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Why Doesn't God Stop This War?

By CHAPLAIN A. CULVER GORDON

Post Chaplain, Fort Lawton, Washington

"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" (Habakkuk 1:13).

THE Bible is old—very old. The Bible is also very modern—surprisingly up-to-date. There is a timeless quality about it. Sometimes it sounds as old as eternity and sometimes as recent as today's headlines. Our text, though it was penned hundreds of years before Christ, is as timely as anything could possibly be.

We look out today upon a world at war. Nation has risen against nation. Great powers have set themselves against each other in a gigantic battle, and little nations have been crushed in the conflict. The great advances in scientific knowledge are being used to maim, kill, and destroy. The four horsemen of the Apocalypse—war, famine, pestilence, and death—are stalking the earth. Killed daily are women and little children in their houses, as well as soldiers in the shock of battle. Thousands and hundreds of thousands have already died and we dare not guess how many more may die. As we look at this frightful and frightening scene, many are asking, Why doesn't God stop all this killing and suffering? Why doesn't God put an end to this war?

That is a very timely question: We can think of nothing more urgent or pressing, and yet the prophet asked the same question hundreds of years before Christ. As he looks out at conditions in his day which

are not unlike our own, he cries out in bewilderment: "Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?"

There Habakkuk is asking the same age-old question. Why doesn't God intervene to punish the wicked and to bring peace upon a war-weary world? Oh Thou holy and righteous God, who canst not even look upon evil or iniquity, why dost Thou look on and intervene not at this time of affliction? The background of this cry was that the prophet had been concerned about the wicked in Israel. God had revealed that the wicked were to be punished by the yet future attack of the Chaldeans. That was the situation in the time of Habakkuk. The people of God had forgotten God: "Therefore the law is slacked and judgment doth never go forth". To overcome this condition, God promises: "Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously for I will work a work in your days which ye will not believe. . . . For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation . . . they are terrible and dreadful".

Do you not see the parallel between that time and this? The carelessness and the sinful indifference of the people of Israel, their love of pleasure, their unrighteousness in both private and public life, inevitably exposed them to the attack of their neighboring nation. The Chaldean invasion was the judgment of God, and

yet note how it proceeded out of their own sin and folly. And it is upon a world of people indifferent to the claims of God that war has burst in our day. Germany and Japan have broken forth as a judgment upon sin, today as then. This war is a judgment of God upon us—but we started it, not He. It flows inevitably from our sins and will come to an end only when we have been punished, the less guilty along with the more. It was this, however, that distressed Habakkuk. The Chaldeans were worse than those they afflicted and killed. And as the prophet sees in prospect the terrible punishment poured forth upon Israel, he cries: "Wherefore holdest thy tongue when the wicked devour eth the man that is more righteous than he?" Habakkuk is puzzled that God could let the Chaldeans oppress Israel, for, whatever its faults, Israel was more righteous than her enemy. Today when we look out upon Hitlerism and Fascism and Shintoism, in their bestial attack upon us, people wonder why God permits it, for whatever the faults of the democracies, our case is more righteous than theirs.

Why doesn't God stop this war? Before we give our answer to this question, let us first ask those who want God to stop the war, just how they would ask Him to proceed. How can God stop this war? Should He suddenly strike dead all our enemies? Should God cause the volcanoes of Japan to erupt and to throw the inhabitants—eighty million of them—into the sea, and should He sweep the islands with great tidal waves? And how should Germany be destroyed—by earthquake and volcano, or by pestilence and famine?

Upon what principle should our God proceed? I think it will be agreed by all that He must proceed upon the principle of absolute justice. God cannot be moved by mere partisan or patriotic feeling. He must proceed upon eternal principles of right and wrong. And we may very well ask, If God is going to intervene in this present war on that basis, just where can He stop? It clearly would not be just to punish some unjust nations and not all unjust nations in this fashion. If He is to pour fire from heaven upon Germany because it has tried to substitute the worship of other gods and because it has been unchristian, what

of Russia, which has denied God? Moreover, what of America? What of England?

It has become rather popular in this country recently to blame the world conditions which produced the present conflict upon the failure of the United States to enter the League of Nations. Our withdrawal to this continent, our policy of isolationism has been assailed as criminal short-sightedness. We are told by many that if we had been willing to take our place in world affairs, this present war could have been avoided. I do not pretend to be able to pass a judgment on this charge. What I am concerned to point out is that, if it is true or half-true, it would be a very dangerous thing for us to have God unsheath the naked sword of His power upon nations. It would be a double-edged sword cutting in directions we would not fancy.

Moreover, if God is to strike unrighteous nations from the earth, can He stop there? Are not nations composed of individuals, and if God is to punish all sinful individuals, who will be left? In the Scriptures, God is represented as cutting off certain sinners for their sins by a direct and single course of action. He struck Ananias and Sapphira dead for a lie. If God were to strike dead all who have lied, would there be any left in the world? On the whole, I think we do well not

to ask God to unsheath His sword in any such fashion. In effect, for God to stop this war in this manner would mean the great Day of Judgment, the end of history. No, we can thank God that He does not stop the war on any such principle. God is long-suffering and kind, as Paul observes, in not directly intervening in order to lead us to repentance.

We have not yet given our full answer to the question of why God does not stop the war by direct intervention. God does not thus intervene because He has made us free moral agents. When God created man, He created him perfect, but He endowed him with such freedom that if he so desired he could sin. That is the story of Eden in a nutshell. Perfect, yet with the ability to disobey God. That freedom to choose the evil is still man's prerogative.

God could have created man so that he was perfect in holiness and could not sin. However, God did not choose so to create the human race. Even after man had sinned, God permitted him to live and to propagate and to build a world and a civilization in which he was free from sin. The world in which we live is precisely that kind of world. For God so to intervene now would be to crush out that freedom which He has always allowed to the human race.

Why doesn't God stop the war? The answer is that He will stop it in His own good time. But, if history is any guide, He will not stop it by a direct intervention of naked power. We have seen how difficult it would be for God to do so without destroying the whole inhabited earth. I once heard a professor at Princeton Theological Seminary say that God could create a desert and call it peace, but that isn't the kind of peace He wants, nor do we.

To say that God has given us freedom of choice is not to say that God has no control over the events of history. On the contrary, we are told that all things are under His power and control. Paul tells us that God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. Jesus said that not even a sparrow falleth to earth without our Heavenly Father. God did not cause this war, but He permits it; nay, He controls it. Are we not told that He

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Reaching the Children for Christ

By the REV. CHARLES G. SCHAUFFELE

Pastor of Faith and New Hope Orthodox Presbyterian Churches in Harrisville and Branchton, Pennsylvania

SEVERAL years ago, while I was supplying Faith Church in Harrisville and New Hope Church in Branchton, western Pennsylvania, I saw the possibility of a weekday church school in a rural public school, and organized two classes for Bible study. These classes have continued under the same ministry for the past two years. One day a sixteen-year-old girl, one of my parishioners, asked me to start classes in the school attended by her brother and sister. Largely as a result of her efforts, permission was obtained and interest aroused among the boys and girls for two more classes last year. Since that time the work has enlarged to include two additional communities. The plan is so simple, and the visible results so worthwhile, that any pastor or lay worker near a rural school may adapt this procedure for his own use.

At 2.45 the children in the first four grades are dismissed. These pile into our Ford, two and three deep, bound for the near-by home of one of our church members who is ready to receive them. In each of our schools, this distance is less than a mile. There each pupil recites the

memory verse for the day, one of an alphabet I have prepared. These verses have been distributed on mimeographed slips the week before. The hostess takes the roll and gives credit for the verses recited correctly with the references. On small colored construction-paper kites, with bright yarn tails, the committed verses are fastened with scotch tape. The boys and girls love to hold these kites for a short time each week and see the verse-tails grow. Hymns and Scriptural choruses are sung, and sometimes seasonal songs are taught. The Bible story is always illustrated with the flannel-graph board or other visual aids. Large Sunday school picture rolls are sometimes used. The course began last year with Genesis and is now covering the period of Joshua-Judges-Ruth. We have secured excellent visual material from the Scripture Press, 800 North Clark Street, Chicago. Some of the children come just to see the pictures. Frequently there is an impromptu dramatization of the story. This is followed by sentence prayers in which the children like to take part. I have been surprised to hear them pray for matters that have been mentioned



BETTY JOY BOVARD, of the New Hope junior class, uses the flannelgraph to demonstrate to the rest of the group the story she is learning.

weeks before. At ten minutes before four, we dismiss the class with a choral benediction and those that have to wait for older brother or sister jump into the faithful Ford and return to the schoolhouse. Our "Fordor" often transports from eleven to fourteen youngsters. The last four grades then have their opportunity with the Word for an hour. In one school, every child in the student body stays for either one class or the other. In another school, eighteen out of twenty stay for this one-hour-a-week class. In still another, which began classes last year, all the juniors stay but only one third of the seniors. We have learned that ignorance and prejudice sometimes offer resistance for as long as two years, but finally the children come.

In the senior group we attempt deeper Bible study, and aim to inculcate the strengthening doctrines of the Reformed Faith. One year we used D. H. Walters' excellent workbooks for both Old and New Testaments. The children liked the type of "to be completed" sentences, true-false statements and direct questions in these books. We have also used Irene B. Ranney's lessons on the Gospel of John, stressing the way of salvation. This year each pupil has his copy of Manual IV on the Life of Christ, prepared by the National Union of Christian Schools, 10119 Lafayette Avenue, Chicago. The teach-



THE JUNIOR GROUP from Ryebread School—a one-room rural school taught by a Christian woman. Here she leads the group into the farmhouse of Mrs. H. N. Christy, the nearest house to the school. Mrs. Christy also helps with the class which Miss Bonner teaches.

ers who have seen this material have commented on its high quality. The attitude of confidently expecting really earnest Bible study has been conducive to receiving just that from these older children. The teacher's manual in the series gives a suggested order for the lesson periods, and there is also homework required, which the children like to do. A gold star on the homework sheet is sufficient reward for this. I have found that these older children like strong meat and comprehend the Biblical teachings regarding the sovereignty of God, election, predestination, substitutionary atonement and the Lord's return. These senior classes do not require much visual aid, but they like some. Since they are studying the life of Christ this year, they are making scrapbooks using pictures from Sunday school papers and calendars that relate to the life of our Lord.

At the beginning of the season, we gave each child a blue and gold celluloid pin labeled "Weekday Church School". These pins are worn with great pride, especially on class days. At first, to stimulate attendance, we gave a little metal fish to every child who brought a subsequent steady attendant.

At the end of the spring term last year, we had a closing program for the four schools. Enthusiastic competition ran high that night to see who would have the largest number present. Many parents also came. Each school wore its colors, and each participated in the program of recitation, flannel-graph story, songs and verses from the year's work. A framed picture of Christ was given to the school having the best attendance record, although the other schools were not far behind.

Both the school boards and the local teachers have encouraged the Bible classes. The teacher of one of the rural schools is a Roman Catholic and yet coöperates in every possible way, and has even asked me to put up and maintain a Sunday school bulletin board in a corner of the school-room. The teacher of another school is a nominal Presbyterian who continually urges the children to study their lessons for Bible class. At the third school, one of our active church members is the teacher. Several of her own children attend another of the schools. She says the Bible classes reduce her problems of discipline.

Some of the children in these classes attend our own rural Sunday school.

Where to Send Orders

IT IS earnestly requested that all orders for publications of the Committee on Christian Education of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, be sent to P. O. Box 4038, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, Pa., and not to the office of The Presbyterian Guardian. When this rule is not observed, lengthy delays in filling orders are the inevitable result; in addition, it involves much extra clerical work, bookkeeping and postage. Your coöperation with this request will speed your order to you, and relieve the Guardian and the Committee of a large amount of unnecessary labor and expense.

Others are mildly Roman Catholic, and a few are Pentecostals. The majority of them, however, are not reached by any religious organization apart from these weekly classes. The percentage of decisions for Christ has been very high. Several of the brightest trophies have come from the broken homes of drunken parents. Continuous effort is made to bring children to our Sunday school, and some have responded. All for whom we have been able to provide transportation have attended our Summer Bible School. Each week we distribute unused Sunday school papers provided by our own church in town.

With the aid of two earnest Christian helpers—one a former school teacher—we have seen the Bible classes develop into one of the most fruitful activities of our pastoral work. We wish that ministers in other communities, with the aid of faithful parishioners, might know the blessing received from helping to garner the wonderful harvest of neglected children in our rural areas.

Songs From Prison

A Review

"OUT OF PRISON" by Bruce F. Hunt. Published by the Committee on Foreign Missions of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 514 Schaff Building, Philadelphia, Pa., 1942. 25c a copy.

READERS of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN are already well acquainted with the story of the imprisonment of the Rev. Bruce F. Hunt, Orthodox Presbyterian missionary to Manchuria, and of the hardships and sufferings he endured at the hands of the Japanese authorities. Here, in one small and attractive booklet, is a series of six brief pictures of the operation of the grace of God in the heart of one of His faithful children during trials that might well have broken a spirit less devoted to the cause of Christ. Out of the night have come songs of praise and out of the blackness a hymn of thanksgiving. Truly, the wrath of man has been made to praise the sovereign God and bring glory to His name.

The booklet, originally planned by Mr. Hunt as an expression of Christian Christmas greeting to his host of friends, contains six poems written by him while in prison, together with the stories of how they came to be composed and the often painful experiences that called them forth. The Foreword contains a brief history of Mr. Hunt's prison experiences. Included also is the music he composed for his hymn, "Give Thanks Unto Jehovah". The arrangement is by Willella C. Strong.

"Out of Prison" is probably the most attractively printed booklet ever published by any committee of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Its beauty, simplicity and dignity are well suited to its subject matter. We strongly urge every reader to secure a copy at once and to buy additional copies for friends. In our opinion, the booklet is one of the most effective pieces of propaganda the church has ever possessed, and its wide distribution will go far toward winning friends for the denomination and its mission work. We suggest also that missionary societies appropriate sufficient funds to supply each member with a copy. Orders should be accompanied with remittance, and mailed to the Committee on Foreign Missions at the address given above.

—T. R. B.

The Trees Choose a King

A Meditation by the REV. LAWRENCE B. GILMORE, Th.D.

Pastor of Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Trenton, N. J.

WE ARE now beginning a devotional study of the parables of the Old Testament. These parables are liable to neglect. In fact, writers on the Old Testament parables complain that there are so few books in this field. But let us pray that the Holy Spirit will make this part of Old Testament teaching fruitful in our thought and life.

The following may be regarded as the chief Old Testament parables and their principal themes: (1) The trees choosing a king (Judges 9:8-20)—the soul's true allegiance; (2) the poor man's lamb (II Samuel 12:1-4)—privilege and pity; (3) the parable of the widow of Tekoa, concerning a son who slew his brother (II Samuel 14:4-20)—the problem of the sinner's reconciliation; (4) the busy soldier who let his prisoner escape (I Kings 20:35-42)—opportunity and responsibility; (5) the thistle that asked for the cedar's daughter as a wife for his son (II Kings 14:9-11)—the folly of pride; (6) the unfruitful vineyard (Isaiah 5:1-7)—God's requirement of spiritual fruitfulness; (7) the farmer's sowing and threshing (Isaiah 28:23-39)—the divine methods with mankind; (8) the two eagles and a vine (Ezekiel 17:1-10)—national treachery and divine judgment; (9) the lion's whelps (Ezekiel 19:1-9)—the fall of the royal house of Judah—God in history; (10) the sensual sisters (Ezekiel 23:1-49)—spiritual unfaithfulness; (11) the boiling caldron (Ezekiel 24:1-14)—the divine judgment on sin.

The basic idea of parables is that of comparing. Parabolic teaching is a method of illustrating moral or religious truth by a comparison with common experience. But parables differ somewhat in form and content.

A short comparison may be stated by such words as *like* and *as*, and this is a simile. An example is: "as a lamb that is led to the slaughter" (Isaiah 53:7). A parable proper is an extended simile. A parable therefore is a short, fictitious narrative designed to teach a moral or spiritual lesson. Such a parable is that of the kingdom likened

to a merchant seeking goodly pearls (Matthew 13:45, 46).

A metaphor is an implied comparison, as where the Lord Jesus calls Herod a fox (Luke 13:32).

An allegory is the description of one thing in terms of another. An allegory therefore is essentially an extended metaphor, as where the Lord Jesus describes Himself as the Good Shepherd (John 10). The allegory is an elaborated picture and lacks the story-movement of the parable proper.

The fable is a parable that represents action that does not occur in real life, as when plants and animals are made to talk. The most familiar example is Aesop's *Fables*. The fable, moreover, is better adapted to teaching earthly prudence than heavenly wisdom.

We should note that this idea of fable is not the same as that which the Apostles Paul and Peter so severely condemn in their epistles (I Timothy 1:4; 4:7; II Timothy 4:1; Titus 1:14; II Peter 1:16). What they reprove is Jewish legends and pagan speculations that are opposed to the gospel. The Bible of course contains no such fables, but only the parabolic kind like Jotham's, which teach divine truth.

Jotham and His Fable

Jotham was the youngest son of Jerubbaal (Gideon), the celebrated judge and deliverer of Israel. After Gideon died, all the sons of Gideon except Jotham, who escaped, were massacred by their half-brother Abimelech. Then the people of Shechem made Abimelech their king.

Jotham soon after, standing at a safe distance on Mount Gerizim, shouted to the Shechemites his fable of solemn condemnation and warning (Judges 9:8-20). He told how the trees wanted a king, and the olive-tree, followed by the fig-tree and the vine, refused to be king. Finally the bramble was offered the kingship, and warned the other trees that he would indeed be king but, if provoked, could start a fire that would burn up all the other trees, even the mighty cedars of

Lebanon.

Jotham meant that his father Gideon and his brothers, though worthy and useful men, had no desire to be king, and that to make a king of a worthless murderer like Abimelech would bring ruin on all concerned.

All too soon Jotham's warning came true. Within three years Abimelech and his subjects were quarreling. Abimelech put down a plot against him in a bloody battle, and destroyed the city of Shechem, burning a thousand of its men and women in the tower where they had taken refuge. He himself was killed soon after, while besieging another town.

What the Fable Teaches

This fable shows us the awful ruin that results from choosing the wrong king. In earthly affairs good men are tempted to avoid responsibility, and to allow bramble-bush men to gain power, to the injury or ruin of all. Witness how thousands who put Hitler in power have had to follow his orders bringing them into hardship, wounds and death.

In the spiritual realm, too, we see the necessity of choosing the right king. Satan, self, and Christ are offered to us as the objects of our soul's allegiance. But Satan's rule is slavery, and the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). If we say that not Satan, but self, shall be our king, we find that Satan will rule self, and again the result is death. It is the Holy Spirit who leads us to see and accept Christ as our Saviour-King (I Corinthians 12:3).

Christ Our King

Christ is our rightful ruler. He is our Prophet, Priest, and King. As Prophet He enlightens and guides His people. As Priest He atones for their sins. As King He rules and defends them. His rule is blessed and fruitful, for it gives that real freedom which releases us from the penalty and power of sin (John 8:36).

The Lord Jesus has the right to rule us because of what He is. He is the Son of God, the Second Person of

the Trinity, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit created us and all things. He is the Son of Man, the perfect sinless Man, the God-man, the Messiah of glory.

Christ has the right to rule us also because of what He did. He ransomed

His own with His precious blood. He overcame sin, death, and Satan in our behalf. We owe Him our loving obedience.

"O Jesus, King most wonderful,
Thou Conqueror renowned,

Thou sweetness most ineffable,
In Whom all joys are found!"

"May every heart confess Thy name,
And ever Thee adore;
And seeking Thee, itself inflame
To seek Thee more and more".

Of Saving Faith

The Sixth in a Series of Studies "Of Things Most Surely Believed"

By the REV. HENRY W. CORAY

Pastor of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Long Beach, California

NOT long ago I was speaking with a retired Presbyterian minister, a friend of Dr. Geerhardus Vos. During the conversation he quoted that fine scholar as saying, "Most people in the pews today hear a good deal about faith but they do not know the meaning of faith. It is no wonder. Most ministers do not know, either".

If this enlightened generation were to go back to the tree of our spiritual ancestors, the Puritans, we would sit under their shadow with great delight and their fruit would be sweet to our taste. Here is a ripe cluster from the bough of one of their number, John Flavel. Says he, "There are three elements in saving faith, knowledge, assent, trust". Let us develop briefly the outline he has sketched for us.

In the first place, faith that spells salvation begins with knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It is founded upon the facts, wrought and explained by God in His Word, historically attested by men who did not follow cunningly devised fables when they wrote the facts into the record. "Men", insists Flavel, "must hear and learn of the Father before they come to Christ. John 6:45. The receiving act of faith is directed and guided by knowledge". This testimony is true. Light must needs be sown before life can spring up. Men have to be presented with the truth about Christ's person and vicarious death if they are to be converted and have their sin blotted out. As another declared, "The gospel is good news. To listen to some preachers you would imagine that the gospel was a pinch of sacred snuff to make them wake up or a bottle of ardent spirits to excite their brains. It is nothing of the kind. It

is news. There is information in it. There is instruction in it concerning matters which men need to know and statements in it calculated to bless those who hear it. It is not a magical incantation of a charm whose force consists in a collection of sounds. It is a revelation of facts and truths which require knowledge and belief. The gospel is a reasonable system and it appeals to men's understanding. It is a matter for thought and consideration and appeals to the conscience and reflecting powers".

The marrow of the message of Christianity is summarized in I Cor. 15:3, 4, where Paul gives us the burden of his evangelistic preaching when he says he proclaimed "that Christ died for our sins according to the scripture and that he was buried and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures".

Then saving faith includes assent of understanding. If we receive, that is, assent or agree to, the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. The gospel hearer appointed to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ under the impulse of God's Spirit receives the word with all readiness of mind and confesses that these things are so. When you turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, you set your seal to this, that the gospel of God is true. Alas, many who come within hearing of the joyful sound are wilfully ignorant of that which maketh wise unto salvation. Because of intellectual pride or secret sin they refuse to subscribe to the testimony of God and His prophets. They choose rather to move on, condemned, to the City of Destruction. "All acts of faith and religion

without assent are but so many arrows shot at random into the open air. They signify nothing for want of a determinate objective". But sinners drawn to Christ will confess, "We have heard for ourselves and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world".

Finally, faith that appropriates full and free redemption commits the soul to Christ as He is presented to us in the gospel. To believe on the name of the only begotten Son of God is to receive Him (John 1:12); to fly to Him for refuge (Heb. 6:18); to be found in Him (Phil. 3:9); to trust in Him with all thy heart (Prov. 3:5); to come to Him (Matt. 11:28). The third element in saving faith is trust.

In preaching to the Chinese we often use a very simple illustration. It so happens that the Chinese word for "trust" is "k'ao" which also means "to lean upon". We stand facing a chair and place hands upon the seat, then lean forward until all our weight is resting upon the chair. It then becomes our one stay or support. So it is with faith that saves the sinner. He takes all the weight from his own conduct and character and, being persuaded that Jesus Christ is able to save to the uttermost, commits the eternal welfare of his soul into His sovereign keeping for time and for eternity.

"The soul that on Jesus has leaned
for repose

I will not, I will not desert to his
foes;

That soul, though all hell should
endeavor to shake,

I'll never, no, never, no, never for-
sake".

Why the Many Cults and Isms?

By the REV. T. C. VAN KOOTEN

Pastor of the Christian Reformed Church of Volga, South Dakota

If we Americans can be called "guinea pigs" because we entrust our physical welfare to the quacks and quackeries that boast themselves as panaceas for all physical ills, we can by the same token be called a nation of incurable idiots when we entrust our souls to the religious quacks and quackeries that thrive in every hamlet, village and town.

Ours is sometimes called an irreligious age, but it might better be termed an age of false religions. We are forcefully driven to this conclusion when we think of the cults and "isms" that have been given birth during the past fifty years. The Bible-loving Christian is reminded of the prophetic utterance of the Scripture regarding the "last days". In II Thessalonians 2:4 we read of the Antichrist that he "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God". The Antichrist will not be irreligious, but will place himself at the center of his own religion. We notice that the man-centered religious quackeries of today, and even the political ideologies of Nazism and Communism, all point in the direction our text warns us about. Man becomes the center of things, even enlisting religious devotion unto himself. This can also be said of many of the cults and isms—witness the Mormon conception that everyone is a potential God.

The number of these cults and isms has been increasing each year, until today we have virtually hundreds here in America. The question often presses itself upon us: Why all these cults? Why should they grow and increase while the true visible church often goes begging for bread? Here are some suggestions as to where the answer may be found.

Terms

First we must define terms. What is meant by "cults and isms"? By cults and isms are not meant the various denominations of the Christian church, who may differ, even radically, in their interpretation of the Scripture but which in general at least

attempt to be true to the Bible. We rather think of those sects which, though they may parade in the name of Christianity, have no room for the basic Christian doctrines of God, sin, and salvation, and have placed other sources of religious "truth" alongside of or above the Scripture—those bastard religions which claim to be the only remaining heirs of truth, which parade as the only true disciples of righteousness, and which rant at the Christian church as an angry dog would bark and growl at a tramp. One thinks of Christian Science, with its denial of sin and the Saviour; Mormonism, with its polytheism; Unity, with its fantastic spiritualizations; and a host of others. No, cults and isms are not the denominations of the Christian religion that have remained even partially true to their historic positions; they are the poisonous toadstools that have sprung up around the dead stumps, and there are hundreds of them. Each year sees the advent of new ones and proselytes for all of them. What is the reason? Can we explain their growth?

Lack of Systematic Indoctrination

The first reason for the phenomenal growth of the cults is an indictment of the visible church. When criticizing the cults and their vulturous attack upon the church, we often forget that one of the first reasons for their very existence and growth can be laid at the door of the church herself. There has been in the church a dire lack of systematic training in the fundamental truths of divinely revealed religion—with emphasis both upon the "systematic" and the "training". It is true, one finds a superficial and general knowledge of what the Scriptures say, but there is little personal conviction and stability as to fundamental issues. The general decrease in Biblical knowledge and its cardinal teachings is deplored by those who are concerned and who know the state of affairs. University and college professors who feel inclined to quiz incoming students on their Biblical knowledge attest to the constantly declining knowledge of the Bible. Whose

fault is this? Is it not the church and the home? Thousands of modern churches have failed to feed their children the milk of revealed truth that their flocks might have even a start in spiritual life. "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10:14).

Life at the Expense of Truth

Of course it is a well-known fact that many churches purposely do not emphasize a systematic and doctrinal knowledge of the Scriptures. They insist that doctrine has been overemphasized in the Reformation churches, and that the modern church should give more attention to the life that should be lived. These moderns have failed to learn from God's Word that life must be built upon the solid foundation of doctrine and truth, and not the reverse. They have failed to learn the fundamental axiom that truth and doctrine stabilize life. Souls must be anchored in the truth before they can live positively. Not having learned that lesson, we find the souls of those members whose emphasis has been only on life drifting without anchorage. They have no truth upon which to stand and rest their weary souls. These drifting spirits are easy prey for the cults, for those cults come with an absolute dogmatism on some point and the drifting soul thinks to find anchorage in that very dogmatism. The strength of the cults lies in their dogmatism. It is according to man's nature as a created being to want a place to stand, and the cults furnish such a place, even though it be a slippery one. If the modern church would only learn this fundamental truth, and systematically indoctrinate her children in the unadulterated Scriptures, the cults would never experience such phenomenal growth. Of course, one must realize that this dearth of Biblical knowledge has been long in progress, and the situation is not easily rectified.

Unconverted Church Members

Many churches are satisfied to allow the souls of their people to drift, letting them pick up what Biblical knowledge they may along the way.

Among these drifting souls we find the unconverted church members. They have been fed on a starvation diet of adulterated truth, and their souls lie perishing within the very sanctuary. To say that such a soul is basically dissatisfied is unnecessary. It has no religious security or satisfaction whatsoever. There is nothing wherein it may delight or trust. This unconverted soul is reached by some cult which at least offers some satisfaction or stability on some score—for example, an emotional outlet, or physical security. The cult offers something positive, at least. The dissatisfied soul grabs for the proffered straw. How many thousands are today heading for eternity astride these many straws! It cannot be denied that the cults are as vultures, who feed upon the carcasses of the spiritually dead within the church; but the fact that there are so many dead to feed on is an indictment of the church. That does not, however, lessen the guilt of the cults, who owe their continued existence to the dereliction of the visible church. They live upon a decadent church. They do very little or no mission work among the raw heathen, but they relentlessly ferret out every Christian among all nations and peoples and try to make a proselyte of him.

Ultrasectarianism

The strength and appeal of the cults also lies in their ultrasectarianism. Each one of them emphasizes, or rather overemphasizes, one doctrine. Each focuses all attention on his own cherished belief. Each has stared at that one single doctrine so long and so hard that he sees that doctrine, wherever he looks, whether it be really there or not. That is why the cultists are all bigots to a superlative degree. They are packed so full of one thing that it is impossible to squeeze anything else in. However, this ultrasectarianism has two distinct advantages for the cult.

Each cult and each adherent of the cult thinks he understands everything, for he simply interprets the universe according to his own sectarian leanings. For the Spiritist, it is a spirit; for the Buchmanite, it is confession of sin, and for the Christian Scientist, it is the power of mind over matter. That makes the interpretation and understanding of all things easy. It explains why these cultists all think they know everything. They know one thing; they

have made that one thing everything; and so they know everything. It is just about that simple for most of them. And such bigotry is very flattering to the cultists themselves.

There is another advantage of this sectarianism. It makes religion very easy for anyone who embraces the sectarian cults, for if one is merely faithful in the one emphasized doctrine, everything else passes unnoticed and unchallenged. Because that one point is constantly emphasized, each member constrains himself to be faithful in it; then, quite naturally, he begins to think that other things do not have the religious value of the emphasized point. That is one reason why so many cultists can be immoral and dishonest, and do not find it incompatible with their religion. They see only one point and they have been very faithful in that one.

Pragmatism

We live in an age of pragmatism. Truth, we are told, is not absolute or final, but is determined by the usefulness which the truth represents. One cannot just teach a doctrine which demands unqualified allegiance because of any reasons within the doctrine itself, but the doctrine must first prove its usefulness. This pragmatic tendency has played into the hands of the sects and cults. They claim to have discarded all useless dogma and have retained and reclaimed only the facts useful for life. If hell is not useful to you, all right; you may be a Russellite. If health is useful to you, you may be anything from a consultant of Doc Robinson to a Christian Scientist. This also explains why there are persons who believe in a hopeless combination of many sects: several of the various doctrines have proved useful to them. In fact, most cults are themselves a hopeless jumble of heterogeneous doctrines taken from many faiths.

Modern Unbelief

We live in an age of premeditated unbelief. The sterility of Modernism permeates the schools and universities, and many pulpits have left the souls of men to wither for want of a cool draught of spiritual refreshment. Consequently, we see these parched souls seeking the welcome shade of some cult. Man is incurably religious. Even though he may vigorously denounce all religion as a left-over from a lower form of man's existence, secretly his

soul will cling to some remnant of the very thing he has shattered with his words. Witness, for example, the scientifically-minded Conan Doyle, and the philosophically-minded William James, who were both Spiritists. Man's soul must have some cradle for repose, even though he may claim he has outgrown a cradle and then stretch himself out on the hard floor.

Sensationalism

Most of the present-day cults answer to the modern craving for the sensational, and for "show". Modern man wants to be entertained, and that with a type of entertainment that he can easily grasp. So we often find that the more sensational, and even absurd, the claims of the cults are, the more dupes will be attracted. How many have not been entertained by Aimee Semple McPherson, a Spiritist seance, or a big tent with a verbal thunderstorm at one end? And who shall say how many souls have been ensnared by that very showmanship?

In the Name of Christ

One claim of many of the cults is that they come in the name of the Lord Jesus. Almost all of them claim to be the last remaining living branch of the Christian religion. They generally employ the phrases, the theological words, and even the approaches of the orthodox Christian faith. This deceives the unwary. For example, the first article of faith of the Mormon cult, as expressed on the pamphlet they distribute at the Salt Lake City temple, reads, "I believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost" (this is the first article of faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, by Joseph Smith). This article of faith looks innocent and even Christian—a confession of the Trinity! Far from it, if one only knew what the Mormon means by the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

The Great Apostasy

Last, but far from least, one of the clearest explanations for so many cults is found in the divinely-inspired prophetic words of Paul in II Thessalonians 2. In verse three we read, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first." Paul is here speaking of the great apostasy which will characterize the last days.

We know we now live in the last days, but we have no knowledge of their duration. Paul further points, in verse ten, to the deception which will facilitate such apostasy: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved". We notice that those who apostatized did not receive the truth. They did not believe in God's Word. Therefore, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie". Paul has spoken of those who did not receive the truth, which implies

that they had had the opportunity to believe and, because they did not receive the Word, God sent them strong delusion that they should believe a lie. Is this not true of most of the cults? They have the Scriptures but have denied the power thereof. They do not believe the obvious teachings of God's Word, but they believe the lie of their own concoction. That is why it is so very difficult to reason with those who hold the Bible to be in error. Does this text not explain the tenacious fanaticism with which the cultists cling to their tenets? We should not forget this in our deal-

ings with them. They believe the lie with all their hearts. They embrace it with all their strength.

There is only one antidote for the poison of the cults, and that is the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. The church must be faithful in the administration of the Word and in its prayers for the mighty manifestation of the Holy Spirit. She must build the walls of Zion with "living stones". She must fortify her ramparts with the "truth". Her cries must be directed upwards, if she is to stand against the incessant onslaughts of these spiritual marauders.

God Our Only Help

An Address Delivered Over Radio Station WKRC, Cincinnati

By the REV. PAUL WOOLLEY

Professor of Church History at Westminster Theological Seminary

TODAY we are engaged in a great world-wide conflict, fighting to preserve values of life which are very dear to us, fighting for freedom, for individual liberty, fighting to remain free of regimentation, fighting to retain the right to speak as we think.

Why is it that we are so zealous to preserve these great rights? What is our real object in seeking to preserve this freedom?

If we answer that question very frankly, I fear that the answer in some cases at least would be simply that we want to enjoy ourselves without interference. We do not want anybody to tell us what to do.

Whether that is a worthy answer or not depends, I think, on the meaning we have in mind when we say "enjoy ourselves". Do we simply want to "have a good time"? Is that what we mean? Are we anxious to be free purely in order to live lives without purpose or meaning, except the ephemeral pleasure of the moment? If that is our end and object, certainly the years will bring the taste of gall and wormwood to us. We must have an enjoyment whose tang endures, an enjoyment which definitely adds values to our lives or to the lives of others. If that enjoyment is to last, it needs to be geared to a definite aim, a positive objective. The great difficulty, however, is to be sure as to what that

objective should be. In a world of confusion like this in which we live, where is any certainty as to an end and aim to be found?

It should be quite clear that mere human effort and thought has never yet provided a satisfactory objective for man. It is easy enough to ridicule "pie in the sky" on the one hand, but, on the other, is pie on the earth all that anyone can desire? Is there nothing at all to ask for but that? Men have never shown themselves to be really satisfied with material goods only. True, there has been a greatly increased desire and scramble for material goods in the past half century. One result has been these two devastating world wars within twenty-five years of one another. Certainly that is an indication of the truth that no material end is sufficient for mankind's highest aim.

If we turn to the things of the spirit, we turn, by the same token, to the reason why we must contend for freedom. Dictators and tyrants know a great deal about material ends. Blood and soil and living space are the dictators' stock in trade. But for the values of the spirit there is no room. Churches and spiritual interests of all sorts receive short shrift from tyrants, black, red, or any other kind.

But there is no man on earth who

is big enough to direct the human spirit. There is no man big enough to supply the answer to the world's confusion. Selfishness, the demand for incessant material gain, is at the bottom of that confusion. And selfishness can be rooted out in only one way. That is by the grace of God in changing the focus of a man's life.

When grace operates, it changes the focus from man to God. With that change a remarkable transformation of outlook occurs. Purely material things no longer loom up across the whole horizon, blotting out the sight of everything else. The center of gravity of the whole outlook is changed because it becomes apparent that the important fact for man to know is not how many things he has but that the affairs of the world are under the sovereign control of God. There can be no more revolutionary change in a man's life than that realization. Not only are goods and comforts no longer the be all and end all of existence. The assurance that in spite of man's maddening course on earth, human obstinacy, human obstinateness and human selfishness are not in control—that is the greatest source of confidence and comfort that can come to any one.

Liberty means something when it can be used to direct activities which are under the guarantee of God's ulti-

mate sovereignty. And the more closely the activities conform to the revealed will of God the more purposeful they become.

Two questions immediately arise: Can there be true liberty under such a sovereignty? And, if so, how can it be most efficiently directed?

Looking at the first of these questions, a great deal of thought has gone in recent years into the question of what true liberty is and under what conditions it can most effectively be exercised.

The liberty that would exist in an empty world is not what any thinking man means by true liberty. Just as a living being would die in a vacuum and liberty there be meaningless, so there must be proper conditions to enable liberty to subsist in a real sense in the existing world. One important element in those conditions is the maintenance of adequate physical living standards. A man has no useful freedom if he is starving to death. Nor can he accomplish something worthwhile if he is freezing. When adequate food and shelter are combined with political freedom, with the absence of governmental restrictions on speech, press, radio and religion, then the conditions for liberty are beginning to be provided. But the search for conditions cannot stop there. One very important factor remains to be dealt with, and it is one that is frequently overlooked entirely. Physical freedom and the supply of physical want are of great importance, but if they are not accompanied by freedom from fretting care and worry they are of comparatively little worth. Caring care and worry about the future, about members of the family, about loved ones and friends, about the condition of the world, eat into the lives of more people than one imagines until he stops to consider. It is this that keeps them burdened, that takes away the lilt of life, that binds them, in spirit, to the grindstone. The remedy for this, then, is one of the most important things in all of life. That remedy is an actual, living realization of the truth of the sovereignty of God. When a man or a woman really begins to believe in his heart that God rules all things and that He actually has them under control a peace is attained that nothing else will produce. Then the spirit is released, and the powers of man burgeon out into flower and fruit. The world is not utterly aimless and useless. There is

an end to which the creation moves and God directs affairs to that end. Far from hindering liberty, then, the sovereignty of God forwards it. Men are released from (mental bondage to the cares of the environment and can turn free attention to the great concerns of life. They are conscious of no chains. The sovereignty of God does not hinder the exercise of their powers. Rather it releases them for their full sweep. They are as free as men can ever be in this world.

That the sovereignty of God is a fact is proclaimed again and again in our only infallible source of knowledge about God, the Bible. The Bible tells us that all things sprang originally from God, that God upholds all things by the word of His power. Not only does He lay His mighty hand upon the great movings of affairs, not only can none "stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, but He marks the fall of every sparrow. Yes, even the hairs of our head are all numbered with Him. Every act from the greatest unto the least and every creature is under His care and His all-wise control. His sovereignty is complete and perfect. How wise and mighty is God!

The second question which I raised a moment ago was the question as to how this liberty could be directed most efficiently. We have the answer to that in the law of God. Unlike the law of this or any other country, man is at liberty, in this life, to obey that law of God or not, as he chooses. But obedience to the law of God will bring true liberty and such obedience alone will bring it. As violation of human law leads to confinement in jail, so violation of the law of God leads to a mental and spiritual confinement of the soul of a man. The spirit beats with increasing violence, but increasing hopelessness, against the bars of its prison. The walls seem more and more suffocating. The only way to freedom is through obedience, obedience to the law which will bring the forces of the human spirit under control. Power run wild is useless, power under control masters all things. The human spirit enjoys liberty only when it is under such control, the control of the law of God.

The knowledge of this law of God comes through a study of His Word. The Bible is an utterly unique book. It is the only book in the world which reveals without mistake the character,

purpose and plan of God and the origin, nature and end of man. A thorough study of the Bible is a task which no man can complete in a lifetime. Yet the main outlines of its message can be comprehended by a child. With its revelation of the character of God and of the commands which He has given to men to enable them to live happy, useful lives, a knowledge of it is indispensable to every human being who wants to live well, to know true liberty.

The present day is increasingly an age of planning. Whatever our hopes or fears in the matter, more and more of our lives are to be regulated by planning. But planning is obviously impossible without a plan. It may be tried sometimes but it won't work for long. And a plan to last must be built on principles. There are no real substitutes for the principles of God. The material world sees the development of new substitutes nearly every day now. But in the spiritual world, where we are not dealing with means but with the ultimate ends themselves, the situation is quite different. There are no substitutes that will work in the spiritual world. For there men deal with basic finalities. The truths of God must be the foundation of every plan, if it is to prove workable. Let us get on with planning then, but on the right foundation, constructing our plans in accordance with the principles of the law of God.

Indecision is sometimes a weakness of democracies. Dictators can act more quickly than democracies can. But they rarely consider the principles of God. The surest way for the democracies to advance is by our observance of these principles. Then, even if our advance is not as hasty in the beginning as that of others, it will be so much the surer that the outcome in the end will not be in doubt. The mills of God grind slowly but they grind exceeding small. A structure built on God's principles, planned on their foundation, provides complete assurance and security, and it is the only structure that will.

In this day of crisis the sure way, the only certain way, to meet the individual's problem and, through the individuals that make up our great democracy, the nation's problem is to recognize that true liberty can only function effectively and at full efficiency through a recognition of the sovereignty of God over the life of the individual and of the nation.

The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITORIAL

Rome's True Face

FOR some time Protestant mission agencies have been aware that attempts are being made to close the door to Protestant mission activity in Latin America. The Hispanic republics all profess their adherence to religious freedom but under one pretext or another have refused admittance to and have put restrictions upon Protestant missionaries.

Last month on this page the Romish Church was shown as the enemy of religious freedom. It is perhaps hard for the average American to agree with that picture. Roman Catholic priests speak at various interfaith gatherings; the representatives of the church praise our national tradition of full freedom of worship; only recently the Most Rev. Edward Mooney, Archbishop of Detroit, declared that religious freedom is the first of the four freedoms, adding, "We can rightly hold the United Nations to guarantee freedom of religion in the world which in victory they will reshape". Certainly in this country the Roman Catholic Church seems to desire and preach freedom of religion.

At other times, though, the Church of Rome has shown quite a different face. When Ethiopia was conquered we recall how the long-established Protestant missions were expelled. In Franco's Spain, Protestant congregations have been dispersed and all public Protestant activity has been forbidden. Bibles shipped in by the British and Foreign Bible Society have been burned. In Roman Catholic Quebec, Protestants even now do not have the same rights and privileges as Romanists. And now the Roman Catholic bishops have sought to stake out an exclusive claim to all of Latin America.

Let us re-emphasize what was said here last month. In the United States, Roman Catholics are in a minority.

Accordingly, Rome favors religious freedom here as a matter of expediency. But in lands where Roman Catholics are in the majority the church shows her true face. There she seeks to limit, hamper and, if possible, destroy all other faiths. There is only one true church, the Church of Rome. All other churches are heretical and have no right to exist. This has always been Rome's position and we may well thank the bishops for reminding us of it, though they, of course, have not said it so baldly as we. And let us not be deceived by the pious statements and disarming attitude of the Roman Catholic Church in this country.

We were momentarily gladdened to see that the Federal Council, in its recent Cleveland meeting, took sharp issue with the bishops' statement. But the Federal Council has had long experience in the art of playing both ends against the middle, of sticking its tongue in its cheek, crossing its fingers, and being a first-rate ecclesiastical mugwump. From Cleveland came not only the sharp statement about the declaration of the Roman Catholic bishops. From Cleveland came also a resolution actually inviting coöperation with the Roman Catholic Church and concluding with these astounding words: "We record our readiness and desire to coöperate with the Roman Catholic Church in the United States in a mutual effort for the welfare of society as a whole and, in such ways as may prove possible, to bear common testimony to the guiding principles of the Christian faith in relation to the post-war world" (italics ours). In the light of such a resolution, we think that the Roman Catholic bishops have little to fear from the nominal Protestantism of the Federal Council. The weak stand and the pitiful vacillation of that influential body will undoubtedly be a boost, rather than a hindrance, to the interposition of obstacles to the free proclamation of the gospel in the lands to the south of us.

Today an opportunity for missionary work in Peru seems to be opening before The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Let us all pray that God will so guide the Peruvian government and our State Department that in the near future The Orthodox Presbyterian Church may preach the true gospel in that dark land.

—J. P. C.

The Year of Grace 1943

THE year of 1942 was a year of grace to the American people. Despite the shock of Pearl Harbor and our early defeats in the Pacific we were not vitally wounded but were able to multiply our industrial and military strength with the passing months. It has also been a year of grace to every Christian. The Holy Spirit has kept, guided and strengthened us. God has graciously bestowed upon us both temporal and spiritual blessings. We have not earned them, but have received them by grace.

As we enter 1943, we know that this will be again a year of grace, for God's grace knows no calendar. For this we have the sure word of His promise. Yet we are told to pray for grace and to seek it. May God guard and preserve our land throughout this year! May He destroy the kingdoms of His enemies, that there may be peace and bread throughout the earth! May He pour out His grace upon all His people that they may be strong in Him! Especially do we pray that He may give the nations grace to repent of their sins and seek His face through Jesus Christ. Not relying on ourselves but trusting only in Him, may we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

"New time, new favor, and new joys
Do a new song require:
Till I shall praise Thee as I would,
Accept my heart's desire.

Lord of my time, whose hand hath set
New time upon my score,
Then shall I praise for all my time,
When time shall be no more".

—J. P. C.

They Need the Word

A Lutheran chaplain remarked that many chaplains tell men who come to them with problems to pray, but the Lutheran said they do not know how to pray, and added, "They need the Word".

In times of trouble, many men become more religious. As a troop ship recently neared the submarine zone off the African coast, attendance at

divine services increased. The same renewed interest in religion has manifested itself among civilians perplexed and troubled by this warring world, and in this interest we rejoice. Let us not forget, however, that man by seeking cannot find God. Prayer and church-going in themselves are not

enough. Men need the Word, the Word of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Only there can they learn who God is and what He demands of men, what sin is and how through Christ there is forgiveness of sin. They need to read the Word for themselves that through

it the Spirit may speak to them. They need to hear the Word preached by faithful ministers that it may be made clear to them. Soldiers and civilians, sinners and saints, all need the Word. Thank God we have His Word. Let us give it to them. "Thy word is truth".
—J. P. C.

To the Poor the Gospel Is Preached

The Second in a Series of Mission Studies on Ethiopia

By the REV. CLARENCE W. DUFF

Missionary Appointee of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

THE year 1918 marked the beginning of a train of events that were to be of far-reaching significance in the history of modern missions in Ethiopia. In that year, in answer to an urgent call from an Ethiopian governor who desired help in the influenza epidemic then raging in the western part of the country, there arrived on the scene a man who, in the providence of God, was to be His instrument for the opening of great areas hitherto unreached with the gospel. Dr. T. A. Lambie had been for about a decade a medical missionary in Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, with the American United Presbyterian Mission. Leaving his station at Nasser on the Sobat River west of the Ethiopian border, he, with his wife and family, came to Dejazmatch Biru's capital at Sayo. From that time on there was a notable expansion in Protestant missionary work, the credit for which, so far as the human agency is concerned, must in very large measure be given to Dr. Lambie.

Generally speaking, the bulk of missionary effort up to the time of which we are writing had been expended in reaching the higher class Ethiopians, the overlords in the feudal system in force in much of the country. There had been notable exceptions to this rule, of course. From this time forward, however, the gospel was to be preached to the poor to a much fuller extent than ever before. Dr. Lambie was indeed the friend of the highest Ethiopian officials, even of the king himself, but his many contacts and his great influence among these was used in very large measure to bring the gospel to the poor, oppressed serfs of the pagan and Mohammedan tribes. Dr. Lambie was used of God in pi-

oneering the mission stations of the United Presbyterian Church of North America at Sayo, Gore and Addis Ababa, each of which has had a far-reaching influence with its medical, educational and evangelistic work.

Between 1918 and 1936 (the date of the Italian invasion) great progress was made in mission work. By 1927 there were twenty-six United Presbyterians and twenty-four missionaries of the Swedish societies at work in seven stations in Addis Ababa and centers in western and eastern Ethiopia, in addition to representatives of other evangelical groups such as the British and Foreign Bible Society and the London Jews' Society.

On Christmas night, 1927, a little band of missionaries, the vanguard of the Abyssinian Frontiers Mission (The Sudan Interior Mission's East Africa branch), ate their Christmas dinner in Dire Daoua, the first town of importance within the borders of Ethiopia as one enters by the Djibouti-Addis Ababa Railway. The party, led by Dr. and Mrs. Lambie, consisted of two American families, two single men from America, a minister from Denmark with his Scottish wife, and a young man from Australia who had joined the party at Aden. God was going to use this little group of men and women to initiate a work that would, in His providence, bring much blessing to the country. The poor in many tribes were indeed to have the gospel preached to them. In less than ten years, these nine missionaries were to be followed by more than sixty others from the United States and Canada, and from England, Australia, and New Zealand; fifteen stations were to be established in ten separate provinces; the gospel was to be preached to tribes speaking ten different lan-

guages and dialects, eight of which had been reduced to writing by missionaries of the Sudan Interior Mission, and in four of which some portion of the Scripture had been printed after having been translated by the missionaries. Men, women and children were to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ from six pagan and Mohammedan tribes where, so far as is known, there was scarcely a true believer before, as well as from among Ethiopians adhering to the corrupt national church. A great number of sick were to be treated in the clinics, in one hospital in the interior, and in the Leprosarium in the capital. Thus was God to prosper the labors of this one mission alone.

In the meantime the work of missions which had been already established was growing, and several new groups entered the field. On the same German ship, the *Ussukuma*, which brought the pioneer party of the Sudan Interior Mission to Aden, there were several German missionaries of the Hermannsburg Evangelical Lutheran Mission on their way to Ethiopia. That mission eventually settled in Addis Ababa and in a station among the Gallas of western Ethiopia. Their work was principally industrial and educational. In 1934 the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society, representing the evangelical party of the Church of England, entered the country. They eventually established a school for evangelists and a native missionary society in Addis Ababa and worked in centers north and east of the capital. They confined their efforts almost exclusively to an attempt to revive the ancient Ethiopian Church, some of their missionaries even going to the extent of becoming members of local churches. Several independent

missionaries or groups also established themselves in the capital.

One thing for which true Christians ought to be very thankful is that Modernism never gained any foothold in Ethiopia. Seventh Day Adventist missionaries with their Judaistic teachings were there in some force. There were several Pentecostal missionaries. But no missionaries who categorically deny that the Bible is the infallible Word of God or that Jesus Christ is the Son of God have established

themselves in Ethiopia, so far as we know. Pray God that the destructive doctrines of so-called "liberal Christianity" be prevented from entering that land.

In this brief survey may be seen something of the beginnings of what promised, in 1935, to be a very fruitful field for the gospel. Much ground work had been accomplished. Many of the missionaries on the field were just at the point where they were prepared by their mastery of tribal languages

and their understanding of native life to be most useful in their ministry. A number of native believers, in different tribes, were making progress in the Christian life and were being prepared for fruitful service to their own people. In some groups elders had been already appointed, and a hopeful start had been made toward the organizing of tribal churches. Then came the terrible holocaust of this global war! But I shall tell of that in the next installment.

Loyalty to Truth

AS SURELY as the truth is right and beautiful and good, and as surely as it pertains first of all to God and to Jesus Christ the revelation of God, so loyalty to it involves loyalty to quality first. In other words, loyalty to truth is precisely loyalty to that body of truth which God has revealed in time past and has incorporated in His Word. But truth, as we know it, and as God has made it known to men, does not stand out full and free and in the open in this world; it stands in contrast to error, by which it is surrounded and opposed.

A mortal hostility obtains between these two, and mortal conflict rages all around the far-flung battle line. The truth of the Trinity is still opposed by the modern variation of the ancient error of Sabellianism; the truth of the person of Christ is opposed by Humanism; and the truth of the work of Christ by Socinianism. Ever and again the hearts of the faithful have had reason to tremble and quake with fear for the embattled truth, but words used on a recent occasion by the Rev. Professor John H. Skilton—"absolutely defensible, invincible and triumphant"—have always applied, apply today, and always will.

The most amazing thing about the truth is that she has condescended to descend and dwell with sinner-men. Truth, the very eternal truth of God, whose house is God, also delights to dwell with man and live in him who is of an humble and a contrite heart. Perhaps a word spoken in season may be of use concerning the test of personal loyalty to truth.

We profess to be loyal to the truth, and we mean to be; but there is always the question as to the extent of our loyalty. There are tests, and there is in the main one great and searching test which may be applied and by which we may take the measure and the gauge of our personal love of truth. That test is the measure of our hatred of error and of all which stands opposed to truth.

For example, there is the sin of most of the churches of today. We see monstrous wrongs being committed in the name of Christ. We observe the character of the churches' leaders, the content of their literature, the things they do and the things they don't do, the things they preach and the things they don't preach. We observe how they act in relation to the constituted idolatry encountered on the mission fields. But it is not a pleasant or an easy thing to engage in severe and caustic criticism of the churches of today. People do not understand how there can be such a thing as an attack upon the churches, and they feel they must resent it personally; and so bound up are the churches with their communities that the enemy of the churches is sure to be counted as being more or less of a public enemy. In loosing attack upon churches we have to reckon with these things and also with the almost unbelievable sales-resistance of the unbelievers of today, entrenched as they are in the new and remodeled faith of today. So accustomed are they, in the vast majority of cases, to the New Faith that they have not the slightest idea that it involves any serious departure from historic

Christianity. Let there be no mistake—an all-out attack, such as must be made, is sure to react upon the attackers most unfavorably.

Of course, there is the whole matter of the manner and the method in which, on any given occasion, we are to offer our opposition. There is the question both of the mood and of the manner. In what mood, and precisely in what mode, shall we oppose ourselves to error? It is true that it may be, and often is to be, by a silence which may be more potent than words. It may be by words without action or it may be by actions without word. It may be by registering amusement or by serious argumentation and refutation. It may be expressed in only a momentary onslaught, or it may mean the occupation and maintenance of a sustained position.

Let it be allowed that we ought to use tact and practice patience. We have to take people where and as we find them, intellectually and otherwise. We should be mindful of the injunction that "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men". (II Tim. 2:24), we must allow time for a divine idea to seep into a sin-encrusted mind, to penetrate a stubborn heart. But, after every possible abatement or allowance has been made for cases and for circumstances, the fact remains: We must oppose error! We cannot compromise! There is such a thing as being both gentle and firm, considerate and unyielding; indeed, there is such a thing as being kind and yet also caustic, easy and yet also "tough". The narcotic that deadens pain is kind and so also is the sur-

By the REV. JOHN C. RANKIN

Pastor of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Worcester, New York

geon's knife, and "faithful are the wounds of a friend". Is there such a thing as a faithful friend who will not inflict a wound upon occasion?

One of the things which we have to oppose is the false view promulgated in the modernist churches concerning what is known as "the Christian spirit". According to this view, any expression of abhorrence or of indignation, as such, and any manifestation of controversialism, at least to the extent of seriously annoying anyone, is decreed as "unchristian". Unless the writer of this article is greatly mistaken, he is bound to say that so far as he himself is concerned he has not so learned Christ. The more filled with the truth we are the more we love it, and the more we love it the more we fight for it. The hatred of error is the test of our love of truth.

Whatever else there may be in it, there is absolutely no compromise with error in the gospel of Christ. It is easy to think of the law as being absolutely uncompromising toward sin. But the law and the justice of God, as sustained and confirmed in the grace of God and in the gospel of His grace, makes that, too, no less uncompromising. Is there any compromise between a remedy for a disease and the disease itself? between antidote and poison? "What concord has Christ with Belial?" The gospel, it is true, has its own methodology, its own *modus operandi*, its own type and method of procedure. It is kind and consoling; it is grace-bestowing. It is charity itself in action. Nevertheless, it knows no concession to evil, no compromise with sin.

We would do well to be mindful of what Dr. J. Gresham Machen used to speak of as "indifferentism and palliation". How can we be indifferentists? We should beware of compromise. How wary of it we should be! And we should not forget the lessons of history, particularly of the history of Presbyterianism in our own country.

The Rev. John Patton Galbraith tells the story in his pamphlet entitled, "Why The Orthodox Presbyterian Church?" From the first false move and fatal misstep to the final plunge into unfaithfulness, the trend away from the truth will be seen to have been coincident with a trend to compromising coöperation and union. Compromise by the way of coöperation and union was the avenue by which unbelief and false belief first in-

vaded the church, for the record shows that the decline of the church began with the adoption of a working agreement with the heretical Congregationalists in 1801.

The act of coöperation, moreover, distinctly implied and most certainly involved a mutual esteem and confidence and a reciprocal indorsement as between the contracting parties. Hence, the action taken was itself an indication of some lack or weakness, already in existence among these early Presbyterians, in the direction of the errors held among the Congregationalists. There was evidently a lack of full recognition and proper abhorrence of those errors. If the proper apprehension, understanding and abhorrence of error had been in them, they would have been alert and on their guard against any affiliation conducive to their own contraction of such errors.

There is reason, therefore, to look with suspicion and fear upon any trend to union; and surely The Ortho-

dox Presbyterian Church, of all existing groups and organizations, has reason to look with fear and aversion upon any sort of compromising association and alliance.

Anyone who would stand uncompromisingly with God and His Word and who would advocate the truth against error in every particular must be prepared to endure hardness and often shiver with the cold. We may well study the way of the Eskimo, for surely the ice-age is upon us. But only to those who must often be despised and ridiculed as the contentious and the controversial—in other words, the faithful—are the promises of God. Why should anyone think that God is for him unless and except insofar as he is for God and His truth? On the other hand, if we are for God and if it so be that God is for us, then indeed, oh then indeed, "who can be against us?" And how shall we not trust in our glorious, majestic, blessed, sovereign God?

Today in the Religious World

By THOMAS R. BIRCH

For Men in the Service

WE HAVE received a copy of a booklet "published particularly in the interests of our boys in the service", and we are glad to recommend it to our readers for that purpose. Under the title, "Dying at Dawn", is presented a timely Christian message aimed first of all at the spiritual regeneration of the man in the service and secondly at his moral well-being. Unlike many similar tracts, however, "Dying at Dawn" puts first things first and stresses the fact that the moral life must be rooted in the Christian life. As long as the supply lasts, copies will be sent free upon request to the Evening School of the Chicago Reformed Bible Institute, 10119 Lafayette Avenue, Chicago. Simply state the number of copies desired, and be sure to include postage.

Revival and Victory

Mr. George T. B. Davis, executive secretary of the Million Testaments Campaigns, believes wholeheartedly that the "surest road to victory lies in a nation-wide revival that will bring repentance and return to God". Accordingly, he has distributed thousands of "prayer cards" for the pur-

pose of persuading Christians to spend "ten minutes or more daily, alone or with others; praying for repentance, revival, and return to God, throughout our land; and for victory for our forces on land and sea and in the air". While we have never felt able to indorse "prayer pledges" calling for a stipulated length of prayer time each day, we believe with Mr. Davis that the united voice of regenerated Christians in prayer during this day of crisis has too long been silent. Repentance, too, is the necessary prerequisite of any effectual prayer for victory. We trust that all our readers make unceasing intercession for national repentance and ultimate victory, remembering the challenge of II Chronicles 7:14, which Mr. Davis quotes on his prayer card: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land".

The Irresistible Merge

The plan, reported here last month, to merge eight major interdenominational modernist bodies into a North

American Council of Churches was approved in substance by the Federal Council and the Home Missions Council, but was received without recommendation by the Foreign Missions Council of North America and the United Council of Church Women. Meeting in Cleveland in three separate sessions, the Federal Council bogged down in the morass of technical details featured in the plan, and left final action in the hands of its executive committee, which will transmit its recommendations to the constituent denominations. In the text of the Federal Council's resolution was incorporated a request for a joint conference of approximately twenty-five representatives from Canada and the United States to consider further relationships of the churches of the two countries. The Rev. Gordon A. Sisco, general secretary of the United Church of Canada, predicted that Anglicans, Baptists and Presbyterians of Canada probably would not join the federated body. Anglicans, he said, do not favor the predominant Protestantism of the proposed North American Council (*italics ours*).

Hearty protest against the name "North American Council" was registered by representatives of the American Council of Christian Churches. Since the latter body, known popularly as the "American Council", is the evangelical opposite of the proposed modernist "North American Council", confusion would be inevitable. And since the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in 1937 was able to convince a court that the name "Presbyterian Church of America" was confusingly and competitively similar to its own, there should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the American Council now has very much of a point. At Cleveland the Rev. Carl McIntire, President of the American Council, was permitted five minutes at one session to state his organization's protest against the proposed name. According to a press release, "he was cordially received and was applauded after registering his protest". Previously Dr. Luther A. Weigle of Yale University, famed modernist chairman of the committee which drew up the plan for the North American Council, had said that the proposed name might have to be changed. He added, however, that there were more valid reasons for a change of name than those presented by the American Council.

Federal Council Elections

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (the southern church) has long pointed with pride to its Columbia Theological Seminary at Decatur, Georgia, and asked with a choke in its voice how anyone could accuse the denomination of flirting with Modernism as long as it drew so many of its ministers from Columbia Seminary. The answer has come. The new vice-president of the Federal Council, elected at Cleveland last month, is none other than Dr. J. McDowell Richards, President of Columbia Seminary. He succeeds Dr. Albert E. Day of Pasadena, California.

Other officers elected for the coming biennium are: President, Rt. Rev. Henry St. George Tucker, Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church; Treasurer, Harper Sibley, former president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, who succeeds Mr. Frank H. Mann of the American Bible Society; and Secretary, Dr. Charles H. Sears of New York, the present incumbent.

Why Doesn't God Stop This War?

(Concluded From Page 2)

causeth the wrath of man to praise Him?

Let me repeat, God did not cause this war. It flowed out of the sinful actions of men. And the reason that God does not stop it is that He will not take from us our freedom of action. God could stop this war by stopping us from being men.

Let us take a very simple example. Two men become intoxicated and start a brawl. In their fight they injure a child and another spectator, standing by. God does not stop the fight by a blow from heaven. In the morning the men wake up bruised and battered and with all the after-effects of their intoxication, as well as the remorse at having injured other and innocent parties. As moral beings they should have learned something from this experience. They should have learned enough to avoid a repetition. Some do. And others do not and go on and on to a drunkard's grave. However, God has intervened in history in such a way as to prevent not only drunkenness, but also wars. He has spoken in every age by His messengers. In the fullness of time, He sent forth His

Son to save men from their sin, from the power of sin and the penalty of sin.

If men will turn to Christ in sufficient numbers, this world can be made free from war. If it be God's will that the great majority of men become Christian, then there is a possibility of an extended period of peace. That is the only hope for a permanent and lasting peace. I think reflection will prove this to be the case. Wars come from the sinful impulses and desires of men. James asks, in his epistle: "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" (4:1). It is only as those sinful lusts are conquered and controlled that there can be hope of the cessation of war.

Why does not God stop the war? Because if He intervened in such fashion it would have to be in a general judgment upon all men and all nations. No, God permits this war to continue because He permits us to remain men with freedom to oppose His revealed will. He intervenes only in the healing ministry of the gospel of His Son, the only Saviour of the World.

In one of H. G. Wells' novels of combined fantasy and science, he tells the story of a great comet newly-discovered by astronomers. At first this

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discovery had little interest for the mass of people, but when one of the astronomers predicted that the orbit of the comet would cause it to come close to the earth, interest quickly multiplied. Then another astronomer predicted that the comet would strike the earth. The comet could now be dimly seen in the sky and the interest became intense. It was in the headlines as astronomers quarreled among themselves as to its effect upon the earth. Would it strike, or would it not? If it struck, would it destroy all civilization? Finally, the time came when the debate was all over, for the comet swept by the earth, but there was no one there to observe it, for as it passed by a greenish gas covered the earth, rendering everyone unconscious. Gradually the people revived, but they were somehow different. All of the cobwebs, all of the prejudices, all of the hatreds, all of the lusts, all of the confusion had somehow been swept out of them. They banded together and began to build a brave new civilization on the ruins of the old.

The interesting thing about this story to me is that H. G. Wells, who has no sympathy for Christianity, here tacitly admits that the way to get a new world is to change the individuals in it. That is precisely how the gospel works—on individuals; and it is only on such a basis that wars will ever stop, and peace fill the earth.

Do you want wars to cease? Then make your peace with God.

Why does not God stop the war? Some months ago I heard Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen of the Catholic Hour speak on this theme, and he said the matter should be reversed. The question should be, Why do we not stop warring on God? And indeed that is true. If men would turn from their sin unto God, if they would turn from lusts unto the Saviour, they would receive the peace which He promised.

"My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you".

If men will receive the gospel, then indeed may they beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. If the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ, then, and only then, will nations learn war no more.

The Reformed Bible Institute

By MARY AVIS ROBERTS

TWO years after I was converted I felt an urgent need and desire to study the Bible, so I enrolled in a Bible school. After a few days, I found that the school I was attending ridiculed the doctrine of predestination and taught modern dispensationalism (as, I was told, nearly all Bible schools did). After two attempts, I had to give up my studies for a year because of ill health. It was then that I heard of the Reformed Bible Institute and came to Grand Rapids to enroll, in the fall of 1941, as the first student from The Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The Reformed Bible Institute offers a three-year course with a special emphasis on Bible content subjects. The Bible content subjects afford us an opportunity to study the Bible from the point of view of introduction, history and doctrine. My study of God in doctrine has proved the greatest blessing. Here we go to the depths of how to do mission work. The first year we observe how others do it and decide on the best ways; then for two years we have opportunities to do various kinds of mission work ourselves by responding to calls extended us through the churches of this city.

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