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A Church With A Message

By HARVIE M. CONN

A couple of years ago, in these same pages, another minister of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was reflecting on his first year in the pastorate. Near the close of his article, he commented briefly on the future that might await the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He suggested that it was quite a good thing to see the Church now standing on its own feet, without the necessity of pouncing upon the Presbyterian Church USA everytime someone breathed out the "Orthodox" in our name. It was his hope that, more and more, that feeling might grow in the Church.

His point was a well taken one, but I just can't seem to practice it. Now I'm not saying I don't believe it. There is great room in the Church for the power of positive thinking. A great many members of our denomination often suffer from the opposite feeling:—an occupational hazard, I guess, for all watchmen on God's walls. The trouble is, I just can't seem to get it to work.

A few weeks ago, armed with a few copies of an invitation to our little Chapel in Stratford, I dropped by a home in the neighborhood. The name had been given to me by some of the Chapel friends. The door was opened by a very pleasant looking lady, fifty-ish, with graying hair, and the look of a friendly poodle. I mistook it. It was a bulldog in disguise. As I told her my name and where I was from, the torrent began to pour forth. She was waiting for me. "I'm a member of the Somerdale Presbyterian Church I like the minister He preaches the best he can Sure, he makes mistakes, but he tries That's all you can do is try, isn't it It's just as much a church as yours No church has got the right to say it has the truth Besides, you can always find a lot of good in the worst of things All you have to do is look As long as you're getting a blessing in some way why bother I mean, that's all anyone can ask for, isn't that true I mean who knows everything You know what I mean."

It was quite a conversation. A little one-sided at first but profitable. But back I went to 1936 and Auburn, N. Y. I had no choice. Pearl Buck

entered the room of the little kitchen where I had been invited in to chat and the Presbyterian Conflict began again on the individual level. Have you ever tried to tell a woman what corporate responsibility is when she doesn't even believe in such a thing as infallible truth? Could I invite her to an *Orthodox* Presbyterian Church when she didn't even know what straight teaching was, when her heart just couldn't go along with Orthodoxy in the first place? Machen rode again that afternoon.

Yesterday I got a haircut. Now surely there I can keep away from 1936. I couldn't. This barber was interested in other types of removals besides the ones that occupied him from 8 to 5. We talked about another removal that split a great church. He was nice enough about it all. He frankly confessed he never went to any church, although his wife was Presbyterian. He didn't go to her church because he had been invited to sing in the choir by the pastor but didn't know the hymns! He was Episcopalian on Christmas and Easter, a pagan the rest of the year. But he figured if he did the best he could, that was good enough. After all who knows what's right anyway? I mean who knows everything? You know what I mean. I told him I didn't know and asked him to explain. It was a wonder how much theology poured forth over a crewcut and a pair of shears. He did the best he could. That's all anyone could do. Five minutes before I sat in the chair, he had been swearing like a top sergeant.

Thank You, Mr. Tavares:

We are sincerely and deeply indebted to the Rev. Henry P. Tavares, who for a number of years has written the "Meditation" which appeared on this page. We thank him for this regular contribution, which we are sure was profitably read each month by many of you.

Due to the new responsibilities involved in his recent change of pastorate, Mr. Tavares feels he should devote his whole time to that field. We regret to see him cease this page, but appreciate his problem and give him our best wishes for real success as he serves the Lord in his congregation in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Five minutes after he confessed his attempt to better himself, he told me how he never went to church. But he did the best

He did not have the slightest idea what the best was. Neither did the lady bulldog. It was for them an intention to do good, a valiant try at what they didn't know was there, an effort to be sincere when they didn't know what sincerity meant. And how one could be sincere without truth?

So I told them I knew where there was a precious deposit of truth and that I knew where there was a church where that deposit was guarded for its very life. Perhaps someday when the Presbyterian Church USA shows itself repentant enough and returns to the Calvinism it has long ago left, I won't have to emphasize the Orthodox bit. There'll be enough of it around for the lady to quit searching in the garbage pails for some good scraps and the barber to return to. But until that day comes, I guess I'm stuck.

Our Church has too many faults. Seminary professors, and students have long been pointing them out. But with all her faults, I love her still. As a new year rolls around, I'm thankful to be a minister of God's pure gospel in her fold. As a minister upholding her ways, there is at least a message I may bring. As Machen put it so beautifully, many years ago, at the beginning of the conflict that still rages, "Whatever be the limitations of your gifts, you will at least have a message. You will be, in one respect at least, unlike most persons who love to talk in public at the present time; you will have one qualification of a speaker—you will have something to say." Find the hungry heart that needs such a message, and then you will have your chance. "While angels look on, you will have your moment of glorious opportunity—the moment when you can speak the word that God has given you to speak. It will be a word of warning; false hopes must be ruthlessly destroyed. But it will also be a word of wondrous joy. What can be compared, brethren, to the privilege of proclaiming to needy souls the exuberant joy of the gospel of Christ?" For that gospel, that good news, that announcement of truth, and not opinion, I give thanks this year.

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The Transforming Power of Christ

By RAYMOND O. ZORN

The private note of Paul to Philemon is an interesting little epistle. Though it is in the form of a personal letter, as are also the second and third epistles of John, like these it has a definite place in the canon of Holy Scripture. For this epistle is a witness to the high demands upon those who profess to be followers of Christ, giving by means of a practical situation from which the epistle was the outgrowth a demonstration in the lives of the individuals concerned of themes found in various other New Testament epistles. The "Be filled with the Spirit" theme of Ephesians, the "Rejoice evermore" of Philippians, and the "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly" of Colossians all come to demonstration in one way or another in this epistle.

The background leading to the writing of the epistle is simply this. Philemon was a well-to-do man of Phrygia in Asia Minor and a resident of Colossae. Sometime previously he had been converted to Christ, either through the efforts of Epaphras, the pastor of the church at Colossae, or by direct contact with the Apostle Paul as verse 19 would seem to indicate. As was true of wealthy people of the day, Philemon owned slaves, one of whom was Onesimus. One day Onesimus, seizing an opportune time, both robbed his master and fled, making good his escape to Rome. There, in the providence of God, he came in contact with the Apostle at this time in prison awaiting trial as the outcome of his appeal to Caesar. Perhaps Onesimus had again been guilty of theft or some other crime which a runaway slave might commit in his position of destitution, and being apprehended, had been thrown into prison where Paul also was lodged. Or it might have been some other circumstance under God's direction which brought him in contact with the Apostle. At any rate, the net result was that Onesimus was converted and subsequently became a highly profitable companion and useful minister to the Apostle Paul.

There was however the remaining blot in the past life of Onesimus which needed to be rectified. For though it is true that God forgives all sin when the true repentance of conversion has been shown, nevertheless that repentance must be exhibited by the correction of wrongs committed against others to the extent that it lies within the power of one to do so. Onesimus owed a debt to Philemon. It was his duty therefore to return to his master. Accompanying the returning slave, however, was a letter from the Apostle to his friend which has become our Epistle to Philemon. In it we see revealed the transforming power of Christ in the lives of the individuals involved and, further, upon society as a whole. Let us see how this is true.

This letter makes clear, first of all, the triumph given by Christ to the Apostle over the present circumstances of his life. We have only to remember his position as a prisoner of Rome, bound with a constricting chain night and day to a Roman soldier, to appreciate the Apostle's triumph. For in the first verse he calls himself, not a prisoner of Rome, but a prisoner of Jesus Christ. But was it not Rome which held him prisoner? Ah, but only incidentally, for he was primarily the captive of Christ. And when this is true, then any and all events and circumstances of life are but the secondary outcomes of His leading. It was Christ Who had led Paul to Rome and Paul's present position was due only to the Lord's active providence in bringing about this result. Paul was Christ's bondman and prisoner. Therefore, wherever He might lead or whatever circumstances He might order for the life of the Apostle would only be incidental to the primary accomplishment of His will. Paul was Christ's bondman and prisoner, in complete charge of the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. What did it matter, then, if the world judged him to be the prisoner of Rome? Paul knew better. He was the prisoner of Christ and was therefore

free, free to serve his Lord in every situation and circumstance no matter how straitened by worldly standards they might be, for in them he was performing the service of his Master and doing His will. How instructive! All things *do* work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.

The transforming power of Christ also gave Paul triumph over his personal desires, in this case the keeping of Onesimus for his own purposes. For we read in verse 13, "Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel". Onesimus evidently could perform tasks that the Apostle was unable in his condition to do. Perhaps Onesimus could run errands, carry messages, serve as a link between Paul and the outside world. But Onesimus, no matter how valuable to Paul or how much he may have desired personally to retain him, had accounts to square with Philemon. Paul was therefore sending him back and in doing so exhibits the triumph of Christ over his personal desires.

The transforming power of Christ is further exhibited by the love which the Apostle shows toward fellow-members of the Body of Christ. This is true, in his attitude both with respect to Onesimus and Philemon. Paul demonstrates what we find written in I John 4:11, "If God so loved us, we ought to love one another." In the eyes of the world Onesimus was a runaway slave - to be tracked down, ferreted out, hounded to death, one whose life in this position of criminality was worth less than a dog's. But to the Apostle, Onesimus was a child in the Faith and a fellow-member of the Body of Christ. We therefore see him pleading Onesimus' case in verse 10: "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds." And so genuine is Paul's concern for him that he is himself willing to make good whatever wrong Onesimus had done to Philemon. "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account: I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it" (verses 18-19a). How sincere is the love revealed here! A love that is willing to exhibit itself in deed even to the standing of personal loss rather than just the empty vocalization of words.

But to the same extent, though in

different fashion, Paul's love is also exhibited toward Philemon. For the Apostle could well have used his apostolic authority to demand of Philemon what should be of him the Christian response in this matter. But though Paul might have been much bold in Christ to enjoin of Philemon that which was fitting (verse 8), yet for love's sake he was rather beseeching Philemon to make the proper response to Onesimus' case (verse 9). Paul wanted Philemon's response not to be from the necessity of apostolic injunction, for that would be of no benefit to Philemon's Christian character. Paul wanted rather Philemon's response to come from the willing constraint that Christian love and conviction would give him in the matter. So he writes, "But without thy mind would I do nothing; that the benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly" (verse 14). What tact, what consideration, what love the Apostle shows! Would that such love were more in evidence in the lives of God's people. How much less friction and fragmentation there would be. How much more harmony and unity might rather prevail. The love flowing from the transforming power of Christ should be as evident in the Church of Christ today as was manifested by Paul in his. We serve the same Lord and the same resources of His grace are still available. But is that love as manifest as it could or should be?

Though not nearly in such diversified evidence as the Apostle Paul's, the transforming power of Christ is nevertheless made clear in the life of Onesimus as well. Beforetime he had been unprofitable to his master, Philemon, in direct antithesis to his name which means "profitable". But the transforming power of Christ had made Onesimus profitable, not only to the Apostle, but also to Philemon (verse 11). It is Luther who has pointed out the fact that we were all once as Onesimus, unprofitable to our Master, the Lord. For in stealing from His bounty and hying ourselves away from Him as fugitives by our disobedience and rebellion, we too have graphically shown that we are like Onesimus in character but not in name. Only the redeeming grace of Christ and His transforming power can make us profitable in the same way and to the same extent that it did for Onesimus.

The transforming power of Christ, not only made him profitable in the service of the Lord, but it also made Onesimus willing to return to his master and face whatever consequences might be the result. Repentance and faith will evidence themselves in restitution of grievances as was also revealed on the part of Zacchaeus upon his conversion (Luke 19:8). We can be thankful that the Lord saves us by His grace and not because of our resources, for as sinners we are completely destitute of anything to commend us to God. But this does not alleviate us of responsibility to square such accounts as may yet be reckoned to us. Love demands as much unless we are forgiven that debt we may owe by our creditor who alone has the prerogative to do so. Onesimus accordingly went back. And Christ

gave him grace to do his duty.

But the transforming power of Christ is further revealed as we regard the life of Philemon. From the commendation given him by the Apostle in verses 5-7, we learn how transparently his life revealed the virtues of love and faith. Among the ways his love for the Lord came to expression is his devotion to the household of God. There was a church in his house (verse 2). And he had oft refreshed the saints and supported their labors by means of his generous and warmhearted hospitality (verse 7). Philemon was instrumental in communicating the good effects of his faith to others so that the good he had received in Christ might be shared by others also (verse 6). Paul had every confidence, therefore, that
(See "Zorn," p. 14)

The Means of Grace And Peniel Teaching

By LESLIE W. SLOAT

The eternal God, whom we are graciously permitted and encouraged to call our Heavenly Father, has been wonderfully satisfying in His provision for the needs of His believing children.

Not only has He secured our redemption through the perfect, once for all, sacrifice of His only begotten Son, whose complete work needs and allows no slightest addition on our part to be effective, but He has also made adequate provision for our guidance and instruction as we seek in the midst of a hostile world to live for His own glory. It is to this latter provision that we particularly refer in the expression, the "means of grace."

Our confession, following the teaching of Scripture, views the means of grace as three in number, and identifies them as the Word of God, the sacraments, and prayer.

By the Word of God we mean the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. This is a written record, and it is basic. It not only provides the divinely inspired revelation of the preparation for and accomplishment of our redemption, objectively in the person and work of Christ and sub-

jectively in its application to us by the Holy Spirit, but also in more general terms it teaches us what we are to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of us. These two are of course closely related, for what a man believes truly in his heart will be manifest in his conduct, and a man's outward walk will give indisputable evidence concerning his inner convictions.

There are those who would tell us that a man's convictions cannot be coerced, that is, what a man believes is strictly up to him, and he cannot be compelled to believe "against his will." However, when we say that Scripture teaches what we are to believe concerning God, we are simply saying that God has there revealed the truth concerning Himself. And to the child of God there can be only a delighted and willing acceptance of the truth, for he loves God, the true God, and desires only to be found "walking in the truth." His acceptance of this truth is thus not "coercion," not believing "against one's will," but a glad submission to the heavenly Father.

Consequently the child of God neither rejects what God has revealed

in His Word, nor desires to enter into mysteries where God has chosen not to speak. There are such mysteries, for Scripture is not exhaustive of the nature of God, being a revelation to men limited by their creaturehood. And there are difficulties, things hard to be understood. But God's children will rejoice in taking the Word as God has been pleased to give it, and will find deep sweet delight in it just because it is God's Word.

As for teaching the duty God requires of us, we understand this teaching to be in terms of spiritual, moral and practical principles, the application of which is left to our sanctified common Christian sense. Though we believe God has sovereignly foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, He has not been pleased to make known to us His secret or decretive will. The details of daily life, the variety of choices which constantly confront us, are numerous and often complex. But God has made us responsible creatures. And while He has given us the principles to guide us in making decisions, given us these in His Word, He has not chosen to go beyond that written revelation to provide us with specific decisions to specific questions. In the weakness of our faith, in the uncertainty of our judgment, some might often like to have an authoritative source of easy answers. But God was willed that we should walk in faith and obedience—obedience to the principles He has given in the written record, His Word, and faith that He who is sovereign will indeed in His inscrutable providence direct the steps of those who commit their ways unto Him.

Consequently the Church speaks of Scripture as the "only infallible rule of faith and practice." And it declares that to Scripture nothing is at any time to be added, even "by new revelations of the Spirit." Scripture is sufficient, it is final, it is authoritative. By acquainting ourselves well with it, making it a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, we find that it serves well its intended purpose. It is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

Scripture is a written revelation. It is to be read, mused on, hearkened to, believed, obeyed. God has also graciously provided something of a

different nature as a means of grace for His people. He has ordained in His church the sacraments. Here, in the congregation of His people, there is a ritual observance designed to signify, seal and apply the benefits of our redemption. Here in visible form, though through symbols, basic realities of our Christian faith are set forth. And here we are not merely listeners but also participants.

Baptism is the sign and seal of the inclusion of the person baptized in the covenant of grace. It is the outward sign of our entrance into the visible company of God's people, His Church. It teaches us that apart from Christ all, even infants, are under the guilt of sin. It teaches the necessity of cleansing, and points to that cleansing as coming only through the blood of Christ. Consequently it signifies our union with Christ in His death and resurrection, and summons us to that life of righteousness proper for the children of God.

Baptism is to be performed but once. The Lord's Supper, on the other hand, is repeated at regular intervals. The Supper reminds us again and again through its visible symbolism, and also our participation in it, of the death of Christ for us, of our union with Him in His death, and of our receiving through faith the benefits of that death even as physically we receive the elements representing His body and blood. By participating in the sacrament, we publicly acquiesce in His death for us, and bear testimony of our faith in Him. This sacrament too, rightly understood and observed, is a rich and rewarding means of grace for the believer.

In both the Word and the Sacraments we receive blessing through a reality which is in form objective to us, and which brings its blessing as we receive what it gives. God has provided yet a third means of grace in which we as individuals - and as groups - are far more active than we can be in either of these two. This third means is prayer. In prayer the child of God comes to the very throne of his heavenly Father and is free to pour out the innermost thoughts, fears, joys and pleas of his heart and soul. Here he speaks to God not in forms given, but in words, often lisping, of his own choice. At times he is not able even to formulate the thoughts he wishes to lay before the throne of grace, but then he is

comforted by the knowledge that the Spirit of God is making intercession for him in ways beyond his own knowledge or ability.

One thing about prayer should be remembered. It is, if we may so speak, a vertical exercise. That is, prayer is directed to God. It is directed upward. How many times we have heard prayers which, or so it seemed to us, were far more directed to a human audience than to the divine ear. There are even those who proclaim the value of prayer - subjectively on the pray-er and objectively on the person who knows he is being prayed for - who yet deny the existence of God, or His capacity to answer prayers if He does exist. But true prayer is directed not horizontally, with a view to its psychological impact, but vertically, to the eternal God, in the knowledge that He hears the prayers of His children, and that He is able to do for us far more abundantly than we can even ask or think. At the same time prayer is always in submission, in the spirit of "not my will but thine be done."

As the Christian makes daily and periodic use of these appointed means of grace, he finds them abundantly satisfying to his every need. He finds a rich contentment in the procedure expressed in the well-known hymn, "Trust and obey."

Strangely enough, however, there are some, who give evidence of being sincere Christian believers, who yet are not content with the means of grace God has given. Rather these find it desirable to supplement the divine provision with elements and devices of their own manufacture. They think thereby to make more real the Christian's fellowship with God, and more vitally Christian his daily walk in this world. But actually, when we begin to supplement, to add to, the provisions God has made, we begin to challenge the adequacy of those divine provisions, and thereby introduce confusion into the Christian community, and ultimately bring harm to the Church of Christ.

Of particular concern here is the Peniel Bible Conference, and the evidence concerning its character, beliefs, and procedures, which has become available as a result of recent discussions in the Presbytery of Philadelphia of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The information indicates that

Peniel promotes a rather specific pattern of self-examination, of resisting Satan, and of securing guidance through what is believed to be the witness of the Holy Spirit. These procedures, reported at first chiefly through persons formerly but now no longer associated with Peniel, have at least in substance been acknowledged as distinctive of the Peniel movement by its own leaders.

In our judgment, these distinctive patterns and procedures constitute an effort to supplement the means of grace God has provided. Consequently they obscure God's own work and program of grace, and introduce confusion into His church.

To support this position, we wish to quote and comment on certain statements presented to the Presbytery, which are a part of an official statement of the Peniel Conference, which was printed in full in the *Guardian* of November 15, 1957.

The first statement is: "We believe that God's requirement for each of his children is holiness. Though this

holiness is never fully attained in this life, it is to be sought after through the diligent use of the means of grace by an experiential acquiescence to the crucifixion of the self life with the Lord Jesus on the cross of Calvary (Romans 6, Gal. 2:20, 5:24, 6:14), an appropriation of the resurrection life of Christ, and a daily reckoning of self to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Col. 3:17)."

In view of the evidence available concerning a distinctive pattern of self-examination, of "knowing the old man," and of "resisting Satan," we can only conclude that the "experiential acquiescence to the crucifixion of the self life . . ." mentioned in this statement is the way Peniel describes this distinctive pattern which it promotes. But, according to the statement, this "experiential acquiescence" is itself a means to make the "means of grace" effective. For it is through the use of the means of grace *by this* (See "Means of Grace," p. 13)

But the Christian Gospel paints sin in the darkest hues, quickens the conscience to keenest sensitivity, and affirms the reality and damning character of guilt. It teaches that sin is among the "realist" things in God's universe! And then, to the heart and conscience made aware of this mountain of guilt for sin, the blood and righteousness of Jesus avail to bring "Peace, perfect peace."

And what purpose is this liberation set to serve in the divine plan? *It is to bring a man face to face with God and leave him there*, for it is never safe to leave him anywhere else. How large a part the omniscience of God plays in Christian faith and morals. Even the godless man is known to God, though he withdraw into the inner recesses of his heart. But he does not fully know how fully he is known, though his erratic conscience throws out occasional hints to that effect. Only the believer is truly aware of the fact that, though his nearest and dearest friends don't know all his heart, as far as God is concerned, he lives in a glass house. It is the conscience among all our members that makes us constantly aware of this fact. It may be said that conscience is that element of the image of God in man which answers to the attribute of omniscience in God. We hear a great deal, true and false, of the dignity of individual man. In so far as man has any claim to dignity and nobility, it is to be found in this very fact that, through his conscience, man is made to know that he stands in the presence of the living God, and that all his thoughts and actions are conceived and performed before His face.

The Task of the Church

It is, therefore, the church's task, through the preaching of the Gospel, to bring men *from* the slavery of sin and hell that they may be free *for* the service of God in righteousness. This is to be done not only once, at the time of conversion, but again and again. The Christian church, just because the saved sinner is yet "prone to wander, . . . prone to leave the God I love," must lead him back repeatedly into the presence of the all-seeing God.

Never since the light of Christian freedom dawned in the world has any generation needed this ministry of mercy more than our own. The disappearance of the healthy fear of

The Lord of the Conscience

By LAWRENCE R. EYRES

"I want to be free," a high school classmate once said to the writer. "I'm tired of being told what I can and what I can't do. It's *my* life, and I intend to live it the way *I* choose." Shortly thereafter she left home and began on that slippery toboggan slide which led to a life of degradation. This girl, and thousands like her, did not know what freedom was. Such people think freedom is only *from* something (parental and social restraints). They have not come so far as to answer the question, "What are you free *for*?"

This question is forcefully answered in the Westminster Confession of Faith (XX - 2). "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are, in anything, contrary to His Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or practice." The quintessence of all liberty is liberty of conscience, and liberty of conscience is attained only by those who humbly submit themselves to the total lordship

of Jesus Christ. The whole program of salvation from sin and its dominion is in order that the soul may be free to serve God in righteousness. The Apostle Paul, in Romans 6, says that in a sense, ". . . when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness . . ." (verses 20, 22).

Completeness of Freedom

In previous talks we saw how all consciences not under the sway of Christ are in bondage to the god of this world. And it is only when saving truth enters and justifying faith is exercised that true liberty of conscience is found. It is remarkable that, between the world and the Gospel, the means for relief of guilty consciences are so diametrically opposed. The soul-doctors of this world deal with guilt feeling by minimizing its seriousness, numbing the conscience itself, or denying the reality of sin. None of these methods is fruitful.

God has given place to a sickly fear of men. It is not surprising that so many today, small and great, fear the face of man. Politicians are afraid of other politicians who are afraid of the voters. The voters are afraid of material insecurity. Employees are afraid of employers; laboring men are afraid of their corrupt labor bosses; husbands are afraid of their wives and parents are afraid of their children (who haven't grown up enough to be afraid of anybody!). This mousiness is even to be found in the temple of God! From high pulpits pastors thunder against the economic and social evils of the day, but do we hear one soft syllable whispered against the modern Caiaphases who sit in the seat of Jesus and His apostles giving out stones for bread and ruling the churches for their own ungodly ends. It was the English historian, Gibbon, who, standing at the grave of John Knox, said, "Here lies one who never feared the face of man!" Would to God that the soul of John Knox, like that of John Brown, would go "marching on" today. It almost seems that the spirit of the father of Presbyterianism, like his body, "lies a mouldering in the grave."

The Ever-Present Threat

This evil of substituting the fear of man for the fear of God is a constant threat to every church. How easy it is, having once begun in the Spirit, to turn back to the flesh and yield that conscientious obedience to men that is due to Christ alone! It happened in the Galatian churches in the first century; it can happen and is happening today. How easy it is for churches, whether "Fundamentalist" or Reformed, with the finest intentions, to draw up catalogues of sins which go beyond the express words and teaching of Scripture. These rules are then enacted for the obedience of men and women who were redeemed for the service of Christ alone. In due time Christ's flock is taught to "hear the church" instead of listening to the voice of Christ speaking by His Word and Spirit. Little by little, ecclesiastical deliverances in practice supplant the Word of God as the "only Rule of faith and practice." These deliverances may be good deductions from Scripture, they may be designed to combat prevalent worldliness among Christian people, yet they wean the tender consciences of Christ's lambs away

from Him and to the church, or to the pastors. In any case the lordship of Christ over men's consciences is weakened and may be destroyed. The church must help Christ's little ones (and who in the church militant is fully grown up in Christ?) to answer the perplexing, modern questions relating to their own faith and life, but in such a way as the obedience rendered be rendered consciously and conscientiously to Christ and none other!

To put it another way, I may keep the commandments of God out of love for my parents, or out of conviction that it pays to live righteously, or out of fear of the censures of the church or the disapproval of society. But keeping the commandments for these motives is not obedience to God. Only

as I keep God's law out of conscience, that is, because my heart tells me that He requires and deserves my loving submission to His will, only then is my obedience acceptable to God as an expression of my gratitude to Him.

It is a good rule never to intrude into those affairs which are sacred to husband and wife, parent and child, friend and friend. Proper respect for those things which are sacred among members of the human family dictates considerable reserve and a fear of tampering. How much more ought we to regard as supremely sacred the relationship between a soul and its Lord! Strengthen that holy bond we must, weaken it we dare not lest we court the wrath of heaven and bring upon us the guilt of destroying those for whom Christ died.

What About This Matter of Schism?

By JAY E. ADAMS

The Rev. Jay E. Adams is pastor of the Haddonfield Bible Presbyterian Church, a congregation associated with the St. Louis Synod of that denomination. He was a fraternal delegate from that Synod to the 1957 General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In the following article he discusses what he considers one of the chief issues between his Church and the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination, in the hope that a discussion of these issues once started may result in a solution, and hence better relations between the two groups.

A committee has been appointed by the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to discuss relations between the Bible Presbyterian Church and itself. In any conferences between committees of these churches, one item will probably loom large on the agenda. It will be the question of schism. Although the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was remarkably free from reference to that word, two or three of the men present did refer to the parting of the ways in 1937 as schism. It was remarkable that more

was not said on this subject since, it would seem, this is one of the most important matters which must be settled before proper relations between the two communions can be established. Now that they are again on speaking terms and there is talk in the air about possible future union, it is obligatory that this subject be raised.

If for our sakes our O.P.C. brethren are hesitant to broach the question, we must make the way clear for full, dispassionate discussion by raising the issue ourselves. Unless it is thoroughly faced and finally resolved suspicion and uneasiness will always remain.

It is not the purpose of this article to settle the question. It seeks merely to set forth the problems and to indicate certain possible avenues of reaching a solution to the same.

The Question Stated

Officially, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has never declared the Bible Presbyterian Synod schismatic. But there have been, and still are, men within the former who have deep conviction that this is true. They have said so. Perhaps there are more who feel the same way, and others who are uncertain, but who have not out-

wardly expressed themselves. Then too, there may be Bible Presbyterians whose consciences are uneasy, and would like to see the matter brought to a settlement. A situation of this kind should not and need not continue indefinitely.

The new friendly relations between the two churches afford the opportunity and lay the obligation upon both denominations to reach an understanding.

The question seems two-fold: First did the formation of the Bible Presbyterian Synod constitute an act of schism (and if so, does that church still exist in a schismatic state)? Secondly, assuming the first question resolved, what will be the respective duties of each denomination toward the other?

Some Problems Which Must Be Faced

First, the Biblical principles concerning schism must be determined and both denominations must agree upon the same. Though by no means simple, this is perhaps the easiest question to answer as it involves the objective standard of the Word of God, and is less of a value judgment than others which demand an interpretation of church history by persons with which it is intimately connected. It is undoubtedly the first question to be asked and answered, as it affords the only possible basis for judging all others. Together with the obvious matters (such as detailed philological, exegetical, and historical usage of the word "schism" and other kindred terms) such problems as the following should be studied:

What is the nature of schism with reference to the church invisible and visible?

Can schism ever be a matter of heart as well as overt?

Can a church which has divided from another be *required* to confess the sin of schism unless it has been officially judged schismatic?

Although not officially judged schismatic, is a body which is held in suspicion of schism not *morally* obligated either to clear its name or confess its sin?

Can a body from which another withdraws be just as schismatic in attitude as the withdrawing body?

Can a body which over a long period of time has taken no substantial action to reclaim those who have withdrawn be severe when the body which

has withdrawn has taken the first official action to restore good relationships?

Is schism an act or a state? If it is a state, is not a body which has a responsibility to reclaim schismatics clearly culpable if it has allowed schism to exist for years without attempting to resolve it?

What does schism mean with reference to modern denominationalism? If it is a state, how many denominations exist today which are and which are not schismatic?

Is pluriformity of the church ever justifiable? Is it a sinful state? Is not every church then schismatic to an extent? To what extent?

These questions are pointed. But they need to be. They are asked in all sincerity because they need to be answered in all earnestness. As a matter of fact, they are but a few of the many questions which must be faced in the discussion of 1937. They are important not merely because of that practical problem confronting the Orthodox and Bible Presbyterian Churches, but also to the history of doctrine. The nature of the visible church is one of the crucial questions of our day. Reformed churches need to know what they hold on these matters. The field of literature boasts much written by liberals about this question, but far too little by conservatives. Too much of what has been written from the latter viewpoint has been influenced by independent, and Plymouth-Brethren Divisionism. Reformed scholars need to publish some substantial material on the question. Possibly this practical problem may be the occasion for some definitive writing.

Secondly, the principles which are determined as Biblical must be applied to the historical events which occurred in 1937 (and if schism is considered a state as well as an act, to what has transpired since). The greatest problem will be to abstract principle from personality and prejudice. This can never be fully accomplished. But perhaps twenty years apart may have been sufficient to achieve something like objectivity. The difficulty involved is after having gone separate ways for so long, the two denominations may easily settle down to complacency, saying, "let sleeping dogs lie." Why stir up old problems? Why not agree to be friends — and continue to go our separate ways? The prospect of

getting together with those whose methods and opinions have differed through the years may not seem very inviting, especially when everything seems to be going smoothly in both communions. And then too, since we now seem to be friends again, why run the risk of stirring up old fires which may cause new enmities? This sort of thinking may very likely prevail, unless it is squarely faced as weakness and compromise. Morally, the matter cannot be so lightly dismissed. Now that the churches are in a position to do something about it, it would seem that nothing less than official agreement between them would be adequate. Is it not wishful thinking to suppose fraternal relations of any lasting sort may be established without a resolution of this matter?

There seems to be but one possible alternative to determining the question of schism in 1937. That is, for both churches to officially agree upon some mutually acceptable statement, which, while not deciding the issue one way or the other, acknowledges the problem, deplors the division, and clearly states the relationship for the future, forgetting the past. It is possible that this is not morally legitimate, but that too must be considered. It may be that this is the only conceivable course of action should the two churches become completely bogged down in an honest effort to decide the matter of schism. If both churches alike were to agree that in applying the Biblical principles to the historical situation doubt yet remains as to the actual status of matters, or that both churches have erred in their own ways, it would seem reasonable that a solution of this sort may be the answer.

As was said, this article proposes to solve nothing. It merely calls for the best thought on both sides of the fence to be expressed in frank and friendly study of the past and present in the light of Scripture. It is presented to THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN rather than the *Bible Presbyterian Reporter* in hope that some of those within the Orthodox Presbyterian Church who have strong convictions may respond to its call.

Although the writer was a Fraternal Delegate to the General Assembly last year, he wishes to state that he writes this article neither in that official capacity nor any other, but simply as one interested individual expressing his opinion.

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The Challenge to the Church

This periodical is closely associated with, though not an official publication of, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Consequently in this first issue of a new year we do not hesitate to direct our attention to the affairs of that Church.

And it seems to us that the Church, and by Church we mean the members of the Church, is faced with a challenge which can be outlined in fairly specific terms. Our purpose now is not to say how the challenge is to be met. We doubt that any one individual has the wisdom to say that. But perhaps if we face up to what the challenge is, we may be making a little progress toward meeting it.

And in our judgment the challenge is three-fold. It can be described in terms of method, of man-power, and of means.

What we are to do is not too great an issue. As members of the Church of Christ on earth, we have the task of promoting His cause and Kingdom, to the glory of His holy Name. We have the task of making His Gospel known in this and every land. We have the task of bringing men to see the implications of the Gospel for the whole of life, and of bringing the Gospel thus understood to actual

fruition in the life of individuals, the Church, and society.

But how is this to be done? We are a small group, a tiny portion of the visible Church on earth. Our resources are limited. Yet we are called on to act.

In general the work of the church is carried on first through the local congregation. There is the first area in which the task of the church is to find effective realization. Here is where the challenge first meets us. The work of the church is not to be done by someone else someplace else. It is not to be done first by another agency. The work of the church begins at home—your home and mine, your home church and mine.

But after this, the Church has its official agencies, and in the three chief standing committees there is represented method by which the work of the church goes forward on the larger scale. These are the Committees of Home Missions and Church Extension, of Foreign Missions, and of Christian Education.

Each Committee must determine the details of its own procedure. That is another aspect of the question of method, and it is sometimes a most difficult one. The limitations which the Committees face in the area of manpower and means serve to force them to increase their efficiency and productivity in the use of what they do have. To that extent those limitations should be constructive.

But on the other hand the Church having chosen the membership of its Committees, should then have confidence that they are doing and will do their task with wisdom and efficiency. And in that confidence it should give them its utmost support. The reports which continue to come from the Committees do indicate that the Church is contributing to their support in a way which is increasingly encouraging. Yet it does appear that the programs the Committees envision are hampered by a lack of funds, and it does also appear on the basis of sound consideration that there is yet additional potential in the church. We must remember our Lord's words, that in doing all we can do, we are only doing our duty. Can we do any less than this?

The problem of man-power arises in many connections. But surely greater efficiency and productivity on the part of our available ministers de-

mands, for instance, that they be relieved of multitudes of minor unproductive activities so that they may devote their attention to their major tasks. How many ministers there are in our churches who are called on to be architects, painters, janitors, chauffeurs, and many other kinds of laborers, and who for that reason cannot be and are not as good preachers, and teachers, and writers as they might be. This situation affects pastors, and missionaries as well as others.

Should we not in this year concentrate on the major tasks of the Church and of the churches, give our earnest and wholehearted support to these, and try to handle less essential matters in a way that does not interfere with our main job. Let us put the Church first in our effort, and then pray that God will bless that effort to the furthering of His purpose through the Church. L. W. S.

Miss Emily S. Weeks

On December 30, 1957 Miss Emily S. Weeks of Philadelphia, a charter member of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church and of the Redeemer congregation of that denomination, celebrated her 100th birthday. A few members of her family gathered at her home for the occasion, but in recent days her health had not been good, so a larger celebration was cancelled.

Four days later, on the 4th of January, Miss Weeks was called to her heavenly home. Until very near the close of her life, she had enjoyed good health, and a clear mind. Funeral services were conducted on January 7 by the Rev. Travers Sloyer, pastor of Redeemer Church in which she had kept her membership since its formation.

Throughout her life Miss Weeks was active in church and charitable organizations. For 50 years she taught Sunday school at Tabernacle Presbyterian Church, 37th and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia. For about the same period she was president of the church's McCook Missionary Society. For many years she helped at the Industrial Home for Blind Women. It is reported that as a young girl she studied art at the University of Pennsylvania, the first woman to do so. To the time of her death she had lived alone. A handyman who lived nearby helped out around the house.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.

Westminster Seminary Purchasing Additional Property

Westminster Theological Seminary is in the process of completing the purchase of an additional property less than one mile from the present campus. The new property has some five acres of land and a three story building which will be used to house married students. An additional residence building may also be erected on the new property when funds are available.

This information is contained in a report prepared by the Rev. Robert S. Marsden, Executive Secretary of the Seminary.

The new property is located near the intersection of Willow Grove Avenue and Cheltenham Avenue, at the eastern edge of Wyndmoor village. The three story building is in excellent condition, and the renovations required to adapt it for the proposed nine apartments will not be great.

Completion of the sale is planned for February, and the only contingency is the matter of zoning. Application has already been made for an exception to the zoning regulations so that

the property can be used for religious and educational purposes, including student housing. The zoning Board is reported to have acted favorably on the application, but the text of its final ruling is not yet available.

According to present plans, the new building should be ready for use with the opening of the Seminary in September.

For a number of years the Seminary has been planning the erection of an apartment building on its present campus, in spite of the fact that this would have crowded the limited space available. When the state decided to put through a limited access highway taking several acres from the campus, the problem of space became more acute. Now, with housing made available in a neighboring but off-campus site, it will not be necessary to crowd an apartment building on the campus. A portion of the funds received from the state for damage to the property caused by the new road will be available toward the purchase and renovation of the new property. Mr. Marsden reports that only about \$27,000. in additional building funds will be required to give the Seminary possession of the new property in usable condition debt free.

Mr. Marsden's report, which will

be distributed to donors and friends of the Seminary, also pictures 1957 as a year of blessing for the institution. He writes:

"The year 1957 was, in just about every way, the finest year in the history of Westminster Theological Seminary. The Seminary income was at an all-time high, even though the general fund balance remained low. The full-time faculty is larger than at any previous time, and all the members have been blessed with good health in the midst of flu epidemics elsewhere. Applications for admission were at an all-time high, and with about half the applicants being admitted, there are more students on hand than for some years. The present student body contains graduates of fifty colleges and universities and members of about twenty-five denominations. And, most encouraging of all, the reputation of the School for sound Biblical scholarship is growing rapidly and there are many indications that the message of the Seminary is being given a more cordial hearing than in many years. Prospects for the expansion of both the physical plant and the academic activities have never been better. For all these benefits we praise our sovereign God who has graciously seen fit to bless our efforts so mightily."



Pictures of Christ in Education

A Committee Report

The Twenty-First General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church took the following action: "It was moved and carried that the question of the use of pictorial representations of Christ in the work of Christian education be referred to the Committee on Christian Education for further study, and report to the Twenty-second General Assembly."

This is not a new question. The church has taken no definite action one way or another. The Committee on Christian Education does not make use of pictures representing Christ in its published materials. This report constitutes an attempt to expound the second Commandment and the interpretation of the commandment found in the Westminster Larger Catechism (Question 109) as it bears upon the legitimacy of the use of pictorial representations of Christ for pedagogical purposes. We shall attempt to narrow our treatment down to this point.

We shall be concerned, therefore, with these two questions: 1) Does the second commandment directly or inferentially prohibit the use of pictures of our Lord for any purpose whatsoever? If not, 2) Are there other reasons why such representations may not be used as aids in teaching? We recognize that, if the first question should be answered affirmatively, there would be no second question. However, we prefer to deal with that contingency if and when it would arise.

The Teaching of the Commandment

The second commandment forbids the making "unto thee" of any creature-likeness whatsoever, either real or imaginary. Whether it be a three or two-dimensional likeness is entirely immaterial. Their manufacture and use for certain purposes is clearly forbidden. And what are those purposes for which manufacture and use of all creature-likenesses is forbidden? Surely not for artistic or purely educational purposes, for there were images of cherubim overshadowing the mercy seat in the tabernacle, and Solomon made brazen oxen and put them in

the temple. Rather, the words, "make unto thee," are interpreted or limited by the second prohibitory phrase, "Thou shall not bow thyself down to them nor serve them." In a word, what is here forbidden is the manufacture and use of any creature-likeness whatever for the purpose of religious veneration, whether regarded as object or medium of such worship.

Now the second commandment is a part of the moral law. The intrinsic immorality of breaking this command-

In many areas of the Church it is customary to employ "pictures" of Christ in the various activities the Gospels record concerning His life on earth. Some of these pictures have become well known, such as that of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, and the head of Christ. Often such pictures find a prominent place in church buildings.

But many devout Christians have seriously doubted the propriety of either preparing or using such "pictures." This question becomes immediately pertinent with reference to materials designed for teaching children. "Visual" education is highly popular and the use of illustrations in teaching has a recognized validity. But should "pictures" of Christ be used in this fashion.

The Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was asked to prepare a study of this matter. After two years the Committee finally reported to the 1957 Assembly that it had not been able to adopt any report on the subject. It had appointed a sub-committee, but even that sub-committee was divided, and came in with two reports. But the Committee could not approve either one.

We are publishing here one of these two reports. Our purpose is to suggest thereby some of the difficulties that are involved, and to indicate why we believe the question cannot be so easily decided as is commonly supposed, and so to warn against careless and indiscriminate use of such pictures in the work of the Church.

ment is simply this: whatever sensory representation man might make of the divine being and perfections constitutes an attack upon those same perfections. This is particularly derogatory of His pure spirituality and of all of His incommunicable attributes. And, since fallen man has an almost total propensity for the sensual diminution of the idea of the being and glory of God, God has mercifully forbidden even the very appearance of this evil.

This appears to be the reasoning behind the framing of the answer in the Larger Catechism dealing with this question (Question 109). "The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising . . . any religious worship not instituted by God Himself; *the making any representation of God, of all, or of any of the three Persons, either inwardly, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever.*" It appears from the foregoing that the framers of the catechism understood the commandment to prohibit the making of any likeness of the divine nature or Persons for any purpose whatsoever, and not merely for purposes of worship. What then becomes of the observation previously made that the commandment does not forbid the manufacture and use of creature-likenesses as such, but only insofar as they are associated with the posture and heart-motions of religious veneration? Did the Westminster divines, in their zeal for the abolition of popish excesses, go beyond the commandment? We think not. Rather, they were jealous for the pure spirituality of the worship of God. They were not inveighing against art as such - not even religious art. They were concerned lest it should creep back and re-insinuate itself into the worship of the Reformation churches. That is why all imagery was removed from the churches in Geneva when the Reformation became established.

In itself there surely was no sin in the manufacture of a golden calf. But when of this calf it was said, "These be thy gods, O Israel," the whole action, not only the worship itself, but the making of the image for worship, became execrable in the extreme. But the Larger Catechism is quite general in its interpretation of the commandment. It does not concern itself about the unlawfulness of the likeness of Jesus of Nazareth alone,

but about the likeness of *any* creature in which there is made, in thought, word or actions, an association with God. And this for the following reasons: any sensory manifestation of deity, true or false, is an indication of the immediate presence of the deity represented. Now, when man stands before such a physical manifestation, the attitude (if not the very posture) of worship is called forth. It is quite impossible for a man to be conscious of the presence of the god he worships without engaging in some phase of worship. Hence all creature-likenesses to which men impute an association with any deity, false or true, are forbidden in the second commandment.

Therefore, to come nearer the resolution of our question, we must say that *if* a pictorial representation of the man Christ Jesus is a representation of any or all of the Persons of the Godhead its use for any purpose whatsoever is clearly forbidden by the second commandment. Let us remember that any sensory representation of God, in the very nature of the case, requires a response from man which is tantamount to worship. But is the *physical likeness of our Lord* (either real or imagined) a *representation of the Second Person of the Godhead*?

Before attempting an answer to this question let us give some consideration to the revelational character of the incarnation. "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory . . ." (John 1:14). "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). From this we clearly see that the divine perfections contained in the Godhead were revealed in the humanity of Christ. This union of the divine and the human was real, though in its totality an incomprehensible mystery. And it was the highest and holiest revelation of God to man in his earthly state.

Perhaps we should compare the revelation of the Godhead in the incarnation to those who saw and communed with the Lord in the days of His flesh with the revelation of the same Godhead through the incarnation to us who know Him only through His Word and Spirit. It is not to be questioned that the former knew *more* of what Jesus said and did than we are *able* to know (John

21:25). Moreover the apostles had the unique advantage of being eye-witnesses of His miraculous acts, particularly His resurrection. Nevertheless, the unrepeatable advantage of having seen Jesus in the flesh does not constitute a superior revelation to that which we may have today by His Word and Spirit. On the contrary, due to the descent of the Spirit on Pentecost, the reverse is true. In a word, the actual sight of the incarnate Christ, considered from the standpoint of revelation, does not in itself constitute a revelation superior to that which the regenerate has in the Scriptures, which contain the record of what Jesus was, said and did as the incarnate Word.

But was that which men saw and heard and touched divine? Was the body of Jesus, which had a certain size and weight, features, etc., divine? It should be said in answer that, while that soul and body were compatibly, vitally and indissolubly united to the divine essence so that the Person, Jesus of Nazareth, walked and talked, ate and slept, suffered and died, yet that which men saw with the eyes of the flesh was always and only a creature. In the language of Scripture it is proper to attribute to the Person that which is true of either nature, yet it is never proper to attribute to one nature that which is true of the other.

This fact could hardly have escaped the framers of the Catechism who understood the commandment to forbid not only "the making any representation of God, of all, or of any of the three Persons," but also making such images "*inwardly in our mind.*" But how could John, who makes so much of his having seen the Word (John 1:14, I John 1:1), or Saul of Tarsus, who was blinded by the sight of the risen Christ, refrain from entertaining a mental image of the physical likeness of Jesus? There is evidence that, on the contrary, they carried that mental image with them to the grave, and that they cherished it as a holy thing (II Corinthians 4:6).

It appears, then, that the likeness of Jesus of Nazareth, whatever more may be said, cannot be held to be the likeness of the divine substance or Persons. Still our problem is not solved. Our Lord's earthly associates knew and remembered how He looked, but for some reason they failed to leave us any clues. No religious

art, nor any word-description of His physical appearance, has come down to us. It has been argued that the providential design behind this absence of data is that God is not pleased with the making of the physical appearance of the Savior the subject of religious art for any purpose whatever. Now there is danger in this type of argumentation. While it is a pious thing to respect the silences of Scripture, it is hardly warranted to make those silences normative. Only *Scripture*, not its silence, is our all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. Furthermore, this argument proves too much: for while we lack any clues as to how Jesus looked, we are no wiser as to the appearance of Peter, or James, or John. If there is something sacrosanct about the physical features of Christ (on the basis of all absence of a description of His features in Scripture) the same must be said of nearly all the characters in the Bible. As a matter of fact the Spirit seems generally sparing of details, and we should not have known that Elisha was bald or that Zacchaeus was small of stature had not those facts been necessary to the records in which they are disclosed.

We conclude, then, that the use of pictorial representations of our Lord for educational purposes cannot be ruled out by appeal to the second commandment as interpreted in the light of our subordinate standards.

Practical Considerations

It does not follow from the above that pictorial representations of Christ deserve an unqualified endorsement from discerning Christians. There appear several reasons that should give us pause on the use of materials which are available today which make such widespread use of pictures of Christ.

(1) The absence of any description of our Lord's physical appearance, if not sufficient ground for a negative rule, is yet sufficient ground for caution, and that for two reasons:

(a) Specimens which we possess of artistic invention often belie what is known about the manhood of our Lord. For example, He is often pictured as weak and effeminate.

(b) The impressionableness of small children all too readily fixes upon what it sees and, being incapable of adult criticism and discernment, takes as very truth what the artist portrays. A warped conception of the

human nature of Jesus may very easily result - one which will affect the thinking of the individual to the end of his days.

(2) The psychological balance of the normal child leaves him short on discernment and long on imagination. Children draw their own mental images with the greatest of ease. The stories of Jesus, read or told to eager children, suffice so to stimulate their imaginations as to make the most vivid artistry drab by comparison. It seems almost cruel to say in effect to their uncritical minds, "this is how Jesus looked while He was on the earth." This sort of objectivising of mental images makes rather for arrested

development of a healthy and, perhaps, holy fancy.

(3) The frequent use of pictorial representations of Christ makes for commonness. Thoughts of the holy Son of God may also become unhealthy common if children are subjected to a multitude of dissimilar and unflattering likenesses of Him everywhere.

It is for these reasons that, while we are unable to find scriptural reasons for ruling out the use of pictorial representations of Christ, we believe that reasonable caution is in order with reference to this present day, wholesale practice.

Means of Grace

(Continued from p. 6)

experiential acquiescence that those means of grace are effective in promoting holiness. The means of grace God has given are then not effective - or not as effective - in promoting holiness when taken by themselves, as when used with the supplementary means Peniel has developed. Thus this program of Peniel, which seems to be promoting a greater richness of Christian life, is actually and implicitly playing down the adequacy of the means of grace God has provided, and is exalting a particular and distinctive pattern of procedure which is peculiar to Peniel.

Now we cannot allow that the means of grace God has provided need such a supplement. We believe that holiness will increase through the working of God's Spirit as we make diligent use of the means of grace. But we cannot agree that holiness is to be sought after through the diligent use of the means of grace by an experiential acquiescence effected in a specific humanly devised pattern of self-examination and self-mortification. God's provisions are not inadequate. To propose the necessity of specific additions to them involves either a failure to understand and use them properly, or a willful refusal to submit to the divine program. Neither alternative is acceptable for those who endeavor truly to abide by God's holy Word.

The statement of the Peniel Bible

Conference referred to above also gives evidence, in our judgment, of a procedure to supplement in an unlawful manner the Word of God itself. It does this by claiming the existence under certain circumstances of an additional witness with reference to specific decisions which confront the individual Christian, a witness which is attributed in some mystical way to the Holy Spirit.

Again we quote the statement: "We believe that it is the Christian's personal duty to have a conviction for himself that a given course of action is the will of God for him (We believe that) effective application of redemptive truth to the life by the Holy Spirit results in a regenerate consciousness of communion with God . . . Guidance is that expression of fellowship with God . . . whereby a man is enabled to function as a redeemed individual in the concrete situations of life . . . To say, however, that such guidance is never in the realm of consciousness is to make the scriptural teaching of fellowship with God meaningless. We are nevertheless careful to maintain that human sinfulness precludes infallibility in understanding guidance, and that all convictions entertained as from the Holy Spirit must be carefully examined in the light of Scripture . . . The conviction of mind which the Christian may experience regarding the will of God for his duty is in no sense to be equated with Scripture, but is to be sought as a promised result of the thorough-going application of

redemptive truth to the life."

The above statements assert, in our opinion, a belief on the part of Peniel in a form of guidance which is in content distinct from the content of Scripture, which is attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit, which gives direction concerning details of daily life, and which is necessary since by it "a man is enabled to function as a redeemed individual in the concrete situations of life." Without such extra-scriptural guidance, presumably, a man would not be able to function as a redeemed individual in the concrete situations of life. The means of grace, including the Scriptures, which God has given precisely for that purpose, are not sufficient, and need to be supplemented. The statement that human sinfulness precludes infallibility in understanding guidance is no sufficient exception, because for the same reason infallibility in understanding Scripture itself is precluded.

In the light of such convictions concerning guidance, it is not strange that the evidence placed before the presbytery told of various instances of "guidance" and in particular reported on such "guidance" in the choosing of marriage partners.

If, as we believe, Scripture is the only infallible rule of faith and practice, if it is the Word of God, and if to it in the sense in which it is given nothing is at any time to be added, even by new revelations of the Spirit, then we believe it follows that Scripture needs no supplement in the form of this distinctive guidance - in fact that to ask for or expect such guidance is to play down the place and importance God has assigned to His Word. It is to declare Scripture to be inadequate, and to ask for something more. In the days of our Lord men asked for a sign, and there was no sign given them. Rich Dives asked that poor Lazarus be sent back to warn his brethren. Christ said, They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. Now men ask for guidance as to whether they should enter the ministry, become pastor of a certain church, or take a particular marriage partner. But the Holy Spirit does not give a man an extra bit of testimony or provide him with a separate conviction so that he knows that in doing this or that specific thing he is following the will of God. The will of God for us is set down in Scripture. If we live in

obedience to the spiritual, moral and practical principles God has given there, we live according to His will. More information than is given there we have no right to ask, lest we accuse God of failing to give us enough. Within the bounds of those principles we have freedom, the freedom to which we have been called as sons of God. Failure to appreciate that freedom and to use it can have but one result, a return to bondage - bondage to human beings who presume to have special guidance from God and therefore who presume to be able to tell us what to do.

We return to our first proposition. God has given us sufficient and adequate provision for daily Christian living in the means of grace He has appointed - His Word, the sacraments, and prayer. To propose that these means of grace need to be supplemented through some distinctive patterns or procedures is to charge God with failing to meet our needs. But to use properly the means of grace He has given will under His blessing lead to a richness of Christian experience and an abundance of Christian contentment and peace of mind such as is attainable in no other way. By His grace we have been saved. In His grace we live. Let us be sure we do not sell our birthright.

Zorn

(Continued from p. 4)

Philemon would not only respond to his request on behalf of Onesimus but that the liberality of his Christian love would carry him even beyond it. Paul's specific request was that Philemon accept Onesimus as a brother in Christ. "For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?" (verses 15-16). But as Paul makes clear by tacit reference in verse 21, he has every confidence that Philemon will give Onesimus his freedom. "Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say." In a word, how could the wrong of slavery continue to exist where men are brothers in Christ? For slavery is that institution founded on the injustice that some men are inferior to others, or that man may suppress and subjugate his

neighbor for his own selfish interest and gain. But in Christ there is no distinction between bond and free, male and female, for all are one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28). Yes, Philemon may beforetime have owned Onesimus as a slave but now in Christ they were together His servants and brothers in the common bond of the Faith.

The effects of the transforming power of Christ will not therefore remain isolated in individuals alone but will inevitably pervade society as a whole. For social evils will be corrected wherever the transformation of men occurs. We see this from the fact that nowhere does this epistle condemn slavery per se, but the attitude which transformed men are to exhibit toward one another as made plain in this epistle condemned slavery and proved to be its death knell.

The Gospel alone in the same way is the answer to the evils present in society today. Men need to be transformed by the saving power of Christ before they will see that light cannot be conjoined to darkness or Christ to Belial. To teach men to be good for goodness' sake without Christ, or to legislate the abolition of evil and abuse apart from the orientation of the Gospel is futile. A man's ethics after all are the result of what he believes. And if he does not love God why should he love his neighbor? He who has little or no regard for God will have little or no consideration for his fellow-man though made in the image of God. Only the Gospel, hence, furnishes the basis for sound ethics as it brings to sinful man the message of reconciliation to God in Christ and obedience to God's laws for love's sake. Anything else is to put the cart before the horse, or forget the horse!

Furthermore, where the Gospel light has penetrated and the transforming power of Christ has wrought, there that faith in the Community of the faithful will communicate itself to others (verse 6). The basic answer to society's ills therefore is not reformation but regeneration, not legislation but transformation. May we hew to this mark as did the Apostle and rest confident that where the transforming power of Christ has wrought regeneration in the lives of individuals, so also the resultant constant application of the Gospel by them will permeate its good through-

out society as well. A little leaven, even though hidden in as much as three measures of meal, will nevertheless leaven the entire lump (Matt. 13:33).

Our relationship to Christ will be manifested by our relationships with others. Do you name the name of Christ? Then you will exhibit the honesty of Paul in regard to another's property. Do you call yourself a Christian? Then you will exhibit the duty of Onesimus in making restitution for wrongs against others whether God or man. Are you a follower of the Lord? Then your faith will express itself in love as did Philemon's, so as to go even beyond the expected (Matt. 5:39-41).

Christianity both individually and socially makes high demands upon its adherents. It must necessarily be so, for nothing less can properly exhibit the transforming power of Christ which must ever come to expression in the lives of those who name His Name.

President Attends Pre-Congress Service

President Eisenhower and Vice-President Nixon, with numerous members of Congress and the government, attended a special service of intercession and Communion at the National Presbyterian Church in Washington shortly before Congress convened.

This service has become an annual affair, and was conducted under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., the United Presbyterian Church, the National Council of Churches, etc. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Secretary of the Army Wilber Brucker, and several other members of the House and Senate who are ruling elders in their home Presbyterian churches, joined in the distribution of the elements in the Communion service.

Graham Crusade Finances

A final accounting of the finances of the Graham New York Crusade has been issued by an accounting firm. It shows total receipts of \$2,850,031 and total expenditures of \$2,632,413.

Of interest is the fact that \$67,618 of the surplus will be given to the Protestant Council of the City of New York for follow-up and additional evangelistic work.

The Presbyterian Guardian

The Year in Religion

Each December *Religious News Service* publishes a summary for the year which it calls "The Year In Religion." The summary attempts to evaluate various significant developments in the life of religious groups in this country and throughout the world. The account considers Protestants, Catholics and Jews. It is by no means written from a conservative viewpoint, nor is it capable of being described as objective and impartial. However, sections of it may be of interest as suggesting what a "news service" considers of interest in the field of religion. We quote selected paragraphs from the recent report which was prepared by Professor Winfred E. Garrison of the University of Houston, in Texas.

"The principal religious events of 1957 — at least in the Protestant area — can be grouped under evangelism, union movements, ecumenical conferences and actions and attitudes in relation to racial segregation and integration.

"The fact that church membership has had about its customary rate of increase (three per cent in this year's reports as compared with 2.8 last year), and that this is, as usual, a good deal more than the estimated 1.7 per cent increase in the population, may be viewed with a degree of gratification that is limited by knowledge that the margin of probable inaccuracy in the statistics is greater than the reported increase . . .

"Undoubtedly the most conspicuous and highly-publicized religious event of the year was the Billy Graham evangelistic campaign in New York. During a great part of the summer the huge auditorium of Madison Square Garden was practically filled at every service. Since the Gospels carefully record the number of those who ate of the loaves and fishes, it may be deemed that there is a justifying precedent for the managers of the New York campaign in reporting that the total attendance at the meetings was 1,941,200, and that the number of "decisions for Christ" was 56,526.

"A rally at Yankee Stadium brought a larger crowd than a World Series game because it filled the playing field as well as the bleachers. Estimates ranged from 75,000 to 200,000 for the jam that stopped traffic in Times Square while Mr. Graham spoke there.

"Stimulated perhaps by the events

in New York, the National Council of Churches has enlisted the services of some of the best Christian thinkers to study, and to guide the churches in studying, the "essential nature and task" of evangelism, with a view to developing an acceptable and defensible theological foundation for it before turning to the secondary question of "methods." During 1957 the United Church of Canada quietly conducted a National Evangelistic Mission which, late in the year, developed into a serious study of the Christian approach to the questions of family, community and economic life and international affairs.

"Paralleling the spectacular evangelistic efforts and many smaller ones that received only local publicity, the work of Christian education made steady progress. A meeting of 1,600 religious educators was held at Cincinnati under the auspices of the National Council's Division of Christian Education. There are now 6,000 employed directors of religious education in local churches — a profession scarcely known 20 or 25 years ago. It has been estimated that 1,000 churches are now looking for qualified persons to fill such positions.

"As it was said a year ago, so it can be said now with more emphasis and with fresh illustrations, the churches are leading their communities in the development of liberal attitudes and policies in regard to race relations. Of southern ministers, some have been heroic in facing adverse local sentiment and even violence, many have been courageous but moderately cautious, very few have been vehement supporters of the continuance of racial segregation on the old lines.

"The expressions of church conferences and conventions, in which laymen also are represented, have similarly leaned strongly to the liberal side. It cannot be doubted that the phrase, "All men are created equal," has in general more meaning for Christians than for citizens who do not see in it any religious significance.

"The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern) approved the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in schools and voted its disapproval of all forms of racial segregation. The Richmond (Va.) ministerial association condemned the rigid stand of their state's authorities against integrated schools. A large undenomina-

tional conference of southern religious leaders meeting at Nashville urged all Christians to let their Christian principles find application in specific attitudes and policies in relation to this vexed problem.

"A large number of Atlanta (Ga.) ministers issued a joint statement of the same general import. A sociological study of the sentiments of ministers in two border cities — Baltimore and Washington, D. C. — found "far more liberal racial attitudes" than had been expected. The Texas Council of Churches fought the ten segregation bills that were before the legislature and was influential in defeating eight of them. Oklahoma City's council of churches elected a Negro as its president. When Koinonia farm and church — an interracial community Christian enterprise in Georgia — was attacked with fire, dynamite and rifle shots, neighboring councils of white churches and the Georgia Council of Churches protested.

"Some items of news from the north also deserve mention. The Presbyterian U.S.A. General Assembly declared for "a non-segregated church in a non-segregated society." An all-white church in the Rochester (N. Y.) presbytery chose a Negro minister. Members of a Negro Episcopal church in Syracuse which had to be closed accepted an invitation to join a neighboring white church. In Chicago the First Presbyterian church and the Normal Park Baptist both have white and Negro co-pastors, beginning in the autumn of this year. In Minneapolis the great Hennepin Avenue Methodist church absorbed the membership of a Negro congregation whose building was swept away by a new highway development.

"Two notable unions of denominations were consummated in 1957. The union of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and the United Presbyterian Church was approved. On June 25, at Cleveland, Ohio, a uniting synod effected and impressively dramatized the merging of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the United Church of Christ.

"This new body of more than 2,000,000 members (and this by a rather accurate count) regards itself as the nucleus for a still larger united Church and holds the door open for other denominations which may wish to enter. The Disciples of Christ at

their October convention — hereafter to be called the "International Convention of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ)" — voiced a receptive attitude toward any overtures that might come from this new united church.

"The American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church will merge in 1960. Four national student organizations of as many denominations have a pending merger designed to reduce the sectarianism of religion on the college campus.

"The plan for a United Church of North India has been completed and now awaits action by the seven Protestant bodies which have been parties to the project. These include Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Disciples of Christ and Brethren. Like the basis for the Church of South India, it recognizes the validity of the present ministries of the participating churches and also accepts the "historic episcopate" as the basis for future ordinations. The reports of official conversations which have been going on for three years between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland are now being submitted to intensive study by the parties concerned and will doubtless be considered by the Lambeth Conference of 1958. Intercommunion rather than union is the immediate objective.

"Most notable among the general conferences of the year were the meetings of the World Council's central committee and some of its commissions at New Haven, Conn., in July, and the North American Faith and Order Conference at Oberlin, Ohio in September. The theme of the latter, "The Nature Of The Unity We Seek," was intensively studied by many regional groups during the summer.

"During the year Pope Pius XII issued three encyclical letters dealing with missions, materialism, radio, films and TV.

"Probably the most significant of these was "Mirana Prorsus" (Remarkable Inventions) dated Sept. 8, in which he instructed bishops all over the world to set up committees on films, radio and TV in their respective countries.

"Shortly after the encyclical the American hierarchy, holding its annual meeting in Washington, D. C., took steps to widen the work of the National Catholic Welfare Confer-

ence's Episcopal Committee on Motion Pictures to include the moral evaluation of radio and TV. The committee controls the National Legion of Decency organized 24 years ago to issue moral ratings of films shown in the U. S. The bishops set up a committee to study ways and means of also evaluating radio and TV programs . . .

"Churches in countries behind the Iron Curtain were still struggling to carry on their work in the face of Communist restrictions and anti-religious propaganda. In Hungary, after a brief period of freedom following the anti-Soviet abortive revolt, the Communist regime gradually, and with increasing determination, re-fastened its grip on the churches.

"A notable event in world Judaism was the decision to form a World Council of Conservative Synagogues. This action was taken in November by the biennial convention of the United Synagogue of America at Kiamesha Lake, N. Y. . . .

"The United Synagogue, a federation of Conservative congregations, also adopted unanimously a set of Standards for Synagogue Practice. The code is the first of its kind ever formulated by a national organization of synagogues."

The Church and The School

The Christmas season brought on another series of incidents in which some members of the community wanted the local schools to observe the season with features more or less

traditional from a Christian standpoint, while others opposed any such recognition.

In White Plains, N. Y. the State Supreme Court Judge was called on to rule whether a nativity "creche" could be erected on the lawn of the Ossining High School. Opponents of the idea claimed that the erection of the creche would violate the law through using a tax supported public school system to aid religious groups to propagate their faith. The Judge however held that the plaintiffs had not been damaged and had not contended that any effort would be made to foist on them the principles of a particular religion. He held that while it is necessary that there be separation of church and state, that does not require that the state be stripped of all religious sentiment. He refused to prohibit the erection of the creche. It was immediately set up, two days before Christmas, at a public ceremony attended by some 1,000 persons.

In Delaware Township, N. J. the Board of Education at first issued an order forbidding the presentation in public schools of pageants telling the nativity story. Then after ministerial associations and some parents had protested, the Board reversed itself. The Rev. Donald Coester, President of the Camden county ministerial association and pastor of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Camden, maintained that leaders of the three major faiths in the area had agreed that nativity plays were not religious services or exercises, but a part of the teaching of history by recalling an established historical fact.

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