and pray for the establishment of an international order in which the spirit of Christ shall rule. In such an order alone will our cherished freedoms, including the freedom of conscience, be secure. Let us unite in labor and prayer to hasten its coming." And that gospel of spiritualized economics seemed to keynote the entire convention.

Missouri Lutherans Pursue Unity

Unity of a far more desirable character than the unity of the Federal Council or of International Christian Endeavor was a goal of the thirty-eighth triennial convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States (Missouri Synod Lutheran Church). "We express our deep regret," said the Synod, "that the Lutheran Church of our country is not united, especially in these days of spiritual indifferentism, apostasy and unbelief, which have increased its responsibility to hold aloft the banner of purity of doctrine." In past years, members of the Missouri Synod have repeatedly made it clear that the only unity with which they will be content is that true unity which embraces purity in both doctrine and practice.

Nazi Gag Dutch Press

Following an order issued in Amsterdam by the Dutch Ministry of Information, which requires all editors to join a state-dominated journalistic association, the heads of most of the Protestant synods informed the ministry that church journals are privately owned and that the state cannot intervene in their affairs. The churchmen also instructed the editors of religious papers to ignore the order. It is likely that the result of this refusal to "co-operate" will mean the end of the Dutch Protestant religious press; if so, the suppression will be justified by the Nazis in the name of the conservation of paper to be diverted to other more important uses, as was done in the case of the entire Roman Catholic press in Holland.

For the second time since March 20th, the War Cry, Salvation Army weekly published in Amsterdam, has been ordered by Nazi authorities to suspend publication. German officials stated that the magazine's circulation was too high, and the paper was needed for other purposes. The Salvation Army of Holland was dissolved some weeks ago, but a few former officers were permitted limited activity.

Godless Russia

During the past year, the League of Militant Godless in Russia has strengthened its propaganda and increased the success of its movement, according to its leader, Yaroslavsky, in a recent issue of the magazine, *Antireligiosnik*. He credited the ac-

complishments of the league to the fact that the Communist Party not only seeks to promote the league in a general way but also exercises direct control over its work. Pointing out that the influence of the church has not been as greatly weakened as is popularly thought, the arch-atheist declared that "this calls for increased efforts by the Godless League." He also cited as a reason for the need of greater activity, the "future special tasks abroad where, except in the United States, England and Switzerland, all free-thinking associations have now been dissolved . . ."

Yaroslavsky states that the total number of Godless cells in the sixty-two subdivisions of the league on January 1, 1941, was 115,477, as against 95,159 during 1939. Enrolled members of the league were reported as 3,450,182, as against 2,292,036 in 1939. Other statistics given are as follows:

Anti-religious discussion groups: 9,698 with 71,982 participants, as against 5,086 with 82,536 participants in 1939.

Anti-religious seminars: 5,060 with 77,011 participants, as against 4,824 with 77,231 participants in 1939.

Anti-religious museums: Two principal museums (in Moscow and Leningrad), seventeen "republican" and twenty-seven "regional" museums.

Anti-religious lectures: 239,000 with 10,765,000 auditors, as against 200,000 with 6,323,000 auditors in 1939.

Publications: 1,832 books with 140,200 copies, representing a total of four hundred million printed pages, published between 1928 and 1940. In 1941, according to Yaroslavsky, it is planned to publish forty general scientific writings, fourteen works in natural science and thirteen specialized scientific works.

Dutch Churches Protest to Government

An official protest which the Dutch Protestant churches made to representatives of the government last March over the "development of events" throughout The Netherlands has just been made public in Geneva.

The communication was sent to the council of general secretaries of the various government departments by the Convention of Churches. This body includes the Dutch Reformed Church, the Reformed Churches, the Christian Reformed Church, the Arminian Brotherhood, the Men-

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nonite Brotherhood and the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The communication said, in part: "The churches are deeply disturbed about the development of the events which becomes increasingly evident. The proclamation of the Word of God which has been entrusted to them obliges them to take their stand for law and justice, for truth and love. They must raise their voice when in public life these great values are threatened or rejected. That these values are now in great danger cannot be denied by those who observe the situation of our national life.

"Thus, there are in the picture which life in the streets shows more and more clearly, in the treatment to which the Jewish section of the Dutch population is increasingly subjected, in the growing uncertainty with regard to the administration of justice, in the continuing jeopardizing of such liberties as are indispensable conditions for the fulfilling of Christian duties, clear symptoms of a situation which not only lies like a great burden on the consciences of our fellow countrymen, but which also conflicts, according to our deepest convictions, with the claims of God's Word.

"It is for this reason that the churches feel obliged to turn to your council with the urgent request to use all means at your command to insure that justice, truth and mercy may be the standards of action of government in the present time."

DR. GREENWAY TO SPEAK AT WESTMINSTER OPENING

THE opening exercises of Westminster Theological Seminary's thirteenth year will be held on Wednesday afternoon, September 24th, on the campus at Laverock, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. The address will be delivered by the Rev. Leonard Greenway, Th.D., pastor of the Eighth Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. His subject will be "Historic Fact and Christian Faith."

Dr. Greenway is reputed to be one of the best orators in this country among ministers who hold to the Reformed Faith, and his address is expected to be eminently worthwhile as well as thoroughly popular. All friends

of Westminster Seminary are urged to make every effort to be present on this important occasion.

LECTURERS AT MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ARE ANNOUNCED

THE Fourth Annual Ministerial Conference sponsored by the Alumni Association of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, will be held at the seminary from Monday, August 25th, to Friday, August 29th. The first lecture will begin at 3 p.m. Monday and the final lecture will conclude at noon on Friday, thus enabling ministers to attend between Sundays.

The lecturers will be Dr. Gordon H. Clark, Professor of Philosophy at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, the Rev. John H. Skilton, Instructor in New Testament at Westminster Seminary, who will speak on the relation between Christianity and Culture, and the Rev. Robert Strong, S.T.D., pastor of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Willow Grove, Pa., who will lecture on Amillennialism. Mr. Skilton and Dr. Strong will lecture each day; Dr. Clark will not be present on Monday and Tuesday. Each evening there will be a worship service, addressed by ministers attending the conference.

Meals will be served at the seminary and dormitory facilities of the seminary will be available for the delegates. With the exception of Monday, all lectures will be given in the mornings and the afternoons will be free for recreation. The cost will be \$3 for registration and \$4 for board. Delegates are invited to bring their wives for whom there will be no registration charge. The only charge for children will be half the cost of board, or \$2.

The conference is based on the consistent Biblical Christianity set forth in the Reformed Standards, and this point of view will be interpreted and maintained throughout. Although the conference is primarily for ministers, any laymen interested are cordially invited to enroll. Those wishing to enroll may do so by sending their registration fee as promptly as possible to the Rev. Leslie W. Sloat, Westminster Theological Seminary, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia.