

# The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

J. GRESHAM MACHEN • EDITOR 1936-1937

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**Guardian News  
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*The gospel of redemption through the  
Cross and resurrection of Christ is not a  
barrier between us and Christ, but it is the  
blessed tie, by which, with the cords of His  
love, He has bound us forever to Him.*

—J. Gresham Machen



**January 25, 1948**

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### Daily Bible Readings

#### Week of January 26 (continued)

Sunday ..... Hebrews 13

#### Week of February 2

Monday ..... Numbers 32:1-15

Tuesday ..... Numbers 32:16-33

Wednesday ..... II Kings 23:1-14

Thursday ..... II Kings 23:15-30

Friday ..... I Thessalonians 5

Saturday ..... Luke 16:1-13

Sunday ..... Matthew 4:1-10

#### Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. Why were Caleb and Joshua permitted to see the Promised Land? Why were others forbidden?

2. What did Josiah do to reform the religious worship of Judah? Note several negative and positive steps that he took.

3. Why is it impossible to serve God and mammon?

4. How did Christ answer Satan's offer of the kingdoms of the world?

### A Divided Heart

One of the most pitiful figures of Bible history is Lot's wife. She was so near and yet so far from the kingdom of God. Had she set her face like a flint away from Sodom and toward the Lord, her life would have been spared. And so she remains an example to all generations of the folly of a divided allegiance.

Some might think God too severe in His punishment of this unhappy figure. It might be said that the punishment was not commensurate with her sin. But that is not so. All sin deserves death. But this sin was expressive of a deeper spiritual lack. Lot's wife had not learned that she was to commit herself unreservedly to God and His care. She looked back for her heart was really in Sodom.

How rewarding and soul-satisfying is complete surrender to God in obedience to His commands and submission to His providences. Josiah would go the whole way with his res-

toration of the true religion to Israel. It was said of him, "And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him."

Thus we have this contrast between Lot's wife and Josiah, the one with a divided heart, the other given to God's service wholeheartedly. No Christian can afford to be like Lot's wife. Success in the Christian life depends on leaving all and following Christ. Are we to study God's Word? Then that must come before other reading. Are we to serve God in His house on the Sabbath? Then that duty and privilege must not be set aside for anything else.

Where is your heart today? Where your treasure is, there is your heart also.

"O Christ, be thou our present joy,  
Our future great reward;  
Our only glory may it be  
To glory in the Lord."

#### Week of February 9

Monday ..... I Kings 8:54-66

Tuesday ..... Romans 4 1-13

Wednesday ..... II Corinthians 1:1-12

Thursday ..... II Corinthians 1:13-24

Friday ..... Isaiah 43:1-13

Saturday ..... Psalm 111

Sunday ..... Psalm 113

#### Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. For what did Solomon praise God when he blessed the congregation of Israel?

2. Upon what truths concerning God was Abraham's faith based? See Romans 4:20.

3. What is the meaning of II Corinthians 1:20. Memorize this verse.

4. How was God mindful of His covenant made with Abraham? Does that covenant have any meaning for us? What is it?

#### WINTER RALLY

**MACHEN LEAGUE of Philadelphia Presbytery, at Eastlake Church, Wilmington, Saturday, February 7th. Program begins at 3 p.m. Dinner at 5.45 p.m. Come!**

### Promises

The year of the presidential election is here. Politicians will promise things to the voters which they will find very hard to produce. Caution and forthrightness will be thrown to the winds if this campaign follows the pattern of former races. For it is easy to make promises when there is hope for political gain.

But with God promises are sacred. He has nothing to gain in telling man of good that will come to him. Taking Abraham out of idolatry into a land which He promised to Abraham's seed, God informs a bewildered and doubting wife that she would be the mother of that seed. And as surely as He said it, the child was born of aged Abraham and Sarah. God was faithful, for God must be true and every man a liar.

The Divine promises are always certain of fulfillment. For with God there is unchanging truthfulness and unlimited power. Though man might with perfect honesty promise to aid another, he might find that that aid was beyond his power to give. Though man might have power to fulfill a promise, he might also change his mind and go back on his word. In a day that is passing from us when it is said of some "His word is as good as his bond," how reassuring is the word of Scripture, "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." (II Cor. 1:20)

God's Word will never fail because His promises have been sealed with blood. His covenant made to deliver His people from death unto life is made sure by Christ. Such faithfulness to promise should make us pray earnestly for faithfulness to fulfill promises we make, and make us scorn deceit and disloyalty.

#### Some Prayer Suggestions

Pray that students for the ministry may be led to consider Westminster Theological Seminary as their place of training.

Pray for God's blessing upon the Rev. George Willis and the Rev. Robert L. Atwell as they seek to interest students in Westminster.

LE ROY B. OLIVER

*The Presbyterian*  
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**Rejoice**

**WE** ARE living in an unhappy world. The scars left by the war are not yet healed. The specters of famine and want, of terror and fear stalk the earth. Even in this most fortunate of nations people do not seem to be very happy. We are at peace but the news headlines and the radio commentators shriek "crisis" and we face the future with foreboding. We have had our most prosperous year but we are scared to death that it will not last. Ours is surely a distressed, if not a neurotic, generation.

Now, moaning about the future and having a jittery apprehension of tomorrow are not Christian. Paul exhorts us in Philippians 4:4 to "rejoice in the Lord always." Things were not going so well with the Philippians and the future did not look too bright but the apostle said "rejoice." The Christian faith is one of joy, of gladness, of optimism. Those who profess it then are called upon to rejoice.

But can we rejoice? And in such a world as ours do we have any right to be happy? Does it not seem that we can only be happy by callously ignoring the unhappiness of others? Our answer is that to fail to do all within our power to relieve the misery of men would be evidence of lack of Christian love. But, to do all we can and then not to rejoice would be evidence of lack of Christian faith. We do not rejoice in ourselves or in the world but in the Lord. Therefore our rejoicing is not subject to human limitations but roots itself in the Being and Work of God.

There are some who say, "Keep

Smiling" or, "Things might be worse" or some other foolish sentiment which either denies the reality of evil or seeks to conjure up some power within ourselves to meet it. There is a great difference between this and the scriptural admonition to "rejoice in the Lord." We do not rejoice because things are not so bad but despite the fact that they are bad. We do not deny that this is an unhappy world. Neither do we indulge ourselves in the optimistic hope that things will soon be better. These vain hopes are the only solace of the worldling but the Christian has something better. His trust is in the power and love of God. He is happy because he knows and trusts the Lord.

If the Lord is our shepherd, if Christ is our Saviour, if all things work together for good, why do we not always rejoice? Why do not our acquaintances remark on our joyfulness? One reason is our failure to obey the Lord. Through our disobedience our fellowship with God is broken. We cannot experience as we should the joy of salvation. It was after his great sin that David said "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." In his sinning he had lost it. Now in his penitence and return to the Lord he recovered it. The Christian who breaks the laws of God and neglects fellowship with God is not going to have much of the joy of the Lord in his heart until he gets right with God.

Another reason why we are not as glad and happy as we should be is our failure to lay hold of, to appro-

priate the Lord as we should. To know, to understand, to rest upon the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is the basis of Christian joy. As we have just said, our disobedience prevents joy but if we think mainly in terms of our shortcomings our joy will be scanty because at best our obedience is imperfect. Not meditation on what we have done but meditation on what Christ has done brings gladness to the Christian heart. It is the remembrance of Christ, faith and trust in Him, that makes the Christian sing as he walks through this vale of tears.

J. P. C.

**Ordination Vows**

**WHO** then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?" If he gives them no meat he is unfaithful. Or, if the watchman does not warn the wicked, and the wicked dies in his iniquity, then his blood will be required at the watchman's hand. It is the most refined form of murder—the murder of the soul by failure to warn. Ministers of the gospel, in other words, are under no light responsibility.

No man is under any external compulsion to seek ordination to the gospel ministry. The office is entered into voluntarily. So it is voluntarily that a man lays upon himself the solemn obligations undertaken in the ordination vows.

In the Reformed Church in America, where a noble concern is now showing itself to bring the church as a whole into conformity with its standards, the ordination vows are notably explicit. This fact is brought to our attention in a pamphlet by the Rev. Henry Bast, entitled "Ordination Vows of Ministers and Elders." A candidate for the ministry, in the seriousness of a church court, hears the formula of subscription read aloud, and must then put his signature to that formula. He thereby "sincerely and in good conscience before the Lord" declares that he believes "the Gospel of the Grace of God in Christ Jesus as revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and as truly set forth in the Standards of the Reformed Church in America," and rejects "all errors which are con-

**IN THIS ISSUE**

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trary thereto." He will exert himself to keep the church free from such errors. He will "teach the Gospel and defend the Standards of our faith, without either directly or indirectly contradicting the same by preaching or writing." He promises furthermore that if he ever has any doubts as to this Gospel or as to the Standards he will neither propose nor teach those doubts but will communicate his views to the church, and submit to its counsel and decision, under penalty of suspension from his office. Under the same penalty he promises always to be ready to explain officially his views respecting any particular article of the Standards.

All these provisions are implied in the ordination vows taken in other Reformed and Presbyterian bodies, although they are explicit in the Reformed Church in America, somewhat less so in the Southern Presbyterian Church, for example, and still less so in the Northern and Orthodox Presbyterian Churches. Through the vows, a minister voluntarily enters into his calling with the very purpose of advancing purity in doctrine. The vows serve also to exclude unsound candidates, and to render ministers who become unsound liable to discipline.

It ought to go without saying that an ordination vow, made solemnly to God in the presence of the visible church, should be meant from the heart. And so modernists ought not to make such vows. But they do nevertheless. They overlook the meaning of the words, and go through a mere form and ceremony.

In this age of unbelief, therefore, the full sharpness and power of the ordination vows should never be concealed. In particular, to weaken them or to dull their force by official steps, would be to withdraw before the antidoctrinal pressure of our times. In this connection it needs to be observed that the United Presbyterian Church, with which the Reformed Church in America has been considering union, has already withdrawn in this fashion. While the ordination vows of the Reformed Church are still remarkably strong, those of the United Presbyterians have been greatly enfeebled.

Thus the preamble to the United Presbyterian *Confessional Statement*, enacted in 1925, contains the following provision: "Subscription to the foregoing Subordinate Standards is subject to the principle maintained by

our fathers, that the forbearance in love which is required by the law of God is to be exercised toward any brethren who may not be able fully to subscribe to the Standards of the Church, while they do not determinedly oppose them, but follow the things which make for peace and things wherewith one may edify another." And so, if the provision be applied to the purpose, anybody can get in and none can be put out.

The struggle for purity in any part of the visible church depends largely upon the good conscience of ministers. Do they mean what they promise?

—A. W. K.

### From the Editor's MAILBAG

#### Lutheranism

DEAR SIR,

I read and enjoyed Professor Woolley's article, "Presbyterians and Lutherans," in the issue of October 25. However, I am frankly a little loath to show it to some of the Lutheran brethren with whom I associate here. The reason for this is not that the article is essentially inaccurate, but that it tries to cover too much material in a few words, and thus might lead to misunderstanding. More than anything else, Professor Woolley's statement that many Lutheran ministers (not only in the Missouri Synod but many in other bodies as well) accept as we do the teaching and authority of the Holy Scripture should be underscored. By and large, the recognition of the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice has been more consistent in Lutheranism than in any other large branch of the Protestant Church. There are many exceptions even today, but there appears to be no vigorous "modernist" movement in Lutheranism. Even the largest of the Lutheran bodies in membership, the United Lutheran Church, has refused to become a full-fledged member of the Federal Council of Churches, although it maintains a "consultative" relationship. The churches of the India mission of this same denomination are the only large church body in South India which refused to join the compromising Church of South India, with the exception of the Baptists. We should rejoice in this stand, and pray that

these Lutherans will be guided to an even more consistent position.

While it is true that every faithful Lutheran minister proclaims unhesitatingly the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, the real (but not magical) efficacy of baptism, and the universal intent of the death of Christ, the Lutheran view of the Sabbath can hardly be put in the same category. Historically Lutheranism certainly has a much lower regard for the Sabbath than does historical Presbyterianism. However, many individual Lutherans are "Presbyterian" in their practice in this respect, and do not hesitate to quote God's Word in criticism of those who make Sunday a day of recreation. Here in Liberia, where all days are the same to the people, and where we buy meat when the hunter shoots it, which is not too frequently, we have sometimes considered it (rightly or wrongly) a mere matter of getting food for ourselves to accept and even pay for meat on Sunday morning, if the hunter brought it then. We have stopped this practice (and feel better about it) after receiving the polite protests of Lutheran missionaries.

On the other side of the ledger, it would appear that Lutherans in general neglect some of the precious truths which their own confessional standards teach. While Lutheranism is not so consistent as the Reformed Confessions in its statement of the doctrines of God's sovereign decrees, it is nevertheless true that the Augsburg Confession teaches predestination and election in some form. Yet many Lutherans seem to consider these as "Presbyterian" doctrines, and for themselves take an almost Arminian position. One missionary on the field tells of discussing these doctrines with other Lutheran ministers; he himself stated and defended the Lutheran standards without quoting them by name, and the others thought he was arguing for Calvinism.

In the interests of a clearer mutual understanding between Presbyterians and Lutherans, two sources of misunderstanding should be pointed out. First, most Lutherans do not understand Calvinism in terms of the historic Reformed Faith, but as a weaker and more-watered-down system of doctrine, perhaps after the manner of the teachings of Melancthon. A good (See "Lutheranism," page 30)

# Are You Saved?

*The Frightened Philippian Jailor Asked a Question.  
The Answer Which Came from a Dungeon Still Holds Good.*

By WALTER J. MAGEE

**T**HE question, "What must I do to be saved?", was asked by the Philippian jailor of Paul and Silas on Paul's second missionary journey. It is an interesting set of circumstances that led up to this question. If Paul and Silas had not been cast into jail, the jailor, humanly speaking, might never have come into contact with these messengers of God, and consequently might never have heard the message of life. And if Satan had not opposed them, they would not have been cast into jail. And if they had not been about the Lord's work, Satan would not have opposed them. But because they were about the Lord's work, Satan did oppose them. And if anyone undertakes a work for the Lord he can expect Satan to interfere, for Satan well knows that the success of Christ's kingdom means the destruction of his own.

Satan sought to bring about confusion through this "certain damsel" who had a spirit of divination and who followed Paul and Silas and cried out: "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." But, because Paul in the name of Jesus Christ commanded the evil spirit to come out of the maid, her masters dragged him and Silas to the magistrates who commanded them to be beaten and to be cast into prison. And why did the girl's masters do this? Because they saw that the hope of their gains was gone. How much trouble, how many heartaches, have been caused through the lust for gold. But God gloriously overruled the salvation of the jailor and all his house.

I believe this text is a good one to bring to the attention of any audience. There's a joy in telling the old, old story, for "those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest." And for those who are not saved I know of no better text to preach on, for it makes us think of that greatest of all questions, the question of our soul's eternal destiny. I

**S**OME people take things for granted, until the ground begins to shake under their feet. It took an earthquake to start the Philippian jailor thinking. Once he started thinking, he very quickly reached the heart of the matter. Fortunately he had in the dungeon a man who could give the answer to his question.

often think of what a pastor of mine said once. He said one mistake ministers often make is in preaching to their congregations as though all were saved, and that if they would preach more often as though some were not saved, more would be saved. There's a great deal of truth in that. If one doesn't hear in the Christian church the message which above all others he needs to hear, where is he to hear it?

## The Importance of the Question

This question the jailor asked is the greatest question any one can ever ask. Can you think of a greater? There are many questions which one has to face. And it seems that these questions become more numerous and press upon us with greater urgency, as the world grows smaller and life more complex. For instance, one has to face the question of his life's work. We have our lives to live. What are we going to do with them? Yet it is surprising how many go about answering that question without ever taking into consideration God who has given us our lives and to whom we shall all one day have to render an account of them.

Another great question some of us may have to face is the question of choosing a school. Many a young person's life has been wrecked because he was entered in the wrong school. The early settlers of our country wanted their children to grow up in the knowledge of God, so they established schools in order that their children might learn to read the Bible. But education today has in many respects

gotten so far away from this original purpose for which our first schools were founded, that many institutions teach God-dishonoring, soul-destroying doctrines that are subversive of Christian truth.

Then there's another important question that some of us will be facing some day, the choice of a life partner. This, I think, is the second most important question of life. And if it were given more consideration, especially in the light of God's Word, there would be fewer wrecked homes. Often marriage is entered into with less consideration than would be given to almost any other kind of contract. And that's why America leads the world in divorces.

But great as are these questions there is a greater question still, the question of our salvation. These other questions involve only this lifetime, only a few years at best. But this question involves eternity. This life is short but eternity is long. Since, then, this is a question of eternal importance, we should expect to see men giving a lot of thought to it. But do we find them doing so? I am afraid not. We find them more interested in the things of this life than in the things of the next. They are more interested in the things that last for forty, fifty, sixty, or seventy years than in the things that last for all eternity.

I was once talking with a man about these matters and he said I was going at the thing backwards. I was trying, he said, to save souls when I should have been trying to save bodies first, and then afterwards to save souls. There may be cases where, as Dr. Machen used to point out, the most important thing to do for a man is not the first thing to do for him. He cited the case of a drowning man. If we should see a drowning man, he said, the most important thing to do for him would be to preach the Gospel to him for the saving of his soul. But he said that would not be the first thing to do for him. The first

thing to do would be to pull him out of the water and revive him, then afterwards give him the Gospel message. But, in general, the idea so prevalent that we ought to deal with man's economic ills before we deal with his spiritual ills is not scriptural. It was not our Lord's way. It was His way to bring men face to face with this greatest question first. And once that question is settled, God will take care of the rest. Let us seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and His promise then is that all other needful things shall be added to us.

### Personal Impact of the Question

What must I do to be saved? Notice in the first place that it's a personal question. What must I do to be saved? Not, What must some one else do, what must my father or mother do, my wife or husband, my brother or sister but what must I do? There is a sense in which every man stands alone before God. Have you faced this matter of your eternal relationship to God? God says we are sinners. There are only two kinds of sinners: saved sinners and lost sinners. Those who have received Christ as their Savior are saved. Those who reject Him are lost. Have you faced the prospect of eternity without Christ?

Notice in the second place, the question reads, "What must I do to be saved?" not, "What must I do to save myself?" Oh, that all might hear and none misunderstand, that no one has ever saved himself, nor ever can. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). Yet it's hard to get out of our minds the thought that there must be something we have to do, perhaps not very much, perhaps just a little bit, but there's something we must do to help save ourselves. God does most of it, we admit, but still we think we have to help Him a little. A man once said it took him forty years to learn three things: first, that he couldn't do anything to save himself; second, that God didn't expect him to; and, third, that God had done everything. "Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe."

Why can't we do anything to save ourselves? I might answer that question by asking another. How much good can you do in a day, a week, a month, a year? More than you ought

to? God requires perfect obedience, and no mere man since the fall has been able to render it. Even if we could obey perfectly, it would take all our time and all our efforts, every faculty of body and soul working together in complete harmony. But we have all sinned. The Bible says: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Assuming that we could obey perfectly, if it takes all we can do within any given time to render such obedience, what about the times we have sinned, the times we have come short? Don't you see, we can never make it up? We can't work a little harder today and make up for yesterday's mistakes, because we can't do more today than we ought to do. Only the perfect and everlasting righteousness of Christ can avail to cover our sins.

There's still another reason why we can't save ourselves. "A good tree," said Jesus, "cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Mt. 7:18). Human nature in its unregenerate state is a corrupt tree and being defiled by sin cannot bring forth good fruit. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7-8). Every act an unsaved person does, no matter how good it may look outwardly, is unacceptable with God, because the fountain from which it springs is at enmity with God. It is only when God changes the hearts of men through His regenerating grace, only when He gives them new hearts, and makes them new creatures in Christ Jesus, that they can produce works which are acceptable with Him. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). Now you have it. God's people are not saved by good works, but for good works. Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

### The Answer to the Question

We have seen that the jailor's question is a personal question. We have seen, too, that we cannot save ourselves. What, then, must we do to be saved? Did you ever hear anybody

say: "I don't steal, I don't tell lies, I pay my debts and provide for my family, I'm a good, respectable citizen, and if there's such a place as heaven, I think I stand as good a chance of getting there as the next fellow"? But no one ever got to heaven that way. What did Paul and Silas tell the Philippian jailor to do? They said: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

But in order to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ one must know something about Him. That's why God has given us the Bible. Here He has given us His own testimony concerning His Son. It is because of the abysmal ignorance of this blessed Book that prevails today that so many are deceived by every wind of doctrine. There is no sorer need than for a greater knowledge of the Word which alone can make us wise unto salvation.

The Bible tells us we are sinners. We have broken God's law. We have done as we pleased rather than doing as God wanted us to do. And the wages of sin is death. Death in its most awful sense is separation from God. It is eternal separation, except the grace of God intervene. But God in His infinite grace has provided a Substitute in the person of His Son become man, who went through a life of trial and righteousness and died on Calvary's Cross in the place of sinners, in whose behalf He made Himself responsible for sins that He had not committed, assumed debts He had not contracted, and died for crimes of which He was not guilty. The second Adam assumed a holy human nature in order to yield a perfect and sinless obedience to the whole law of God and to render satisfaction to God's justice for man's sin, by His meritorious suffering and death. He came to give His life a ransom for many. And with His expiring breath He cried: "It is finished." He had accomplished what He came to do, for it was He who should save His people from their sins. And now God says: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—even the chief of sinners (I Tim. 1:15). The Gospel declares that Christ died for the guilty and that the most guilty who believe shall be saved. If the most guilty of the human race believe in Jesus, there

is the most perfect certainty that he shall be saved. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36). "Hath"—present tense. He has it now, and has passed from death

unto life. Reader, have you believed? There is only one name under heaven by which we can be saved. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

## What is a Reformed Evangelism?

*Mass Psychology, High-Pressure Salesmanship, Close Harmony and Arminianism Don't Constitute Evangelism. Preaching the Full Gospel Does.*

By CALVIN K. CUMMINGS

WELLINGTON of Waterloo fame was once asked whether he thought it was worthwhile to bring the gospel to the Hindus in British India. He replied curtly: "We have our marching orders." The task of evangelism (bringing the gospel to others) is not optional, it is mandatory. The Captain of our Salvation has commanded "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." An unevangelistic church of Christians is a contradiction in terms. A church or an individual that does not endeavor to bring the gospel to others is fundamentally disobedient with respect to the supreme task of the church and of the Christian. Upon this truth there can be and is little dispute today among Protestants.

Serious differences, however, have arisen among Protestants concerning both the message and the method of evangelism. Sad to relate, not all today that goes by the name of "evangelism" is true evangelism. Current Federal Council "Preaching Missions" are in many instances proclaiming just the opposite of the gospel of Christ. And in many "evangelistic" services where Christ crucified and risen is proclaimed, essential elements of the Gospel are omitted, and unscriptural methods are employed. These defeat their own ends and dishonor Christ.

A Reformed evangelism seeks to proclaim the pure and full gospel of Christ, and to proclaim it in the manner in which Christ and the apostles proclaimed it. Reformed evangelism is simply Biblical evangelism. It is that type of evangelism of which we read in Holy Writ,—nothing less, nothing more. To set forth the idea of

Reformed evangelism, then, is simply to reconstruct from the Scriptures what the message and the method of evangelism really are.

### The Message of Evangelism

Just what does the Bible really teach concerning the message of evangelism? When Christ commissioned His church to "go . . . preach," He

**A** WELL-KNOWN preacher once remarked that nearly every seat in his church auditorium was consecrated by having been, at one time or another, the place where, under the regular ministry of the Word, some sinner had come to a conscious acceptance of Christ as his savior. The regular preaching of the glorious truths of the gospel is the most "evangelistic" work that there is. And when special services are held, it is the message preached that determines whether they are "evangelistic" or not.

told it precisely what it was to preach, "the gospel." In the original the word translated "gospel" means "good news." What is the good news we are to proclaim? It is the good news of salvation through Christ. In the words of Christ which Luther once called the little gospel, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Paul, taking up the same strain, wrote to the Corinthians, "I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you . . . how that

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures . . . and that He rose again the third day."

A Reformed evangelism, then, will be very jealous to make Christ the crucified and risen Savior the sum and substance of its message. It will have a holy abhorrence of and intolerance toward the message of Modernism, which continues to abound in the church today. Dr. George Taylor, former president of the Board of Trustees of Western Seminary in Pittsburgh, in his recent book, *The Victory of the Cross*, under the caption "The Heart of the Gospel," declares that ". . . my better instincts which have been awakened by Christ's perfect life are encouraged and conserved for God by the friendship which I have with Jesus. As his ideal of life becomes my incentive for living I experience forgiveness." Professing to speak in the name of Christ, Dr. Taylor really denies that man needs or that Christ has provided salvation and forgiveness through His substitutionary atonement. But one who is at heart Reformed cannot have peace of conscience until by word and act he has done all within his power to expose and uproot such Christ-denying, soul-destroying doctrines. He will be fired with a new determination and zeal to proclaim salvation through the atoning death of the Savior.

The preaching of Christ, crucified and risen for the salvation of sinners, must be presented in the context of the whole counsel of God, revealed in Holy Writ. Not to do this is to present a truncated or emaciated gospel. It is to blunt the sword of the Spirit which alone can pierce the heart and conscience of the sinner. The whole truth of God's Word is needed to make the most direct and effective impact upon the souls of the lost. The doctrines of sin and of redemption through Christ's blood, and the demand for repentance and faith must be presented in their relationship to other great doctrines, such as God's sovereignty. The church's greatest evangelist, the apostle Paul, did this. On Mars Hill, for instance, Paul's appeal to repentance was oriented to the doctrines of God the Creator and the final judgment. It was these very doctrines which gave potency and persuasion to his message. How many times in the interests of appealing to people, the only solid basis of appeal—God's sovereignty—is omitted.

True evangelism will give earnest heed to the grand particularities of the gospel of grace,—man's total depravity, God's election, and Christ's definite atonement. Many evangelicals today deny these doctrines. Many others who believe them hold that they should not be preached as a part of the message of evangelism, but only to believers after they have become Christians. No authority can be found in the Scriptures for either denying them or omitting the preaching of them. Christ and the apostles preached all of the doctrines of grace to all men. Christ declared to Nicodemus his total (complete) depravity (sinfulness) when He informed him, "ye must be born again." Peter in his great sermon to unbelieving Jews on the day of Pentecost declared that "the promise is . . . to as many as the Lord our God shall call," thus recognizing God's sovereign selection of those whom He would redeem. In that masterly evangelistic sermon on "The Good Shepherd," Christ teaches, "I lay down my life for the sheep . . . ye believe not because ye are not my sheep." These words of the Savior at once bring comfort to believing hearts, and strike fear to the heart of the impenitent. Far from being hindrances in the preaching of the gospel, the doctrines greatly enhance the effectiveness of our message. What doctrine is better calculated to persuade the sinner of his need of divine grace, than the doctrine of total depravity? What doctrines are better calculated to convince men that "He is able to save to the uttermost (completely)" than the fact that our salvation rests in the eternal and unchangeable decree of a loving Father and in the finished and complete atonement of Christ the eternal Son of the Father? The penitent sinner will recognize in these truths his only hope for salvation.

### The Method of Evangelism

Variety rather than uniformity may well characterize the method of Reformed evangelism. Methods should always be adapted to the varying gifts of the evangelists and to the varying circumstances of the local communities. It is true nevertheless that since our message in large measure determines our method, and that message is one, there are certain basic elements which should be common to all evangelistic effort, public and personal. We

can mention several of them.

A Reformed evangelism will be carried on in humble yet confident reliance upon the truth of God and the Spirit of God for results. The church's most successful evangelist was at once the humblest and the most confident of men. "We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake," wrote Paul. Though ever ready to testify to what the Lord had done for him, he preached not himself, not his own wisdom, not in his own eloquence, but he preached in the wisdom and power of God. Those who heard him saw

not Paul but Christ. He had complete confidence in the all-sufficiency of Christ for man's salvation. "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Has not Christ promised, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me?" Whether in public service or in personal work, the Christian must have complete confidence in the ability of the Savior to save. In proportion as he realizes his utter dependence upon the Lord for any abiding results, he will be found oft and long upon his knees (See "Cummings," page 30)

## Art and the Early Church

### A Book Review

By PAUL WOOLLEY

Walter Lowrie: *ART IN THE EARLY CHURCH*. New York: Pantheon Books. 1947. xviii, 268 pages and 153 plates. \$6.50.

WHEN I graduated from college I had come to the conclusion that the value of any particular course in the curriculum was due in far greater measure to the personality of the instructor than to the subject matter of the course. It is not a new discovery, but one which each generation is always engaged in making anew for itself.

A new book by Walter Lowrie is always a delight, no matter what it treats, for it is bound to be full of frank and honest expression of intelligent opinion, sprightly and vivacious in tone to boot. Lowrie has no qualms about telling stories, true stories, even at the expense of the academic profession.

Nearly a half century ago, as a recent young Fellow of the American School of Classical Studies in Rome, he published a most useful survey of early Christian art, under the title, *Monuments of the Early Church*. It was so compact and comprehensive that many generations of students have used it, until it really became out-of-date. Now we have its successor in the present volume, larger in page size, though evidently not in number of words, and equipped with greatly improved reproductions of the subjects discussed in the text. These illustrations are nearly five hundred in number and are ex-

cellently reproduced for the most part. It is a doubtful virtue to have them all at the end of the book, but perhaps with so many this is almost unavoidable. The text has been rewritten, revised and rearranged, in accordance with what appears to be a distinctly improved plan. Many of the details of the earlier discussion are missing. The bibliography is entirely revised and bears practically no resemblance to that of the earlier work.

A thoroughly refreshing feature of this volume, as of Lowrie's work in general, is its freedom from scholarly cant. When the learned do not measure up to what Lowrie expects of them, he says so (pp. 5, 198). If the world had a few more authors of the boldness of this one and a few more reviewers of the ability and frankness of the late D. Hay Fleming of Edinburgh, more of these pretensions would be punctured.

It is true, however, that even Lowrie still has things to learn in the historical field. The synod of Arles was held in 314 not in 316, and whatever the date of the synod of Elvira, it was hardly as late as 315 (p. 29). And what does this mean, in connection with the discussion of the form of early books, "The adoption of the codex was not likely earlier than the fourth century?" (p. 199). Finds in Egypt seem to me to make such a statement antiquated. For example, Sir Frederic Kenyon says, "It has now become clear that . . . at any rate from the early part of the



second century the Christian community was using the material (papyrus) in a different way—that, namely, which is known as the codex form" (*Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, New York, 1940, pp. 12f.).

Lowrie declares openly what all men should admit—that disinterestedness is out of place in Christian archaeology (p. 4), just as it is in most other fields of endeavor. He writes as an avowed Christian. He stresses the vital place of faith in the New Testament witness, for example (p. 66). He points out the importance of historical facts in Christianity, though his judgment of what is historical is hardly to be trusted (p. 67).

There is one element of Lowrie's account that has long intrigued this reviewer, for it appeared in his earlier volume, also. This is his particular stress upon the use of curtains in the church buildings to increase the secrecy of the ritual and also, he now says, to separate the sexes in the audience from sight of one another (pp.

121, 222-224). That the curtains were there is not disputed, but the evidence as to their exact use is, I believe, too tenuous to permit all the deductions that the author draws. Fortunately in this current book he seems a bit less confident about the manner of their use than in the earlier one.

What form and style of auditorium is best for protestant church worship today? That is a question of great current interest and importance. Lowrie's discussion (pp. 108ff.) of the reasons for the use of the basilica style when the early church came to build for worship is very helpful as a reminder of the factors that have to be considered. There is no reason for insisting on uniformity in building churches today, but it is important that the demands of a worship service be considered rather than that the responsible persons should blindly follow custom or current fashion.

The binding, paper and type-face in this volume are all thoroughly attractive.

Linoleum has been ordered for the floor of the auditorium. The Christmas candlelight service was attended by 125 persons.

**Omaha, Nebraska.** An offering of \$70 was received through Christmas offering banks for the missionary work of the denomination, from the First Church. The church treasurer, Mr. Kerr, reports that the closing quarter of 1947 saw the largest missionary offering in the history of the church. The Rev. Reginald Voorhees, pastor, reports an average morning attendance for 1947 of 63, an increase of 7 over the average for 1946. Miss Louise Salmon is conducting a club for GUARDIAN subscribers. Sunday school Christmas exercises were attended by more than 130 persons.

**Waterloo, Ia.** Professor Ned B. Stonehouse conducted both services at First Church on December 28th, in the absence of the pastor, the Rev. Oscar Holkeboer. An audience that filled the church witnessed the Sunday school Christmas program. Special services were held on both Christmas and New Years Day morning. Offerings were received for the construction of the new church building at Gresham, Wisconsin.

**Gresham, Wis.** The interior of the auditorium of Old Stockbridge church has finally been completed so that it can be heated, and at the same time look quite attractive. Finishing touches remain to be done in the spring. Lighting fixtures have been installed and a temporary stove provides the heat. There was a good attendance for the series of special services conducted by the Rev. George W. Marston, December 9-14. Forty children and young people presented the Christmas story in pageant, song and recitation, at a program on Christmas eve. A good congregation was present for the occasion.

**Evergreen Park, Ill.** The Rev. Mr. Yin, pastor of the Korean Church of Chicago, dressed in native costume, spoke to the Sunday school of Westminster Chapel recently. Partly in response to his plea for help in Korea, 224 pounds of food and clothing were brought in and shipped to the Rev. Bruce Hunt for needy Koreans. Over 120 parents and friends attended the Sunday school Christmas program on December 21. All sections of the school had part in the program. The school's enrollment is now over 60. Word has been received that on No-

## Orthodox Presbyterian Church News

**Berkeley, California.** The pastor of Covenant Church and his family were agreeably surprised on the evening of December 23rd when the whole congregation suddenly marched into their home laden down with groceries and other necessities to stock the family larder. It was a revival of the old-fashioned "pounding party," and was much appreciated by the Churchill family. Chaplain John Betzold, just back from Korea, spoke at the evening service on December 28th, and showed slides of Korea.

**Los Angeles, Calif.** Attendance at the Grace Church Sunday school has been affected by the influenza, which has affected many areas of the city. Christmas programs were held for both upper and lower schools. The Machen League presented the play, Janet's First Christmas, and the adults presented the candlelight service, The Light of the World, by the Rev. Richard W. Gray.

Christmas programs at the Westminster Church included a Young People's service at the W.C.T.U. Home and an evening of fellowship

for the choirs, as well as the regular Sunday school program. At this latter, one of the ladies of the congregation gave a "chalk talk," while another kindly furnished a treat for the children.

**San Francisco, Calif.** The play, Christmas at the Jones', featured the Sunday school Christmas program of the First Church. The Intermediate and Senior Machen Leagues each spent an evening singing carols in the community. A Watch-night service was held on Wednesday evening, December 31st, from 9 to 12 p. m. Chaplain John Betzold spoke to the Sunday school on December 28th concerning conditions in Korea.

**Volga, South Dakota.** Although attendance at Calvary Church Sunday school has been over 20 per cent above the average, the school is still trailing in the attendance contest with Faith school of Quarryville. New pews for the church auditorium, on order for a year and a half, were expected to arrive about the middle of January. A new pulpit desk has also been ordered, and a pulpit Bible is to be purchased.

vember 15th the American school at Hsingyang, China was surrounded and looted by Communists. No word has been received of the whereabouts of missionary children who were there. Among them was Miss Isabelle Lawton, niece of Mrs. George W. Marston. Your prayers are requested for these missionaries.

**Westchester, Illinois.** The Rev. Edmund P. Clowney showed some colored slides on the Birth of Christ at the Christmas program of Westchester Chapel, December 19th. The Rev. George W. Marston conducted a series of special meetings at the Old Stockbridge Church, Cresham, Wisconsin in December. The people of that congregation sent back with him when he returned home a gift of canned goods and other items.

**Cincinnati, Ohio.** On December 17th the Rev. Paul Voronaeff, Russian-born evangelist and lecturer, spoke at First Church on the subject, "Is Christianity Doomed in Russia?" A Christmas cantata was presented on December 21st, under the direction of Mr. Ted Siereveld. The Sunday school program was presented on Christmas afternoon, featuring the play, "Janet's First Christmas," written by Mrs. Charles Ellis, wife of the pastor of the church.

**Indianapolis, Ind.** The Rev. John Stelle, representative of the Indiana Lord's Day Alliance, was guest preacher at the Covenant Church on Sunday evening, December 14th. Eight boxes of clothing and other gifts were sent to Trinity Chapel in Newport, Kentucky. On Tuesday evening, December 23rd, the Sunday school presented its Christmas program, prepared under the direction of Mrs. Thomas Gregory, Mrs. Gordon Clark and Miss Joyce Hancock. After the program the young people went caroling in the community.

**Harrisville and New Hope, Pa.** Boxes of clothing were sent by the Women's Missionary Society of Faith church to Korea, and to several of the Home Missions stations of the denomination. Plans are being made for a building program, which is to include a manse. A portable organ has been purchased for use by the Sunday school.

**Pittsburgh, Pa.** The indebtedness on the Covenant Church has been reduced to less than \$10 000 from an original \$23,500. Eighteen pupils are now regular attendants of the Begin-

ner's department of the Sunday school. A Junior choir sings regularly at the Sunday evening services.

**West Collingswood, N. J.** The Rev. John Betzold was guest preacher at the services of Immanuel Church on January 11. In the evening he showed slides of Korea, including a number of pictures of the Korea Theological Seminary. On Wednesday, January 14th, a ten week's series of Bible classes was started. There are two courses given, one by Professor Edward J. Young of Westminster Seminary, and one by the Rev. Robert S. Marsden. Average attendance at a similar series of studies last year was forty-two.

**Ringoes, New Jersey.** The Rev. Lewis Grotenhuis was guest preacher at Calvary church on December 7th, at which time the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered. The annual children's program was held on the evening of December 23rd. The program included a "chalk talk" by Mr. Meredith Kline, who is serving as pastor of the church. Christmas gift packages were sent to missionaries serving the denomination, both home and foreign. A quarterly fellowship supper was scheduled for January.

**Trenton, N. J.** The annual Christmas program of the Grace Church Sunday school was given in the auditorium of the nearby public school, as the church's own facilities were not large enough. The Rev. H. Wilson Albright, pastor, and Mrs. Albright held open house on New Year's eve. This was followed by a watch night service. Weekly offerings for the building fund have been resumed. It is hoped construction of a church building can begin soon.

**Rochester, New York.** The congregation of Covenant Church has been saddened by the death of Mrs. Alexander Muir, one of its most faithful members. Mrs. Muir died on December 27th. She is survived by her husband, Mr. Alexander Muir, and by two sons, the Rev. William A. Muir and the Rev. David B. Muir, both pastors of churches in Iowa, as well as by other relatives in this country and abroad.

**Fairlawn, N. J.** The pastor of Grace Chapel, the Rev. Bruce A. Coie, and Mrs. Coie are rejoicing in the birth of a daughter, Betsy Jean, on December 12, 1947. At the Christmas program on December 21st, a near record attendance of 81 was present.

**Schenectady, New York.** Special

holiday services of Calvary Church included the Sunday school program on December 22nd, carol singing by the choir at the Glenridge Sanatorium on December 23rd, and a Christmas day service at 9 a. m., attended by over 30 persons who had braved ten-below-zero weather to be present. On New Year's evening a Watch-Night service was held in union with the Covenant Church in Albany. A number of boxes of clothing were shipped to the Rev. Bruce Hunt for needy Korean Christians.

**Portland, Maine.** Second Parish Church has extended a unanimous call to the Rev. Calvin A. Busch of Steamboat Springs, Colorado, to become its pastor. Mr. Busch has indicated his acceptance of the call, and plans to begin his new pastorate on March 1st. He has been serving the Euzoa Congregational Church for the past four and a half years.

**Franklin Square, L. I.** The Christmas pageant, "The Light of the World," by the Rev. and Mrs. Richard Gray, was presented at the Franklin Square Church on Sunday evening, December 21st. Due to the record snowfall on December 26th, the scheduled Christmas program had to be cancelled. The church is placing the *Westminster Theological Journal* in the Franklin Square and Hempstead public libraries.

## Prophetic Research Conference

A PROPHETIC research conference was held on January 5, 6, 7 and 8 in the Beverly Hills United Presbyterian Church, West Philadelphia. Prophetic conferences have featured the modern Dispensationalist movement, and we would not ordinarily report such a conference except under special circumstances. We report this conference because it turned out to be a most interesting gathering.

The conference was privately sponsored by a group of United Presbyterian and Baptist ministers who in recent years have found themselves forced, through reading and diligent Bible study, to give up much of what is commonly associated with Dispensationalism. They decided to have a conference in which all opinions, dispensationalist, non-dispensationalist

premillennial, and even amillennial, were represented. Speakers of all these persuasions were invited, though not all who were invited attended.

The most interesting feature of the conference proved to be the respectful hearing which was given to the "a-mil" position. Among those present though not on the program, was Dr. Oswald T. Allis, author of the book, *Prophecy and the Church*, which severely criticizes the dispensationalist position. Dr. Allis was, on the spur of the moment, invited to give two brief addresses. Another of those present, Dr. Robert Strong, was invited, also more or less on the spur of the moment, to present the "a-mil" interpretation of Revelation 20. This he did by reading the chapter of his doctoral thesis dealing with that subject. (THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN in 1942 carried a series of articles by Dr. Strong on Amillennialism). The speaker at the evening meeting on three days was Dr. T. T. Shields of Toronto, militant anti-Catholic Baptist, who is also a non-millennialist.

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell gave two addresses, identifying himself as a "mid-tribulation pre-wrath rapturist." The Rev. James R. Graham and the Rev. Phil Saint were among those on the program. Also present was Mr. I. C.

Herendeen, of the Bible Truth Depot.

Among the overtones which became noticeable during the conference was the idea that many Christians who should be enjoying spiritual fellowship were being unjustifiably separated by differing views concerning the last things. It was agreed by many that the answer to the situation was for those concerned to get together and discuss the matter on the basis of their common Christian faith, rather than to separate from one another over these things. Several of those present indicated that they were being subjected to a certain amount of "persecution," for having departed from the "dispensationalist" faith.

Another fact that became apparent was that some of these people for the first time became aware that the non-premillennialist has a position, and can do a really acceptable job of maintaining it on the basis of Scripture. One of the men, as he went out the door following the last meeting, was heard to remark, "I don't know what I am now."

The gathering agreed to have the committee which had sponsored it, sponsor another similar conference in the not too distant future. All in attendance seemed to feel it had been eminently worthwhile.

tian insists that the doctrine of Christ's two natures is of the essence of Christianity; another holds that it is unimportant, and may be omitted. One asserts that the so-called Apostles' Creed is an adequate statement of the "essential truths" of Christianity; another replies that it is inadequate because it leaves out everything that was gained by the Protestant Reformation. One maintains that the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture must be included in the church's confession; another counters by saying that it is only a "theory" and by no means to be insisted on. The inevitable result must be that any creed pared down to such a few "essential truths" as to suit the generality of professing Christians would in reality suit very few of them, and would leave the visible Church to bear a corporate witness to almost nothing. No Christian who believes that the Bible as a whole, with its wealth of divinely revealed truth, is the Church's supreme authority, will be satisfied with attempts to solve the confessional problem of Protestantism by concentration on a few selected "essential truths." This is a false trail which must necessarily result in the rejection as "non-essential" of the greater portion of what God has committed to the Church in His Word.

There can be no short-cut or easy solution to this problem. To say that the Church as the pillar and ground of the truth ought to bear witness to all that God has revealed in His Word is axiomatic, but does not solve the problem we are considering. For the problem consists precisely in the fact that Christians differ in their conceptions of the content of the system of truth revealed in the Word. If all were in agreement there would be no problem. The Church is faced with the task of bearing a corporate witness for divine truth while no two of her members are in complete agreement as to what that truth is. Now unless it is attempted to solve the problem in a purely arbitrary way, a key to its solution must be sought in the Scripture itself. Although the Scripture does not present a body of doctrine already formulated in logical, systematic form, still it does present not merely an aggregate of individual doctrines but a system of doctrine which possesses an organic character. Now if we regard the Scripture in its entirety as special divine revelation, and discover in it

## The Visible Church

### Part 8: The Confessional Problem of Protestantism

By JOHANNES G. VOS

**J**UST where this line is to be drawn —just what area is to be marked off—constitutes the confessional problem of Protestantism. Divergent ideas on this question have produced denominationalism, at least in its creedal aspect. This is a very serious and difficult problem. The present generation is not even inclined to face it frankly. We live in an age when creeds are seldom taken very seriously, and are more often by-passed than honestly accepted or rejected. Men are not seldom ordained to ecclesiastical office who have not even read the confessions they profess to accept, and who after they have been ordained go blithely on their individualistic way in utter disregard of the express statements of the creed they have solemnly vowed to defend and propagate.

Where such conditions exist, the problem stated above cannot really be faced, much less can it be solved. When men are indifferent to truth as such, or when they have lost all interest in corporate testimony to truth and care only about their individual witness, there will be no serious concern about the problem of just what and how much doctrine a denomination is to bear witness to in its confession.

Nor can the problem be solved by the short-cut of concentration on a few generally recognized "essential truths." Such a solution would be an unscriptural oversimplification. Moreover it cannot solve the problem because there will inevitably still be disagreement as to which truths are to be regarded as "essential." One Chris-

an organic system of doctrine, and if the visible Church is to bear corporate witness to divine truth, then at least the system of doctrine presented in the Scriptures, in its integrity, must be insisted on as the content of the visible Church's corporate testimony for truth. Nothing that is essential to that system of doctrine may be disregarded or omitted. (We are not, of course, considering what is necessary for a person's salvation, but what is logically essential to the system of doctrine.)

There are indeed professing Christians who deny that the Bible presents a system of doctrine. Some hold that it presents elements of mutually contradictory systems of doctrines. Others say that the doctrine contained in the Bible is incidental and "the life" is the important thing. And of course there are those who maintain that Arminianism, Socinianism or even "Christian Science" is the system of doctrine presented in the Bible. We can only say that we believe they are profoundly mistaken and that their convictions are not substantiated either by express statements of Scripture or by valid logical inference from the Scriptures. But among Calvinists (not necessarily among members of Calvinistic churches) there is general agreement that the Bible presents a definite system of doctrine, and also general agreement as to what that system of doctrine is. There exists a certain organic complex of doctrine, every element of which is logically essential to the system, which every Calvinist will insist must be exhibited in its integrity in his Church's confession as a matter of public corporate witness.

There are also certain truths revealed in the Scripture—even truths generally recognized as such—which are not essential to the system of doctrine. For example it is generally recognized among Calvinists that defensive warfare "upon just and necessary occasion" is sanctioned by Scripture. There is also perhaps general agreement that Scripture teaches that pastors are justly entitled to adequate compensation for their services. Few Calvinists would question the Scriptural character of either of these principles, yet it can hardly be maintained that they are essential to the system of doctrine set forth in the Scriptures. That system would still possess its organic integrity even

though neither of these principles were found to be taught or implied in the Bible. On the other hand, it is universally recognized by Calvinists that the doctrines of election, creation, providence, total depravity, the limited and substitutionary atonement, and

many others, are not only Scriptural but also essential to the system of doctrine revealed in Scripture; if any one of them were to be omitted, the system would be deformed and inconsistent, or it would fall to the ground.

## The Life of Jesus Christ

By LESLIE W. SLOAT

### LESSON 28

#### The Last Supper

SCRIPTURE: *Matt. 26:1-35; Mark 14:1-31; Luke 22:1-38; John 13:1-17:26*

**O**N THURSDAY of the last week of His public ministry, Jesus sent two of the disciples into Jerusalem to prepare the place for the eating of the Passover supper that evening. The instructions He gave them proved to be sufficient and definite, but did not reveal to any of the other disciples where the gathering would be. Since Judas had determined to betray the Lord, this may have kept him from knowing where the group would be that evening, and so have prevented any unfortunate interruption of the Passover celebration. It also indicated our Lord's continuing sovereignty over and knowledge of the incidental events of everyday life.

At the appointed time the twelve and their Master met in the upper room. Only Jesus knew that it was the last time He would sit and sup with them before He suffered. Yet no intimation of the coming event shadows the occasion. Indeed, the disciples seem to have been completely taken up with their own problem, the self-centered problem of who among them was greatest. They even failed to perform for one another the simple service of washing the feet, a usual contribution to cleanliness and comfort. Finally, near the close of the Passover meal, Jesus took up a towel, wrapped it about His waist, and Himself with a bowl of water started washing the disciples' feet. Peter objected, but then saw a little of the deeper significance.

In this act Jesus set an example by which to measure greatness. For greatness consists in humble and willing service. "I have given you an example," He said, "that ye should do even as I have done to you."

There was another tension in the

air on this Passover evening. Jesus knew and felt it, and now He spoke of it. "Verily verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." Up to this point Judas had sat as a regular member of the group. Even now he tries to dissemble. The others, and he with them, ask—"Is it I?" In response to John's more direct question, Jesus said, "He it is, to whom I shall give the sop, when I have dipped it." But even when He took the sop and casually gave it to Judas, the others seem not to have realized the situation. And when He told Judas, "That thou doest, do quickly," they thought the words had some reference to something else. But Judas understood. He no longer had a place in that company. He left quickly. And it was night.

Matthew and Mark seem to indicate that the institution of the Lord's Supper followed the identification and departure of Judas. Luke appears to say that Judas was present at the Supper. John is not clear since he does not specifically mention the instituting of the Supper, but he allows no convenient place for it after the departure of Judas. So we are not certain whether or not Judas was present for the institution of the sacrament.

It was after the regular Passover meal that Jesus took the bread and distributed it to the disciples, and then the cup, speaking the words which have become familiar to us through the observance of the sacrament in the church. This sacrament, by His specific instructions, is to be continued in the church "until He come." It looks backward to the sacrifice He offered, and forward to the fellowship in His kingdom, and provides a bond of union for all who, resting upon that sacrifice for salvation, have good hope of entering upon that kingdom of glory.

Certain things are clear. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper can be

interpreted satisfactorily only when the death of Christ is understood in vicarious and sacrificial terms. The elements represent the body and blood of one who was slain for others, in their stead. The sacrament is corrupted when it is made a symbol of fellowship among people whose views of the death of Christ are radically diverse.

Observance of the sacrament requires more than outward participation. Whether or not Judas was present at the first celebration, the individual who partakes unworthily does so to his own condemnation. Hence true saving faith in Christ is the essential element which the believer must bring to the table.

Note that Christ gave the cup to all the disciples. In the (unfortunate) translation well known to us, "Drink ye all of it," the word "all" refers to "ye," not to "of it." A clearer rendering would be, "All of you drink of it." The Catholic practice of withholding the cup from the laity is not only without Christ's authorization, but contrary to His explicit command.

After the institution of the sacrament and the departure of Judas, Jesus talked with the eleven about their life in the days ahead. Significantly it is the one who is about to be slain, who speaks words of comfort to the others.

They are not to be troubled at His departure from them, says Jesus. He will send the Holy Spirit to be their helper and to guide them into the truth as He Himself has given it to them. Moreover, He Himself and the Father also will come to them and abide with them. He and the Father are One. Using the figure of a vine and its branches He describes the intimacy and the necessity of their abiding in Him. Without Him they can do nothing. So the church to be strong must ever live and think and walk in closest intimacy with its Savior-Head.

Jesus also gave to the disciples His great commandment, that they love one another. His call is for an unselfish, sacrificial love, reaching out to lift men from the depths of sin, misery and despair. He said that no man had greater love than to lay down his life for his friend. (Perhaps these words suggest that His was such a greater love, inasmuch as He was to lay down His life for those who were at enmity with Him on account

of sin.) And if the disciples, in carrying out His command to love, find that the world replies with hatred and persecution, they ought not be surprised. Such was the experience of Christ Himself. The disciple is not greater than the master. But hatred of them indicates also a hatred of their Lord and their God.

The Holy Spirit whom He would send, would not only guide them into the knowledge of the truth, but would also act in the world, convicting the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. And the very testimony they were to bear before the world would be utterly without effect were it not for the work of the Spirit in the hearts of men.

Finally He declared plainly to them that He "came forth from the Father and had come into the world. Again He was leaving the world, and going unto the Father." They thought they understood these words, but He replied that so little did they understand them that when His hour came they would all forsake Him and flee. Yet He would not be alone, for the Father was ever with Him. He had spoken these words that they might have peace. In the world they would have tribulation. But, "Be of good cheer," He concluded, "I have overcome the world."

Such were the words He spoke to the disciples on the night of His betrayal, the last night of His public ministry. The church has always cherished these words. There are depths here the soul cannot fathom, and comfort and strength we little appreciate.

John also records, in chapter 17, what is known as the "high-priestly" prayer of Jesus. In this prayer, our Savior intercedes before the throne of God on behalf of those whom He is soon to leave for a little. And thus He consecrates with prayer the offering of Himself which is so soon to take place. This prayer richly rewards diligent study. His claims upon the Father, His concern for His disciples, the particularity of His requests, and the nature of the blessings He asked for them—all are extremely suggestive of the things which are eternally of most importance in the lives of the people of God. What He asked for them, also, He asked for all who should believe through their words. And He makes His final plea for that eventual union which they shall have

with one another and with Him in the glory which has been prepared for Him.

Following the discourse and the prayer, Jesus went with the disciples across the brook Kidron, into the garden, where He was found by the mob, and led back to Jerusalem for trial, condemnation and crucifixion.

#### QUESTIONS ON LESSON 28

##### Detail Questions:

1. What steps did Jesus take in preparation for His last Passover feast?
2. What service did Jesus perform toward the close of the Passover meal? What lesson did He teach by this service?
3. Recount in detail the words and acts with which Jesus instituted the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
4. Whom did Jesus promise to send as a companion for the disciples after His own departure? For what purpose would this companion come?
5. What is meant by the "high priestly prayer" of Jesus? Where is it found?

##### Discussion Questions:

1. Compare the meaning of the Passover with the meaning of the Lord's Supper.
2. In what ways can we follow the example of Jesus regarding service? Consider in some detail.
3. Discuss the function of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian Church. Could there be a church, or could people be saved, without the presence of the Holy Spirit?
4. What does it mean that Christ is our mediator and high priest? Discuss.

## Westminster Home-Coming

PLANS have been announced for the annual Home-Coming of Westminster Theological Seminary alumni. The date is February 10th. In the afternoon at 4 p. m. the Rev. Paul Woolley will speak. Dinner is to be at 6:30 p. m. Reservations should be made with Mr. T. Sloyer, Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia 18, Pa. At 8 p. m. the Rev. James E. Moore of the Mt. Washington Presbyterian Church (Southern), Baltimore, is scheduled to speak. All alumni of the institution are urged to plan to attend this reunion.

## Cummings

(Continued from page 24)

beseeking Him who sits upon the throne of sovereign grace for the presence and blessing of His Holy Spirit. Christ instructed us, "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Prayer is the means whereby the blessings of heaven's grace may be bestowed upon men on earth. Prayerless evangelism is usually fruitless evangelism.

How is it that sometimes two men can proclaim the same gospel, and the one has the manifest and abundant blessing of the Lord, while the other seems to be barren and fruitless in spiritual results? Frequently it is because the one spoke with Spirit-born fervor and compassion, while the other did not. When Christ beheld the multitudes, "he was moved with compassion, because they were scattered abroad as sheep not having a shepherd." He loved the souls of men and yearned for their salvation. We dare not be aloof or coldly academic in proclaiming the gospel of God's love. Hear the heart-beat of Paul as he writes, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." "Speaking the truth in love"—that was Paul's method. No method that man has ever devised has been as powerful as a man speaking the truth in love.

Will the Reformed evangelist use "the invitation"? Most assuredly. Christ did. "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest," He tenderly invited. Should one press for a decision? Certainly. Hear Paul before Agrippa. "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest . . . Then King Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God that not only thou but also all that hear me this day were both almost and altogether such as I am except these bonds." Paul spoke in the consciousness of the urgency for an immediate decision. "We, then, as workers together with him, beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain . . . Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." The particular methods of extending the invitation must needs

vary according to the gifts of the evangelist, the particular subject treated, and the background of the audience. Those methods, however, which tempt the listener to do something to be seen of men, or which become occasions for the evangelist to glory in the flesh, are to be shunned. All trickery and employment of mass psychology is to be avoided.

The true evangelist will not consider his work done when decisions are made. The greater portion of the New Testament is composed of Paul's letters to Christians who were young in the faith. Apart from continued earnest solicitude, prayer, and instruction, he well realized that the fruits of his evangelistic efforts might well be lost. And when at last he could no longer labor among them he commended them "to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Through instruction, prayer, exhortation and reproof the faithful evangelist will seek to preserve the results of evangelism.

*O Lord, we earnestly beseech Thee, enable us to be just such evangelists as this, to Thy glory.*

## Lutheranism

(Continued from page 20)

Lutheran is quite pleased with a careful statement of what we mean by the sacraments being "signs and seals" of God's grace, and is relieved to know that we do not think of them as merely memorials or "pictures."

Secondly, a member of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church may be misled when he hears Lutherans talking about "Liberalism" and "Conservatism." These words are not commonly used by Lutherans as synonyms for "Modernism" and "orthodoxy." Many a Lutheran who is quite consistently orthodox nevertheless prides himself on being a "liberal." Lutheran "liberalism" involves primarily questions of church policy and individual Christian liberties. While Lutheran "modernists" are probably all liberal, it does not follow that all Lutheran "liberals" are "modernists." At the same time, Lutheranism would do well to define more clearly what non-Lutheran "modernism" consists of,

and to insist more strongly on a firm adherence to the inspiration of Scripture.

Finally a word is in order about how the Lutherans use the Bible. For every Sunday in the year, certain Scripture readings are prescribed, though others may be used in addition. These prescribed readings are almost exclusively from the New Testament. While this practice tends to prevent a minister from "riding a hobby" and from neglecting many important parts of God's Word, it also has the opposite tendency of causing neglect of the Old Testament and of some of the New Testament. This tendency is deplored by some Lutherans, but little is done about it. Similarly, the prescribed prayers insure a beautifully-worded and carefully planned worship in prayer, but also tend to ritualism and neglect of heartfelt prayer for special needs.

In spite of individual exceptions, the prevalence in Lutheran churches of a faithful and fearless proclamation of Lutheran doctrine ought to shame every large Presbyterian and Reformed denomination in America; it may be something of a rebuke even to us in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church; and it should certainly be an encouragement to us whenever we are tempted to feel that the preaching of doctrine is unpopular and unsuccessful.

As ever,  
WILLIAM E. WELMERS  
American Lutheran Mission  
Monrovia, Liberia,  
West Africa.

## Atwell on Trip for Westminster

THE Rev. Robert L. Atwell, pastor of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Middletown, Pa., has been granted a leave of absence for a month that he may make a trip to the west coast in the interests of Westminster Theological Seminary. Mr. Atwell expects to leave about February 16th, and will visit colleges in the far west, midwest, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Southern Ontario and Southern New England. He will be glad to receive names of prospective ministerial students who might be persuaded to come to Westminster for their theological training.

# The GUARDIAN NEWS COMMENTATOR

VIEWING THE NEWS FROM THE RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE AND THE RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR PRESS

## Nation-wide Organization Formed to Maintain Church-State Separation

THE formation of a nation-wide organization of Protestants and others interested in maintaining separation of Church and State was announced in Washington recently. The official title of the group is Protestants and Other Americans for Separation of Church and State. Officers of the organization are Dr. Edwin M. Poteat, president of Colgate Rochester Divinity School, president; Dr. Charles C. Morrison, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam and Dr. John A. Mackay, all vice-presidents; Dr. J. M. Dawson, secretary; and Mr. E. H. DeGroot treasurer.

In announcing its organization, the group issued a manifesto announcing plans and objectives. Affiliated groups will be established in each state, so that the strength of the whole can be directed in support of its objectives in any local situation.

Immediate objectives of the organization include the enlightening public opinion in support of religious liberty as embodied in the Constitution; resistance to every attempt to breach by law the wall of separation between Church and State; the specific demand for discontinuance of the ambassadorship to the Vatican; an effort toward the repeal of laws in any state granting aid to church schools from the public treasury; and other labors along these lines.

The organization claims that it cannot be justly charged with being motivated by anti-Catholic animus. "As Protestants, we can be called anti-Catholic only in the sense in which every Roman Catholic is anti-Protestant." Its manifesto, however, did level a series of sharp indictments against a certain "powerful Church" which, it was maintained, "makes no secret of its intention to secure for itself, if possible, a privileged position in the body politic."

That the Roman Catholic Church does seek a privileged position in the state has been made clear many times. Just recently that claim was reasserted in remarks by the Pope to the Dominican Republic's new Ambassador to the Vatican. The Pope stated certain conditions which must be met by lay governments if the Catholic Church is to make an efficient contribution in defense of Christian civilization. These were "freedom of movement in the field of education; financial means adequate to the formation of a clergy capable of caring for the spiritual needs of the faithful . . . , and material and spiritual conditions that favor protection of the Christian family and the progressive education and training of selected laymen. . . ." In other words, the lay government is to support the Catholic program of education, clerical training, and Catholic Action. So says the Vatican.

## Magazine Barred from Newark Schools

POINTING up the problems involved in church-state relations and education, the superintendent of schools in Newark has banned from local high schools the magazine, *The Nation*, because of a series of allegedly anti-Catholic articles which the magazine carried last November. The articles discussed Catholic Church policies on various subjects "in a manner that must have been offensive to many Catholic parents," said the superintendent. "I cannot countenance such articles . . . any more than I could countenance articles containing anti-Protestant, anti-Negro or anti-Semitic material," he went on.

This appears to be contrary to the

principle of freedom of the press. Since when has it been the task of a school superintendent to decide what is not anti-something and therefore may be read by the pupils? Is this school principal equally concerned to see that in the history and biology and science textbooks in his schools there is nothing anti-Christian or anti-Biblical or anti-Protestant?

## Calls for a Reformed Advance

THE Rev. Harry R. Boer, missionary to Nigeria of the Christian Reformed Church, in an address to a group of Calvin College alumni, published in the *Calvin Forum* for January, 1948, has called for a real Reformed advance.

Surveying the situation of American Calvinism, in contrast to the Calvinism of the Netherlands, Mr. Boer found serious and significant shortcomings in this country. Calvinism in America, he said, is living its life "largely without the encouragement and stimulus that spring from opposition and criticism." American Calvinists constitute "not only a minority, a very small minority, but an ignored, a not-reckoned-with, an unknown minority. . . . I greatly fear we are gradually being absorbed by the American activist spirit . . . activity, doing, organization, without adequate reflection on ultimate bases and ultimate ends, and on means growing out of the first and suitable to achieve the second."

In particular Mr. Boer emphasized the need of a suitable theological journal, in which the discussion of significant questions in Calvinistic thought could be carried out on a high level. He acknowledged that *The Westminster Theological Journal* is such an organ, but pointed out that he was speaking to Dutch Calvinists



and considering the situation in their sphere of life. In the second place he called for an adequate investigation and exposition of the Calvinistic philosophy of education, in the light of current educational trends in America.

Mr. Boer claims that the present trend is toward a Reformed Fundamentalism, in which the five points of Calvinism are superimposed on the essentials of "fundamentalism," and all else is treated as a matter of indifference. He calls for a resumption of positive Reformed study and writing, which by its inescapable validity shall impell others to consider its conclusions.

We feel that Mr. Boer has said something that deserves to be listened to, and acted upon. What he has said has implications for the whole area of Reformed life, and not only for Reformed students of Dutch extraction.

## Confessional Representation

**T**HE Lutherans have taken the lead in calling for confessional rather than geographical representation at the forth-coming World Council of Churches. This would mean that seats would be allotted to Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists, for example, rather than to United States, Britain, Germany and Sweden.

Speaking on this subject, Dr. S. C. Michelfelder, secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, described as "ecumanians" those churchmen who seek to unite Protestantism without taking into consideration the differences between the various denominations. "Let those who have no convictions other than that it is expedient to unite, do so," he declared. "That there are too many denominations and unnecessary divisions everyone will admit. But this is no time for superficial thinking. Now is the time for all men, clergy and laity, to restudy the Word of God and their own confessions. If this produces loyalty to confessions, it is of God and no temporary advantage for expediency's sake dare change such convictions." Dr. Michelfelder feels that Lutheran delegates to the World Council should come as Lutherans, and not as representing some "nebulous, non-existent invisible body of geographic sections."

## Lutherans Extend Organizations

**P**LANS have been announced for a United Lutheran Church of India. Reasons given were chiefly the need for closer relationship between the various Lutheran bodies, especially since the formation of the United Church of South India, which the Lutherans refused to join.

Word has also been received that an Evangelical Lutheran Church of Italy is expected to be formed in Rome shortly, and will apply for membership in the Lutheran World Federation. There are about 6,000 Lutherans in Italy, most of them being located in some of the larger cities. Lutheran clergymen are located in several cities, and receive \$50 each month from American and Swedish Lutherans. Lutherans in Italy formerly received most of their support from German and Austrian foundations and were affiliated with the Evangelical Church of Germany.

## F.B.I. Director Urges Daily Prayer

**I**N A RADIO broadcast from Washington, F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover urged a return to God and to the practice of daily family prayer. "Can we have internal peace without morality?", he asked. "Our nation is sadly in need of a rebirth of the simple life—a return to the days when God was a part of each household, when families arose in the morning with prayer on their lips, and ended the day by gathering together to place themselves in His care. . . . A Godless home is built upon sand; it is an inviting breeding ground for moral decay and crime. My hope for the future of this nation is predicated upon the faith in God which is nurtured in the family."

## Patriarch Maximos Resigns

**T**HE resignation of Ecumenical Patriarch Maximos V, supreme spiritual leader of Eastern Orthodoxy, has been announced in Istanbul. Resignation was due to ill health.

Maximos who is fifty-two years old, has been ill for months. The Eastern churches will now have the task of choosing a successor.

## Here We Go Again!

**A** WAYNESBURG, Pa., woman has been dropped from the benefit rolls of the State's Unemployment Compensation program. The reason? She refused to accept employment in an eating establishment where beer was being sold. She is affiliated with the Church of the Nazarenes, which prohibits its members from working in places selling intoxicants. The Board of Review thought her suitable for the job, and refused to acknowledge the validity of her argument.

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