

# *The Presbyterian*

## **GUARDIAN**

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# Letters From Aunt Polly

Written at sea while sailing over 18,000 feet of water

*Dear Young Friends:*

As you know, we are returning to Taiwan (Formosa) after a happy year in our native land. It has been good to see so many of you whom we have known, and we are thankful to have met many of you that we did not know before. If our plans work out the way they have been made, it will be at least five years until we see you again. That's a long time! So we are trying to keep in touch by letter from time to time. Besides, there are just lots of things we'd like to tell you that we didn't have time for in the short visits we had with most of you.

When we visited your churches we often showed slides. Maybe you will remember some of the slides of images worshipped by the Chinese people. There was one of a green jade Buddha with a little golden-colored Buddha down in front, to whom people are told to pray if they desire to become rich. And I am sure that you remember the ugly old Ma Tsu with all her ugly and mean-looking attendants who are worshipped especially by the Chinese who are natives of the island of Taiwan. She is their patron goddess. We told you how the people worship these images by burning firecrackers or candles or incense or prayer papers before them. Sometimes they cook meals of many kinds of good food (such a meal is called a feast) and set the food before the god.

There is one god that we haven't told you about, the kitchen god. He is one of four very special gods that are worshipped around the New Year time. To be exact, it is since King Wu ruled China, about 200 years after Jesus went back to heaven. During these many centuries the way of worshipping him has changed, I am sure, because he is a man-made god and men change their ideas very easily. But I will tell you how, in these present days, the Chinese generally worship the kitchen god.

Most Chinese homes have very few pieces of furniture in them. But you

may be sure that they always have a kitchen stove. When you visit a home if you see stuck upon the wall above the kitchen stove a picture of the kitchen god, you will know that the people in that home worship this god. They call him the Stove King, which is a very proper name for he spends most of the year sticking right there above the stove. They think that he is very busy all that time. It is very sad but true; they think that he watches all that the members of the family do all through the year. He notes all their virtues—good points—and all their vices—bad things about them. He is also thought to be a powerful god, for he decides whether that family will be

The Kitchen God



rich or poor, and just how rich or how poor. Worse yet, they believe that he decides just how long the members of the family are going to live.

On the 23rd day of the 12th moon (they use a lunar calendar) of each year the Stove King takes the notes he has been making all year on the vices and virtues of that family, and he goes straight up to the Celestial (Heavenly) Emperor. On that day the family all try to please their kitchen god in very special ways, so that he will be kind in the report he gives to the Celestial Emperor. A great feast of sacrificial meats, fruits and wine is

placed on the table beneath his picture. They buy a lot of make-believe money and put it there too. They make sweet meats to place there, making them very, very sticky. And why do they make them so sticky? So that their kitchen god will not be able to open his mouth to make his report when he gets to the Heavenly Emperor!

Then they fall down prostrate before the Stove King in worship. They shoot firecrackers to frighten away evil spirits. These evil spirits are always around to cause mischief and harm, and they might influence the god against them.

As the ceremony ends, the god's picture, which has been there all year, is torn from the wall and burned together with the money offerings that had been placed on the table. A toy horse is burned also to speed the Stove King on his way to the Celestial Empire. The little hearth cricket so common in your yards is often thought to be the god's horse, and many Chinese children would not dare harm one.

On the 30th day of the moon, they believe that the kitchen god comes back to live again with the family. When he returns, although he has been gone only a week, he finds that the family have gone out to the market and bought a new picture of him, which is already pasted on the wall where the picture which was burned had been. And a lot of good food has been set out on the table in front of it as a welcome back to the home. The next day will be the first day of the New Year, and the family will eat the food for their New Year's feast. As the days of the new year pass by it seems that most of the families forget all about the god there by the kitchen stove.

I think that they are much like many Americans, so far as forgetting goes. But let us not be like them. Remember that Jesus said, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve." Pray for your missionaries as they tell people of the one true God and of His Son Jesus Christ whom He sent as the Saviour. Good-bye now. We shall write you again soon. Mr. Gaffin sends his love too.

*Your Aunt Polly*

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# Do You Know the Love of Christ ?

By LESLIE W. SLOAT

**D**o you know the love of Christ? What does it mean to know the love of Christ? And if, as Paul says, the love of Christ surpasses knowledge, how can you know it?

This much is certain. You can never know the love of Christ except as God makes you able to know it. So it is that Paul prays, that God according to the riches of His glory would work in the hearts and lives of Christian people, so that they might "be able with all the saints to comprehend the length and breadth and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God." Surely, to know the love of Christ in any real sense is indeed to be filled with all the fullness of God. And only God can accomplish this in your life, or in mine.

It is also clear that Paul is here talking about something more than intellectual knowledge—the possession of information. He is talking also about experimental knowledge—the knowledge that comes through experience. We never know anything of the love of Christ, until we know it in our experience—until we sense and feel what it means to be loved by Christ, and to enjoy the benefits of His love. Yet so corrupted are our senses and our feelings, that we need to receive accurate instruction, lest we fail to know the love of Christ aright, and so worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator. Consequently it is necessary even in such a matter as this that we turn to the teaching of God's own Word, and seek to understand from it what the love of Christ is, that in turn we may recognize and appreciate that love when it comes to bear on our own lives.

So first I would have you think of the love of Christ as it is seen in the infinite majesty of His Person. Who is it who manifests this love toward the children of men? It is one no less than the very Son of God Himself—the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the same in substance and equal in power and glory with the

Father and the Spirit. John opens his Gospel by saying of Christ, that He was in the beginning with the Father, and that all things were made by Him and without Him nothing was made of all that was made. Christ Himself could quietly say to the Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am." He could as simply pray to the Father, "Restore unto me the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Paul in another place says, that Christ was in the very form of God. Everything that God was, He was. And when Jesus began His public ministry at the baptism, there came the voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, on whom I have set my pleasure."

## Love Surpassing Knowledge

Before the majesty of the sovereign, absolute God we can only bow in adoration and praise. There is nothing we can say or do that can add one iota to His perfections. He doeth according to His pleasure in heaven above and in the earth beneath. He is not subject to the beck and call of any. Yet it is this same God, God of majesty and glory, in the Person of the Son, of whose love Paul speaks. Majestic though He is, the Son of God loves. Does not that fact in itself surpass knowledge? Yet it is what Paul would have us know.

But we are such puny individuals, such petty people, so small and mean and insignificant. We gaze upon the universe. He made it all. We count the innumerable stars, and everyone has its place by His decree. The laws by which the sun and moon and stars and planets—and atoms and ions and electrons move are His ordinances. In Him also we live and move and have our being. Can He be concerned in terms of love with the likes of us?

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*It is indeed a pleasure to welcome back to these pages the former editor of the PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, the Rev. Leslie W. Sloat, with this article that is so rewarding in directing us to the answer to its soul-searching question.*

Yes, says Paul, just that is the unbelievable truth. Christ loves us, with a love that surpasses knowledge.

He who loves us is infinite and perfect in His holiness, and wisdom and power. In Him there is nothing that defiles, nothing that corrupts, nothing that shames. There is never a failure, never foolishness. None can stay His hand; He is perfection, for perfection itself receives its name and nature from Him. Yet for all this majesty and glory of His Person and His power, He loves—loves us. Can we understand it? Can we even begin to know it? Yet He Himself in His Word tells us this is true.

But what is love? Can you define it? We talk about it so much, but does the word have any meaning? Can we say, for example, that it signifies an outreaching and outgoing of the one who loves to the one who is loved, an attitude which involves the whole soul and strength and mind. But if this be the case, if love involves self-abnegation in the interests of the well-being of the object, can we possibly attribute love to God, or to the Son of God? Yes, even in those terms we can do nothing less, for the very love of God was manifest in this that He gave His Son; and the very love of Christ lay in this, that He came to us, and gave Himself up for us.

Consider then in the second place, the love of Christ as seen in the condescension it involved for Him. And first of all consider the objects of His love. Were they worthy of that love? Did they return that love which was showed to them?

## Love's Condescension

Think back if you will to the gates of paradise, to the garden of Eden, where first God placed the perfect creature that had issued from His hand. And recall if you will what happened there: how God gave to our first parents every thing that His perfect wisdom and power and love could provide, so that their home was literally a paradise on earth. Here was indeed everything heart could wish. Yet, in a mystery that we cannot un-

derstand, our very first parents chose to do the one thing in all paradise God had forbidden them, and brought a curse on His good earth—sin and shame and death. Did He brush them aside then and make a new start? Not at all. Instead into that very garden where they had broken His law and cursed His creation, God Himself comes seeking them, and when He finds them He himself slays one of His own other creatures, to provide a covering for their shame.

And so we could go down through history and point out how that God's concern, His love for His people was ever rejected, rebuffed, and despised by them. They preferred the ways of sin to His way, yet His love never faltered. And when finally the Son came, we read that "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." The ancient prophet cries out in the name of God, "I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." Yet immediately we hear the voice of love speaking—"Come, now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

The perfect Son of God loved, and loves, a sinful and unworthy people—even you and me. Can we know or understand that love?

But let us look further at it. As Paul says in another place, though Christ was in the form of God, yet he thought not the being on an equality with God a thing to which He should cling, but made himself of no reputation, taking on Himself the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Is it possible for you to think of the Son of God being found clothed in the flesh of His own creatures? Yet that is what was true. He took not on Him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. He was made in all points like as we are, yet without sin. You see him in the home in Nazareth. He is Son of God. See Him working in the carpenter shop. He is Son of

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**For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.**

**Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.**

**—Ephesians 3:14-21**

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God, doing this also out of love for His unworthy people. See Him tired on the road, weary as he sits by the well, surrounded by publicans and sinners but despised by the good people of the land—all this because of His love for us, and His determination to accomplish that for which He had come into the world, even the salvation of His people.

#### **Love's Suffering**

But you have seen nothing yet. Look now at Herod's palace. Watch as the king hearkens to the people and frees a murderer, but hands the Christ—the Son of God—over to the soldiers to be killed. Feel—if you have any feeling—as they slam that crown of thorns down on His head, as they smite Him with reeds and rods, as they mock Him and spit on Him. He is Son of God. Think of this. Then go on the road as they lead Him out, bearing His own cross till its very weight crushes Him. Watch as they bring Him to death hill, feel if there is any feeling in you as they pound the nails through His hands and His feet: He is Son of God, and He endures this, for He loves—loves sinners, loves you and me—and needs must bear our sins in His own body

on that tree. And what does it mean to Him? It means to Him that even the Son of God at the last cries out: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Can you know that? Only so, do you know the love of Christ—which passes knowledge.

He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from Him. He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Yet the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed. For the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Can you understand this? You must, to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge. For only as you see the condescension, the humiliation, the suffering, the death it involved for Him, the Son of God, can you or will you ever know His love for you.

But if His love for us meant His own humiliation and suffering, what has it meant for us? This also we must know, if we would know His love. It has indeed meant much. It has meant everything. For though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.

#### **Love's Riches of Grace**

And what are these riches? First indeed, the forgiveness of our sins. He bare our sins in His own body on the tree. And in Him we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. We do not have this by something we do—by some effort of ours to deserve forgiveness—not at all. We have the forgiveness of sins simply by receiving it at His hand. It is a free gift and all we need is to receive it as He offers it to us. For as the wages of sin is death, so the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus came not into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. We are condemned already. Our sins burden us down. We know how miserable we are as we think of our guilt, and the times without number we have broken God's law. But Jesus came to save. He shed His own blood to cleanse and free us from that accursed load. And we have but to take the gift freely offered, to forsake our selves and accept what He gives, and it is in that moment ours, completely ours. And in that moment we are free from the guilt and the power

of sin, our sin. We are free! Here too, is the love of Christ.

Not only are we free from the guilt and power of sin, but we are received as members of the family of God, and the very righteousness of Christ Himself—that perfect majestic holiness which is the righteousness of God—that is set to our account and God views us as though we were actually clothed over with Christ, and so He sees us in Christ His beloved Son.

And He who has saved us and forgiven our sins and received us into the family of God is also our constant companion and friend. He even calls us His brethren. And He prays for us, and watches over us, and hears us when we pray, and helps and strengthens us when we are in trouble or sickness or heartache. And this too is His love for us, this too we must know if we are to know His love.

And what is the end of it all? Eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him. But we do get some glimpses. In His Word he pictures to us the glory of the church triumphant, the glory of the heavenly Jerusalem, the future paradise of God which is better than the past one was: the city that hath no need for the sun or the moon to give it light, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof, and they shall dwell with their people—with us, whom Christ has redeemed, and loved, and for whom He prays, "I will, Father, that they may be with me where I am, that they may see my glory, which I had with thee before the world was." When He finished His work here, He went to prepare a place for us, that where He is, there we may be also. This too is His love for us. This too we must know and understand, if we are to know the love of Christ—which passes knowledge.

### Love Known and Experienced

You see, to know the love of Christ, we must know *about* the love of Christ. And we come to know about it, as we learn what He tells us about it in His Word. There alone do we learn who it is that loves us. There alone do we come to see what that love of His cost Him, in humiliation, suffering, and shame. There alone do we learn the truth of what that love means to us, in our forgiveness, present peace of mind and joy in the Holy

Spirit, and in our future blessing as members of the kingdom of glory.

We have to know *about* all these things to know the love of Christ. But even when we know about all these things, we still don't *know* the love of Christ. We don't know that love, until we stop loving ourselves, and accept the gifts He so freely offers. And this means for us simply trust—just accepting His Word as true, and putting our lives, past, present and future in His gracious hand. Even though our word of faith be weak as was that of the disciple who said, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief," yet our gracious Saviour in His love for His people has declared firmly and finally, "He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

So now it is done. Now we have put our trust in Jesus Christ. He has fulfilled His promises. He has borne our sins in His own body. In Him we have redemption through His blood. And being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Now—in a measure, weakly, yet truly—we know the love of Christ as a fact of experience. It is true of us—of each of us individually—as Paul also said of himself: "No longer do I live, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

### Our Response to Such Love

What then is our response to His love? Can it be any less, than that we love Him? Can it be any less than that we desire to be found well pleasing in His sight and presence? Is there any greater motive to holiness in this life, than to know as a reality of our experience the love of Christ for us? And is there any greater motive to service for Him, than this, also? Should not that mind which was in Christ, when He became obedient even unto the death of the cross, be also in us, that we shall likewise be obedient to His call, as it comes to us through His Word? Should it not be our desire that our lives in their totality—in thought and feeling as well as in will—should praise Him every day He keeps us in this world?

My friends, do you know the love of Christ? Do you even begin to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge? With Paul I pray, it may be so for both you, and me.

## Guidance

By G. I. WILLIAMSON

"How can I know the will of God for my life?" Surely this is a question that concerns every true believer. For what can concern the Christian so much as to know and do that which is pleasing in God's sight?

It should be evident, to begin with, that the will of God cannot be known unless God makes it known. It must be equally clear that God's will can be known only to the extent that He determines to make it known. For this reason the Scriptures state: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29). And from such scriptural data it has been the practice of Christians to make a clear distinction between two aspects of the will of God. One aspect of the will of God is called God's "preceptive" will. That is, the will of God as it is set down in precepts which direct men as to His moral good pleasure. The other aspect is called His "decretive" will. That is, the will of God as it remains undisclosed to man, and thus not meant to be a rule for man to follow.

Now in a sense everything that happens is "the will of God." That is, God has actually predestined everything—yes, even the acts of Satan, and sinful men. Many of us can look back and see that even our past life of sin and godlessness was a part of God's plan. We can see how God now uses that past evil to humble us, and make us praise His grace. Yes, God (by His decretive will) wills evil to be permitted that good may come. But God himself never *does* evil, not even that good may come. Nor does God *approve* of the evil itself, even though He is able to bring good out of it. God never approves evil, and therefore His "preceptive will" (His revealed will, contained in the precepts of Scripture) alone can be regarded as the rule for His moral creatures who are to reflect Him as images.

Here then, is the supremely important point: the one and only source of guidance for the Christian, is the

revealed will of God which is entirely contained in the Holy Scriptures. There is nothing wanting in sacred Scripture: it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. And by a right use of Scripture alone, the man of God will be perfectly and thoroughly furnished for all good works.

### Guidance by The Spirit Through the Word

We are without hesitation, then, as we assert that the only guidance that there is for the Christian is the guidance provided for him by the Holy Spirit of God speaking in the Scriptures. Now to be sure, the Christian who seeks guidance from the Holy Spirit, must also consider his peculiar circumstances. And in a particular action we must consider not only the action in itself, but also the circumstances under which it would be done, and the purpose of our heart in that action. And without a doubt our own powers of reason, emotion and will are factors involved in the guidance process. It is, in other words, a complex process. And assuredly there is no one who can trace out the sovereign operations of the Holy Spirit as He applies within that process His own energy which gives efficacy to His Word. In this way of such profound mystery the Spirit of God makes His Word's principles operative in the formation of our decisions.

But it is just here that some have erred. For some speak of the decision itself as the Holy Spirit's. It is as if the decision to which the Spirit leads us were as much His decision as ours, so that when I formulate my decision: "I will do thus and so," it is attested to by the Holy Spirit, just as He attests to the word of Scripture.

It is our conviction that the Holy Spirit never assures us that our decisions are right except by convincing us and confirming us in that decision by the precepts of Scripture made efficacious to this end by Him. It might seem to some that the Holy Spirit would, 1) lead us to a right decision by enlightening our minds to understand the Scriptures as they apply to us in our circumstances, and then 2) give a special testimony of the Spirit apart from the Word to confirm this decision. No: both are accomplished by Him *through the Word*.

## Lines from an Old Book

### Newton on Opposition and Popularity

After pointing out that opposition to the work of the Christian may bring bitterness of spirit, John Newton uses his penetrating insight to expose a more subtle danger springing from the pride of our hearts: "Again, opposition will hurt you, if it should give you an idea of your own importance, and lead you to dwell with a secret self-approbation upon your own faithfulness and courage in such circumstances. If you are able to stand your ground uninfluenced either by the favor or the fear of men, you have reason to give glory to God; but remember, that you cannot thus stand an hour, unless He upholds you. It shows a strong turn of mind, when we are very ready to speak of our trials and difficulties of this kind, and of our address and resolution in encountering them. A natural stiffness of spirit, with a desire to have self taken notice of, may make a man willing to endure those kind of hardships, though he has but little grace in exercise; but the Christian fortitude, from a consciousness that we speak the truths of God, and are supported by His power is a very different thing."

Turning from opposition to popularity he writes: "If opposition has hurt many, popularity has wounded more. When you have an attentive congregation hanging upon your words; when you hear the well-meant, but often injudicious commendations of those to whom the Lord shall make you useful; when you shall find, upon an intimation of your preaching in a strange place, people thronging from all parts to hear you (something we perhaps may little fear!), how will your heart feel? It is easy for me to advise you to be humble; but while human nature remains in its present state, there will be almost the same connection between popularity and pride, as between fire and gunpowder; they cannot meet without an explosion, at least, not unless the gunpowder is kept very damp. So unless the Lord is constantly moistening our hearts by the influence of His Spirit, popularity will soon set us in a blaze.

Compiled by LIONEL F. S. BROWN  
From *Works of John Newton*, Vol. I.  
Carter & Sons, N. Y. 1860. Pp. 121-122.

"Sometimes, if His ministers are not watchful against the first impressions of pride, He permits it to gather strength; and then it is but a small thing, that a few of their admirers may think them more than men in the pulpit, if they are not left to commit such mistakes when out of it, as the weakest of the flock can discover and pity. And this will certainly be the case, while pride and self-sufficiency have the ascendancy."

Newton's last warning is against the mistaking of the ready exercise of gifts for the exercise of grace. "The minister," he says, "may be assisted in public for the sake of his hearers; and there is something in the nature of our public work, when surrounded by a concourse of people, that is suited to draw forth the exertion of our abilities, and to engage our attention in the outward services, when the frame of the heart may be far from being right in the sight of God."

He writes that to counteract this God in His wisdom will appoint distressing exercises to awaken us to a due sense of our own unworthiness, and to convince us that our ability, our acceptance, and our usefulness depend upon a power beyond our own. This is followed by a description of the amazing disparity that exists at times between the frame of our spirit in public, and then in private when the eyes of men are not upon us, such as will make us almost ready to conclude that we are no better than hypocrites, mere stage-players who derive all their pathos from the sight of the audience.

"At other times," he concludes, "you will find such a total emptiness and indisposition of mind, that former seasons of liberty in preaching will appear to you like the remembrance of a dream, and you will hardly be able to persuade yourself you shall ever be capable of preaching again; the Scriptures will appear to you like a sealed book, and no text or subject afford any light or opening to determine your choice; and this perplexity may not only seize you in the study,

(See *Newton on Popularity* p. 248)

# Christians in the Armed Services — and Their Problems

By ARTHUR B. SPOONER

In an article entitled "Why Army Churchgoing Lags" (*Christianity Today*, Volume III, Number 21, July 20, 1959), Chaplain Tracy Early has put his finger on several of the real causes for Protestant defection in the Armed Forces environment. First, he notes, Protestants have never convinced their young men that regular public worship is important. In the second place, he feels that "the average Protestant regards his church life as a social affair rather than as an opportunity for confronting God." Finally he points out that in general Protestants are all too likely to give their primary loyalty to a particular local church rather than to Christ.

In a unit with 80 to 100 men of all grades, the Protestant service does well to have eight to twelve men in regular attendance. Ten per cent is a figure slightly above average.

Now all that Chaplain Early says about stateside churchgoing habits is true, and families should take earnest heed of this. Christians everywhere need to seek prayerfully an increase of the assembling together of the saints in regular and Spirit-filled worship. There are, however, several additional factors that enter in to make the situation a bit more complex than might appear from any one brief article.

We must also remember these things. The men in service are away from home. These 'men' are very young. There is an attitude of rebellion against service regimentation. There exist many strong temptations, especially overseas. Liquor is both cheap and plentiful. Finally, but not the least important, there is the matter of the quality of the chaplains, and the limited amount of work even the best chaplain can do.

The men are away from home. Rootless. Restless, and on their own for maybe the first time in their lives. Unsupported by the moral suasions of whatever home and community life they were accustomed to, they soon reflect, as Chaplain Early says, the depth of their spiritual growth and strength. In some cases, even, the change may be salutary, American family life being what it is these days. In most

cases, the separation presents danger. The Armed Service is no Sunday School! Loneliness, the inability to choose their own companions (generally true), competition of other standards, fear of being the "odd duck"—all these play their part in the average young man's spiritual life.

## Exceptions to the Rule

In each of three units with which I am acquainted, and sometimes serve, there are about two men that seem very different. These six men are not ashamed to kneel by their cots to pray; they read their Bibles and witness regularly; needless to say, they are found in worship service at every opportunity. One man is a Navy Chief Storekeeper, two others are Master Sergeants, and the other three have lower specialist's and private's ratings. Nothing extraordinary except their faith and perseverance. It can be done—even away from home. One man not only witnesses daily to his mates, but has begun three Bible classes, two among the native trainees on the same base. In another outfit, I recall one warm evening eating ice cream one of the men had made, holding a religious discussion with two men in the mess hall until late at night—and we had the real attention of the other men who neither mocked nor derided, nor turned on the radio. They listened, they were interested. It can be done!

The fellows are, for the most part, very young. I do not know the statistics, but there is a broad cross-section of late teen-age and early-twenty-year-old men. Even back home, pastors know this to be a difficult age-area to crack. It is the 'wild oats' time of many a man's life, it is the break-away point, the time of venturing out on the ice of the world's great surface. Even under the persuasive pressures of church and family, many men defect from the church at this age, and only return with the newly realized responsibilities of their own families. Some never come back.

The rebellion against regimentation is more difficult to define, but relatively easy to see. No man likes to be just a number, a little wheel in a myriad of other wheels in the military

machine. The impersonalization of Army life takes its toll in attitudes of indifference and laissez-faire. "Don't stick your neck out—they'll paint it green!"

One phenomenon is that a man sometimes tends thus to withdraw into the very anonymity against which his nature rebels, unless he has a genuine, early-planted faith coupled with good doctrinal training. I am not sure, but I think sometimes he may avoid worship simply because it is the one thing his superiors cannot force him to do!

In one section, where the Protestant chapel of the native Navy men is heavily attended, the usual 10% of U. S. men is the rule at their own Protestant service. Any other Sunday action seems to be preferred. But this *may* have a deeper reason than mere rebellion. The native chapel has services *every* Lord's Day, with a resident chaplain, music director, choir and organ—a full staff that holds mid-week Bible study and prayer meeting as well. The U. S. unit has a missionary come just once a month—the nearest Chaplain is at the big Area Command center over two rough-riding hours away. The missionary would like to come more often, but the pressure of his own responsibilities forbids it. (Yet, even here, the Catholic Chaplain, with a smaller unit to serve, manages to serve three or four men every week with confession, mass, and friendly contact.)

## Temptations Bold and Subtle

The immoral influences on a serviceman are, in turn, bold and subtle. They are all dangerously persuasive. He is a *man*. He is free! Because of economic differences between the native and the G.I., the G.I. is a rich man, a benefactor from whose hand can flow money and material blessings. And low ethical standards open up conduct to the lowest enlisted man, conduct that he can only dream about at home. Our G.I.-foreign baby rate is fairly stable, but it is remaining high. On a pro-rata basis, it may prove to be even higher than during war-time.

The many G.I. marriages are at best arranged with girls of completely different culture, and the lowest of back-

grounds is the well from which these wives are drawn, in most cases. So many boys coming to our house say, "How can I meet a *decent* native girl?" Gambling and prostitution will probably always plague the Armed Forces. But when men are not under battle conditions, when they train and wait, wait and train, and just plain wait—there is a toll in morals, and a pull at the very best of men. Army men not only need to be *men*, they must be strong Christians to survive.

I have placed liquor on a separate basis for what I consider good reason. In the Armed Forces, at all levels, beer or hard liquors are both cheap and always available. Yes, there is always plenty of coffee, but the great supply of stronger drinks makes easy the temptation to excessive use. The stuff leaks out into native shops in such great quantities that the supply *has* to exceed the G.I. demand! Case-lot sales generally are open five days a week. In one spot, however, the open doors of the case-lot store are just opposite the closed doors of the Chapel, on a Sunday afternoon. Here one Sunday I saw a G.I. and his wife each get one case beer and one case coke from the case-lot store. They sat for awhile, toying with a sandwich, and then went back for a second helping by the case. It is more than available, it is plentiful, and it is almost free. Liquor, like cigarettes and all P.X. items, are tax-free and the huge transportation costs are all paid by the Army.

### Problems of the Chaplain

Finally, I must be somewhat brief with a subject that would indeed make for a separate discussion and perhaps should be treated with more consideration than I can give it here. I do pray that some of my good friends in the chaplaincy will forgive me for this brevity, which does not do justice to the fine labors of many hard-working, Christ-honoring men.

But such men are not the rule; rather they seem to be the exception.

The Chaplain is, by the very nature of his job, an Army man or a Navy man, or whatever. This is *first*. Then he is an officer. He has rank, and he has priority, and he walks and talks with officers. To get out of such a web demands a superhuman dedication to the calling of the Gospel.

***"The true shepherd, in any situation, does not wait for the sheep to come to him."***

*The writer of this article has been in Korea for several years. He served in the D.A.C. field, as maintenance engineer in power plant work, and then under the State Department ECA program. Later, after completing his training at Westminster Theological Seminary, he returned as a missionary of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He has served as civilian chaplain on the DMZ, and with local units near Pusan, assisting the Chaplain in his widespread and difficult job of serving a "waiting" army.*

Many never succeed at this in all their life's service in the Armed Forces.

The best of Chaplains is apt to be bogged down with administrative details: with routine visits, inspections, audits, dedications, etc. He cannot always choose his most important helper, the Chaplain's Assistant. Not only is the Chaplain regularly rotated (so that he hardly gets to know an area before he is sent elsewhere), but his men are rotated all about him: assistants, superiors—and his very congregation itself!

But even admitting all these as handicaps, most Chaplains fail to make the most of their opportunities. Perhaps it is because fundamentally they fail to see the absolute priority of their allegiance to Christ but subjugate it to the yoke of military activity and military attitude.

The Chaplain often is bogged down with fixed and sometimes elaborate chapels. He is anchored by pews, drapes, choir, electric organ, and careful inventories of all that is in his care.

### Shepherds of Souls

He needs large areas of his time free to circulate among enlisted men and officers alike—often, and with a genuine, friendly interest. The true shepherd, in any situation, does not wait for the sheep to come to him; he knows the sheeply nature of sheep, and out he goes after the ones for whom the Great Good Shepherd has made him responsible.

When the Chaplain recognizes the priority of the Great Command, and the secondary value of his military command, great things will happen—to him, and to those whom he is called to serve.

The Gospel *can* be preached in the Armed Services, of course. I remember one Chaplain who was first stationed in downtown Tokyo. His services were always well-attended. He preached in the heat of the day in the heart of the great bombed-out city. He was moved to the suburbs. He was transferred to the Base Chapel in a port city in Korea, and eventually to an evacuation hospital in that same city. Still the services were crowded, and his hearers heard the Gospel.

Where the Gospel is preached in simplicity and with conviction, in the power of the Holy Spirit, by a man who lives out his faith daily, and who sees men as *men*, men in need of the only Saviour—he will always have a harvest to reap. Not static, meaningless statistics, not just divine worship attendants, but men who are drawn by the Gospel of God's grace in Christ, and by the zeal and love and concern of him who so preaches.

If we are going to send men into the chaplaincy, let our denominations send their very best available men into this service: their best preachers, their best Bible scholars, men who believe the Bible to be the very Word of God, and above all, their best soul-winners. Then you will see a difference, believe me!

### Newton on Popularity

*(continued from page 246)*

but accompany you to the pulpit.

"If you are enabled at sometimes to speak to the people with power, and to resemble Samson, when, in the greatness of his strength, he bore away the gates of the city, you will, perhaps at others, appear before them like Samson when his locks were shorn, and he stood in fetters. So that you need not tell the people you have no sufficiency in yourself; for they will readily perceive it without your information. These things are hard to bear; yet successful popularity is not to be preserved upon easier terms; and if they are but sanctified to hide pride from you, you will have reason to number them amongst your choicest mercies. May the Lord make you wise and watchful! That He may be the light of your eye, the strength of your arm, and the joy of your heart."

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# The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

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## Westminster Seminary

An event that has occurred now for thirty-one consecutive autumns passed almost unnoticed in mid-September, save for the two hundred or so who were present, and perhaps a few hundred others across the country who at least knew about it. None of the radio networks sought on-the-spot interviews, nor did television, preoccupied with the visit of the chairman of the Soviet council of ministers, make any effort to send a cameraman to cover this event which concerned a completely different type of ministry.

We refer, of course, to the opening of another academic year at Westminster Theological Seminary. Attracting no headlines, probably rating not even a paragraph on an inside page of your newspaper, it was yet an event of no little significance. To the multitudes it may seem that the comings and goings of statesmen, what they say and decide and do, are the big things in the making of current history. Certainly it is true that history is thus being made, and we recognize and may remind ourselves that all these happenings are under the sovereign rule of our God.

We know that God is carrying out His purposes in all the affairs of men, whether they are aware of it or not. But let us also remember that these things are not an end in themselves. It is not within the kingdoms of this world that the ultimate issues are to be decided. No, we make bold to suggest that the really important news is to be found elsewhere, in another realm, the realm of the kingdom of God.

Unknown, ignored or forgotten by the world, nevertheless it is to the sphere of God's kingdom that we must look for matters of lasting significance. Here men are concerned with the eternal, not the temporal destiny of their fellow men. Here the church of Jesus Christ manifests itself upon earth. Here the great commission of our risen Savior is being fulfilled. Here the warfare against Satan and his hosts must wax ever hot, and the Christian who knows the wiles of the foe contemplates no plan for disarmament.

And in this realm of the kingdom of God we dare assert that Westminster Seminary occupies a unique and strategic place. This is said not in boastfulness, but in gratitude. This is true not because its faculty are renowned in the wisdom of this world, but because they are steeped in the knowledge of the Word of God. They are not engaged in the frustrating business of trying to accommodate their thinking to the changing ideas, moods, or whims of modern science or psychology or religious notions, but are rather devoted to setting forth that grand system of truth found in the Scriptures. They make no pretense of lecturing or teaching on the basis of their own authority (although recognized as authorities in their respective fields), but whole-heartedly acknowledge the supreme authority of the infallible Word of God.

Although Orthodox Presbyterians may be the largest single denominational group, they number not over a quarter of the student body, which includes twenty or more denominations. The Seminary, moreover, is independent ecclesiastically and continues to attract men from many churches, men who appreciate its steadfast stand for orthodox Christianity, the faith of the apostolic age, the faith of the Reformation, the consistent Biblical faith of the Westminster Standards. The Seminary has achieved a growing respect in many foreign lands as a bulwark in the defense of the true faith against the devious and clamoring voices of doubt and unbelief and heresy of our day. A half-dozen lands outside North America are represented in the present student body.

Far from being obscurantist or clinging to the past just because it is ancient, the institution is ever ready to publish its distinctive witness and

seek to give an answer for its allegiance to the gospel. It is singularly aware of the issues of the day in the church, and its faculty members have refused to remain aloof from making their convictions known and from acting thereupon. They are sought after as writers and speakers throughout the world. It is our belief that graduates of Westminster Seminary are generally far more abreast of the thought of opposing religious viewpoints, whether of the older or the newer modernism, than are the adherents of such contrary views when it comes to familiarity with scholarly exposition and defense of the orthodox Reformed faith at its best, as presented by the faculty of Westminster, for example.

We repeat, then, that the beginning of another year for this school is an event worth noting. Fortunate indeed are the eighty or more students who in God's gracious providence are privileged to spend this year of preparation for the service of Christ at this Seminary. They are marked men in more ways than one. You will do well to remember them in prayer that they may derive rich benefit from their diligent searching of the Scriptures during the school year. Pray also that faculty and students alike may be kept from those subtle and even fiery darts which Satan the adversary would attempt to hurl in particular against these who most desire to honor their Lord.

May that same merciful God who raised up this institution, whose doors opened for the first time in September of 1929, be pleased to grant a continuance of His favor, without which there can be neither blessing nor progress. May the God of all grace give to both faculty and students a sense of humble reliance upon that grace, hearts that are submissive to His Word which is truth, and a love for the Savior issuing in a godly walk according to that Word, to the end that God may be glorified in the proclamation of the gospel of His beloved Son.

R. E. N.

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"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

—Jeremiah 6:16

Religion and politics were strangely mixed at Connie Mack Stadium in Philadelphia on September 11 when the American Council of Christian Churches and Refugee Groups from Hungary and the Ukraine sponsored the first of a series of "Freedom Rallies" to give dissent to Nikita S. Khrushchev's visit to the United States. Only one thousand persons attended the rally and these were gathered around home-plate in the 33,000 seat "Phillies" ball-park.

Upon entering the stadium, Ukrainians offered leaflets bearing a grotesque and bloody cartoon of Mr. Khrushchev with axe and whip in hand and the skulls of his victims at his feet. Anti-Khrushchev "gimmicks" were available to all free of charge. Lapel pins carried the slogan "We serve Christ, not Marx" and little envelopes containing a sliding device depicted the Soviet leader first as a saint complete with halo and a dove of peace upon his shoulder, and then as the tab is pulled, revealed him with a revolver in one hand and a dead bird in the other.

The meeting was led by Dr. Carl McIntire. Following prayer and the National Anthem, banners reading "Khrushchev-Hangman of Ukraine" and "Butcher of Budapest" were paraded past the standing and silent crowd by marching refugees. Many of those present had personally learned to fear this man who in 1938 was appointed Communist chief of the Ukraine and who is said to have directed the murder of 400,000 men, women and children in that single year.

Participating in the rally were Dr. Clyde J. Kennedy, President of the American Council of Christian Churches; Hon. Glandislaus Konkoly, President of the American Hungarian Federation of Philadelphia; Capt. Wayne Montgomery, U.S.M.C. Ret., Lima, Montana; Dr. Walter Gallen, President of Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, Phila. Chapter; Dr. Kenneth R. Kinney, Pastor, First Baptist Church of Johnson City, N. Y.; and Mr. Ignatius Billinsky from the staff of *America*, a Ukrainian Catholic daily newspaper.

The speakers contended that to bring Mr. Khrushchev to the United States was a dreadful wrong. Our deference to him, it was claimed, will enhance him as a person in the minds

## I Attended An Anti-Khrushchev Rally

By CARL J. REITSMA

of the people of our country and result in a softening of United States policy toward the Soviet Union. It was pointed out that our President's invitation to Mr. Khrushchev amounts to saying that the Soviet Premier and his government are essentially worth talking to, reliable and honest. It is upon the basis of such underlying approval that the visiting dignitary is honored by official greetings, his flag saluted and national anthem respected. Such elementary trust, however, cannot be granted Mr. Khrushchev whose record is known. To extend the tokens of honor to him is hypocrisy and the effect will be to confuse and weaken the basic resistance of the American people to Communism.

In my judgment this is a good case against Khrushchev and we are indebted to the American Council, the 20th Century Reformation Hour and to Dr. McIntire for objecting to the invitation and for warning the American people against the godless character of the Communist State which is a menace to freedom everywhere. We may be glad that someone spoke out against his coming.

And yet, we cannot be pleased with the kind of opposition provided by the American Council's anti-communist crusade, and obviously Christians in the Philadelphia area do not seem to be impressed with it. It is sheer nonsense to suggest that the 32,000 who failed to show up at Connie Mack Stadium are pro-communist, or indifferent to Communism. This was an embarrassing defeat for the American Council, and it is to be hoped that the Council will radically alter its approach to the problems of the Church and the World and gain the respect of Christians throughout our nation.

By way of evaluation of the Rally there are the following points to be made. First, one wonders what possessed the leaders of the American Council to rent a stadium so large at a fee of \$1500 with total expenses running to \$5,000. This was either a costly blunder in calculation or a carnal publicity stunt unworthy of a

Christian. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

### Religion on a Side-Track

Second, the appeal of the meeting was indeed carnal. The crimes of Mr. Khrushchev were certainly exposed, but as we listened, our hearts were not led to bleed for him and the millions in Russia today dying without Christ. The spirit of the meeting was, "Down with Khrushchev!" It was a hard, cold, and lifeless meeting with emphasis upon Democracy rather than the Gospel, upon Survival rather than Salvation, upon Goodness rather than God. At one point I thought I was listening to the Social Gospel. Does it really matter if one says "The Rights of the State" as the Russians do, or "The Rights of Man" as Americans do, if one fails to say "The Rights of God" as only Christians can do? When Christians sponsor a meeting of this kind the issues must go deeper than Democracy or Communism. The basic question is, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" It isn't enough to be an anti-communist. There will be many of them in hell. Like the Crusades of old, the Twentieth Century Reformation Movement is religion on a side-track. It is a dangerous preoccupation of religion with politics. It is developing a fixed vocabulary and riding its hobbies with the result that the simple Christian requirement of faith in Christ is being obscured.

Third, I know that there were many who returned home after the meeting confirmed in their hatred of Communism but still far from the Kingdom of God. The first indication that the meeting was not under complete Christian sponsorship came when a protest parade was announced for Sunday afternoon. Then, as I scanned literature in my hands, I read to my surprise, "Ask your parish priest to toll the bells and say prayers for the countless millions . . ." And then this statement full of proud self-reliance, "But Khrushchev is afraid of war! The United States is much

stronger than the Soviet Union, riddled with internal strife, can ever be!"

Upon investigation, I learned that a large percentage of those in attendance as well as at least three of the speakers were Roman Catholic or Greek Orthodox. The refugee groups from the Ukraine and Hungary are predominantly Catholic. Four of their priests were present with them. In spite of this Dr. McIntire declared, "Your cause is our cause." And at the close of the meeting Dr. McIntire raised his hands and in the name of Jesus Christ declared the blessing of God upon each person present. This is an astonishing thing for a person so well versed in the doctrine of Separation. Can the distinctives of our faith just be set aside to make common cause with Catholicism against Communism? And who is to say that Catholicism is a less dangerous enemy of liberty and our Lord than Communism? It is to be feared that much more was lost to the Gospel than gained to Democracy by this demonstration of Christians and Catholics united in worship.

#### Except for God's Grace

We sang "I Love to Tell the Story" and reference was made to John 3:16, but the Bible passages were mainly directed toward Mr. Khrushchev and the Communists, thus: "Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good," and "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." In response to the rhetorical question "Who is Khrushchev?" someone in the stands volunteered "The Man of Sin." But, there was nothing that even remotely approached an explanation of sin and the Plan of Salvation. No one seemed to be saying, "Except for the grace of God, I would still be a Khrushchev at heart." Things were kept general and only Khrushchev appeared to be the sinner. What a pity. Surely, this is mis-directed zeal.

Christians awake! Our enemy is not Mr. Khrushchev but Satan and all the hosts of the wicked, both Russian and American and a good deal more. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). We are to "fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather

fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).

And like the enemy we fight, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual, not picketing but prayer, not protest but preaching. What the world needs is not reformation by argument, but regeneration by the Spirit of God through the "foolishness of preaching." It is this all-

important task of preaching and prayer that the Lord has committed to His people. Let the church be the church. Let it preach the Word. There is no force for good so great, so effective, so necessary today as the example of a holy and happy church of Jesus Christ. Let us remember Mr. Khrushchev and his countrymen and the peoples of the Captive Nations in our prayers.

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## Livening Up Your Prayer Meeting

Midweek service, I was always told, was an oasis in the desert. Until recently I believed that, and then some delightfully frank people told us through family visitation it was more like a desert! Through self-examination (a gruesome but necessary job), we found the problem was mostly in how it was done. The idea of it wasn't arid, just the way the idea was carried out. We had dried up the streams by giving the people the same mush for breakfast for three years running. We began to realize a little change of diet freshens the appetite and whets the palate for solid meat and delicate fare.

There were several people who were exceedingly embarrassed at the thought of praying out loud. They felt they couldn't do it, and didn't want to be embarrassed, so they quit coming, or just never came. So we let them pray different ways. The hymns we picked for the midweek service began to be hymns using the phrasing of prayer. If people couldn't speak their prayers, they were encouraged to think through the hymns and sing their prayers. Verses were hummed to give people a chance to take a look at the words now and then. When the pastor closed the prayer session, he closed it with the Lord's prayer, giving everyone a chance for audible prayer at the session. When the group adjourned for the week, they adjourned with closed eyes, singing a prayer-hymn that all might be familiar with. Then came the big step—silent prayer! Listed on a blackboard were the prayer requests. Everyone took a good look and there was healthy, unanimous prayer for five minutes on the part of *all* concerned, each in his own way, each in

*This little article or editorial is taken from a recent issue of the "Presbytery of New Jersey News." While it was unsigned, we have an idea that the author's initials are H. M. C.*

his own heart, so the man tells us on the radio every morning. It was a "blessed quietness." To be sure, there were a few grumbles about "not enough praying out loud," but they didn't come from the people who had trouble praying out loud. They had begun to enjoy a *prayer* meeting because they personally were taking a more active part in it. It was not done at every meeting. Only once every two or three weeks. The rest of the times our prayers were group prayers audibly offered. Only all could take an unembarrassed part in our midweek service.

And why does the pastor have to do all the talking at prayer meeting? someone might have said to us. Our services are held on a strictly discussion basis for all to take a hand in or a whack at, but this objection too was worked over. Once every three weeks we had testimony time on a small scale. Ahead of time, we asked one of the regulars to prepare a list of six or seven of her favorite Bible verses to read to the group. No commentary necessary if she didn't wish to. But when the verses were read, the commentary, very down to earth, and expressing real conviction, came. Now everybody wants to volunteer. And somebody recently asked the pastor, "How about more Bible verse times?" And beginning this Wednesday, a question box will be found in the

room that houses our prayer warriors. That box will be opened once every three weeks and for twenty minutes of the service, an attempt will be made to answer the problems—whether pertaining to the Bible or spiritual life in general. Said one of the regulars, "Boy, I'll fill that box after a day at home!"

Said one of the honest people about prayer meeting, "Why are we always getting off the subject and talking about Aunt Minnie's arthritis and Uncle Jim's hog calling abilities? Let's stick to the point." How do you solve that one? Better control over the group, to begin with. Then real and hard planning over the meetings, at least as much as you would devote to picking hymns and sermon subjects and exegetical work for the Sunday services. And when all that is done? A good news hour once every three weeks, in which the people are invited to bring to the group's attention news of note to the whole church—something they saw in the paper about the work of Christ's church, a note in the *GUARDIAN* worth repeating, some new ideas for the church program that might be worth a look-see, something nice about the service that new visitor in the third row from the rear said last Sunday. Make it all good. After all, this service is supposed to be a lift, not a let down.

And when all this is done, and you get down to the Bible study, make it fascinating and suspenseful. Take books or sections or doctrines people have expressed a real interest in or want to study. You'd be surprised how many have been dying to study the character of faith and the assurance of salvation. Keep the study full of questions and discussion. Don't sermonize. You've got all day Sunday for that. Just keep tossing the ball to the group and they'll toss it around and find the answers (which, of course, you must be prepared to lead them to by pointed questions).

And the results? Maybe one Sunday morning you'll hear a regular at prayer meeting tell the adult Bible class in Sunday school how much they've been missing at midweek service. Maybe you'll hear him say how much he misses that service and how his week seems empty without it. I've heard that remark. Liven up your prayer meeting and maybe you will too.

## Westminster Seminary Begins Thirty-First Year

The thirty-first annual opening exercises of Westminster Theological Seminary took place on September 16 in the sanctuary of Calvary Church across from the campus. The invocation was offered by the Rev. Theodore Hard, a missionary to Korea of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, who is home on furlough and has enrolled as a graduate student at Westminster for the year.

The Scripture was read from Ephesians by the Rev. William A. Mahlow, general secretary of World Presbyterian Missions, following which the Rev. Robert E. Nicholas led in prayer.

The address of the afternoon was delivered by the Rev. Roger R. Nicole, Th.D., Professor of Theology in Gordon Divinity School, Beverly Farms, Mass. Speaking to the overflow audience on the subject "The Five Points of Calvinism," Dr. Nicole gave something of the history of the term and captured the interest of his hearers by the manner of his treatment of this stimulating topic. The *Guardian* expects to publish his address in a later issue.

Preceding the address, the Rev. Professor Cornelius Van Til, Chairman of the Faculty, who presided, gave the following words of greeting, directed particularly to the members of the incoming class.

### Van Til's Greeting to the Entering Students

Perhaps your friends at home or at college were surprised to hear that you were planning to attend a seminary. Perhaps they were even more surprised to learn that you were planning to attend Westminster Seminary. If they were I think I know what you told them. In all likelihood you told them that you were planning to teach or preach Christ and him crucified, Christ and the resurrection. Perhaps you quoted Paul's words when he said: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

If these words of Paul truly express the purpose of your hearts then we of the Faculty and of the student body welcome you with open arms. For

there is no greater joy than to set forth Jesus Christ the Savior before lost and dying men. To tell all classes and conditions of men that the "wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23), who would not give his all to do just that? And to lead the people of God in saying the words of Paul's doxology: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39), is there anything better on earth than to do just that? The Seminary stands ready to help you to prepare yourself to do this very thing.

### Prepare Yourself?

But why should you *prepare* yourself in order to speak of Christ? Why should you learn Hebrew and Greek in order to present Christ to men? Do people want you to speak to them in these languages today? Why should you involve yourself in the problems of higher criticism? Can you make men believe that the Bible is the Word of God by showing them from the facts of Scripture that no mere words of men are found in it? Why should you study church history, systematic theology or apologetics? Much learning will only make you mad! There is no need for it; we have enough in Scripture, in Christ and in the promise of his Spirit!

### Confusion

But you know the answer to this sort of reasoning. At least you know it in substance. You know something of the confusion that exists in the minds of men today. Men speak of sin and they speak of Christ as the Savior from sin. But they do not think of sin as making them rightfully subject to the wrath of God. Nor do they think of Christ as the Son of God who, though he knew no sin, was made sin for us "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Corinthians 5:21).

When men today speak of sin they tend to mean only that they have not

lived up to their own ideals and ideas of right and wrong. And when they speak of Christ as Savior from sin they tend to mean that he, more than other men, has overcome the battle with evil in himself, and has set us an example that we may follow.

### The Source of Confusion

The source of men's confusion on the questions of sin and salvation lies, of course, basically in their own hearts. Sinners are bound to misconstrue the meaning of sin. The natural man is self-righteous above all else. To maintain himself in his self-righteousness the natural man invents all manner of excuses for his failure to love God above all and his fellow-man as himself. Similarly the natural man, when he hears of Christ, seeks to bring down this Christ so that he too is of the earth alone. A Christ thus brought down to earth cannot convict others of sin nor supply them any help in overcoming it. Or if men raise up the Christ above the earth it is because they think all men, with him, are inherently and essentially from a higher world. Thus always the Christ men naturally think of is at most gradationally higher than other men. For them he is never the one by whom "all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Colossians 1:16-20).

### Yes, Prepare Yourself

You will be called upon in days to come, therefore, to preach Christ to men who are in a state of confusion. And this confusion is traceable, at last, to sin. Men worship and serve "the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever."

There seems to be no end of the many ways by which men seek to make themselves believe that they are serving God when they are really only



Machen Memorial Hall from the South

serving themselves. Men make bulwarks of defense for themselves by means of science, by means of philosophy, by means of literature, by means of biblical criticism. With great honesty and sincerity but withal in basic self-deception men employ all the artifices of learning to keep from facing God. And thousands there be that follow them.

How can you bring Christ to such men? You cannot effectively do so if you do not know their thoughts. The church of Christ cannot perform its mission in the world without a learned ministry. True, the church needs first of all a pious ministry. The final question is not one of learning. The power of the Holy Spirit regenerating the hearts of men will, in the last analysis, alone enable men to accept the Christ of the Scriptures. Even so, God is a God of order. He would have his church set forth the Christ as the one who "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Corinthians 1:30). Christ said, "I am the Way, the

Truth and the Life." As such he must be presented unto men.

### Christ as Truth

To do so with confidence to all classes of men we must understand for ourselves, so far as we can, what Christ means when he speaks such words. We must understand what this means for the sake of building up the church of Christ. Do you not yearn to lead God's people more deeply into the riches of the meaning of his Word? Is there not a burning desire within your heart to display the risen and ascended Christ before his people that they may be changed from glory unto glory as by the Spirit of the Lord?

All the learning that you may expect to acquire at the Seminary, the languages and exegesis, the church history, the systematic theology, the public speaking and the apologetics, must be subservient to the one purpose of presenting Christ to his church.

And then as you learn more adequately, more truly, by means of

*This address by Dr. Van Til to the entering students helps to make clear part of the reason for and the importance of such a theological training as Westminster provides.*

"much learning" to present Christ to his church you will, at the same time, learn better to present him to lost men in general.

You will then first of all learn true humility. It is not likely that you will be able to compete in learning with the wise men of the world. But even if you could it would still be true that you cannot begin to fathom the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of Christ. You can and must always and everywhere present a sovereign God, speaking of himself to men in Christ. This Christ identifies himself in terms of himself. He tells you who you are and what you are. He alone knows the heart of man. In terms of his Word alone do you know sin and deliverance from sin.

Only by grace, by his Spirit have you been able to call this Christ your Lord. Only by his Spirit have you been enabled to say "Abba Father." Where then is boasting? It is excluded.

### Humility and Boldness

But though it is in humility that you must learn to present the Christ, you must nonetheless present him as a challenge to the wisdom of the world. Without Christ there is no wisdom. Men must learn to know that all is darkness, and all is unrighteousness and all is despair unless they submit to Christ. "Where there is nothing but oneself, there is nothing." (\*) "The entire human community is (then) in the desert, attempting to build an impious tower of Babel to scale heaven, but really cutting itself off more and more from God . . ." (p. 285). Man then lives in a world in which the church "spire is falling and no adequate substitute has been found for the faith which the spire symbolizes." (\*\*) So you must not only humbly but also boldly challenge

(\*) *The Tragic Vision*, ed. by Nathan A. Scott, Jr. New York, 1957, article by J. Hillis Miller, Jr. on Franz Kafka and the Metaphysics of Alienation; p. 291.

(\*\*) *Ibid.* p. 308.

the wisdom of the world. "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Corinthians 1:20, 21).

Why then *prepare* for preaching Christ? Why acquire much learning at great expense of energy? It is that God might "grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man . . ." (Ephesians 3:16) "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him (Ephesians 3:10-12).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Following the closing prayer, the faculty, students, and friends enjoyed tea and a time of visiting in Machen Hall of the Seminary.

### Westminster Alumni Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Westminster Alumni Association held its stated fall meeting at the Seminary on Wednesday, September 16 prior to the opening exercises. President Albert G. Edwards, III, '52 was in the chair, with a dozen others present besides the faculty representative, Professor John Murray.

The Rev. Raymond O. Zorn, '55, was appointed chairman of a committee to formulate plans for the annual Alumni Homecoming scheduled for February 9, 1960. Assisting Mr. Zorn are the Rev. Robert H. Graham, '32, and Dr. Robert D. Knudsen, '47.

The Rev. Louis T. Tuleja, '56, of Philadelphia, was chosen as editor of the "Alumni News" and he was requested to make an effort to discover if there is enough interest to provide sufficient funds for publication of an-

other issue in the near future. Secretary Ralph E. Clough, '45, reported a favorable response to the query of former editor Edwin H. Palmer, '49, as to alumni interest in such a paper's appearance from time to time. Appointed to assist Mr. Tuleja as an editorial committee for the "Alumni News" were Dr. Palmer, the Rev. Theodore J. Georgian, '48, and the Rev. William L. Hiemstra, '41.

Treasurer F. Clarke Evans, '35, announced that the current balance in the bank is \$41.92.

### Louis Praamsma to Give Worcester Lecture

The Rev. Louis Praamsma, Th.D., pastor of the First Christian Reformed Church of Toronto, Canada, will give a lecture on the subject, "John Calvin as an Ecumenical Figure," according to an announcement from Westminster Theological Seminary. Given under the Seminary's Harry A. Worcester Lectureship and Publication Fund, the lecture is scheduled for Thursday, October 15, at 8:00 p.m.

The public is cordially invited to hear Dr. Praamsma's address which will be delivered across from the Seminary campus in Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Willow Grove Avenue and Church Road (Route 73). This Calvin Anniversary Lecture is presented in connection with the worldwide observance during 1959 of the 450th anniversary of John Calvin's birth and other significant events of his life.

Dr. Praamsma took his doctoral degree in theology at the Free University of Amsterdam. After graduation he served several congregations of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. He came to his present pastorate in Toronto in March, 1958. Dr. Praamsma is the author of several books. His work entitled *Calvijn* marked him as a notable Calvin student. Currently he is writing a series of books on the Heidelberg Catechism.

### Willis in Rochester

The Rev. George J. Willis and his family arrived in Rochester, N. Y. near the end of July in order that he might assume his duties as pastor-elect of the Memorial Orthodox Presbyterian Church the first of August. His

actual installation will take place some time after the October meeting of presbytery.

The Willises moved into the recently purchased manse, right across from the church. The house had been painted and equipped by weeks of hard labor during the summer heat by men and women of the congregation. On July 30th a reception was given in honor of the Willis family in the church basement.

A farewell gathering of the St. Andrew's Church, Baltimore, prior to the departure of the Willis family, was the occasion for presenting them with a fine 35 mm. camera as a remembrance of their years in Baltimore.

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### Eastlake, Wilmington

The Rev. and Mrs. Robert W. Eckardt have announced the birth, on August 11, of a third son, Richard George.

During the summer months, Mr. Duncan Lowe, a member of the Franklin Square Orthodox Presbyterian Church, served as student assistant. He has completed one year of his studies at Westminster Seminary. His main task was to engage in survey work in the new area in which Eastlake Church is located. He also assisted with vacation Bible school, young people's work and Sunday school; and he preached during the vacation of the pastor.

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### Activity in Chula Vista

The annual Labor day picnic of the Bayview congregation was a late summer highlight of games, food and fellowship. In the evening the Adult Fellowship group, 16 of them, went bowling, followed by refreshments at the Earl Macey home.

The congregation is happy at the reported arrival of Mr. Jack Corzine as an entering student in Westminster Seminary. He with his wife and two sons were an indispensable help in the beginnings of the mission work in Chula Vista.

The Bayview Church, together with Paradise Hills and Valley of Santee, have been cooperating in area calling from time to time, and 17 persons from the three churches called on over 125 homes in the Chula Vista area on

Wednesday, August 26. "This is real Presbyterianism in action," says the Rev. Jack Peterson, pastor of the Bayview flock. He reports an innovation for the evening service begun in August—another idea that is working—as follows:

#### Family Evening Worship

"Here is the plan, aimed at bringing whole families together for the Sunday evening hour. At 5:30 we meet in a neighboring park for light supper (not a picnic in the usual sense of that word). By 6:15 we are back at the church building and divided into four Machen Leagues. The adults are led by Connie Bawcum. Elder Guy Newland takes charge of the seniors, grades 8 and up. The juniors, including the first seven grades, meet with the Rev. Herman T. Petersen, and the pre-school beginners are cared for by the ladies in rotation.

After a five-minute break, a worship service begins promptly at 7 o'clock and includes the singing of God's praises and a sermon by the pastor. With the benediction at 7:45, families with young children, and we have many of them, are able to get them home and to bed at a reasonable hour for both pre-school and school-age youngsters. Under this plan we have more time for actual instruction in the Word of God and for worship by a larger group, along with the fellowship of eating and being together as families, with our attention centered about the Church of Jesus Christ on Sunday evenings. We are quite enthusiastic about it. Pray that it may so continue," concludes Pastor Jack Peterson.

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### Emmanuel of Morristown Installs Elder

Mr. H. Robert Keenan was ordained and installed as an elder of the congregation of Emmanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Church on September 20. Elders Oscar Sterner and Theodore Roycraft assisted Pastor Calvin A. Busch in the impressive service

which took place during the Sunday evening worship hour.

An informal reception for elder and Mrs. Keenan was held in the church parlors after the worship service. Mr. Keenan was appointed by the Session to represent the congregation at the next meeting of the Presbytery of New Jersey as his first official responsibility.

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### Glenside Church Welcomes Seminarians

Members of the Session of Calvary Church, Glenside, together with their wives, were hosts and hostesses to a large number of students, and their wives in the case of many, at a dinner on the day following the opening of Westminster Seminary's fall term.

About ninety persons enjoyed the dinner served in the fellowship room of the church. Pastor Robert Atwell presided during a brief program following the meal. Mrs. George Hall sang and Professor John Skilton spoke concerning the place of the local church in the life of seminary students.

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### Machen League Monthly Rallies

The first of a series of monthly rallies for the Machen Leagues of northern New Jersey and Franklin Square, N. Y., was held at the Emmanuel Church of Morristown on Saturday, September 19. About 70 persons arrived with box lunches in the late afternoon, and outdoor games were provided until the evening program began. The youth enjoyed a hymn sing and a quiz on the book of Genesis with Franklin Square's League coming in first on the quiz.

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### Mereness - Holkeboer

Miss Cecilia Holkeboer was married to Mr. Eldon J. Mereness, Jr., of Westfield, N. J., on August 13, 1959, at the Calvin Seminary Chapel, Grand Rapids, Mich. Cecilia is the daughter of the late Rev. Oscar Holkeboer and Mrs. Winifred Holkeboer, who teaches in the English department of Calvin College.

Mr. and Mrs. Mereness reside at 2313 N. 5th Street, Sheboygan, Wisc. and both are teaching in the Sheboygan Christian School.

## THE KNOCKOUT BLOW

**D**escribing his work for the Lord Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul said, "I fight, not as one who beats the air" (I Cor. 9:26).

Paul recognized that he was involved in a fight, not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with rulers of the darkness. In this fight he was set to make every blow count. Each blow had to be a telling one for his Lord.

First of all, he made certain of the truth of his message. After his conversion, he was for a long while in the desert, where he received revelations from God. Nevertheless, to make sure that he had not run in vain, he sought out the leaders of the church in Jerusalem and asked them whether his message was the same as theirs (Gal. 2:2). He was overjoyed when they received him warmly, saying that the things which he had received were in agreement with the teaching of the rest of the apostles.

Paul did not wish to fight as one beating the air with his fists; he made sure of his message. Paul had one foot in heaven; but he had both feet on the ground.

Further, the apostle did not content himself with half-hearted effort or with vague statements. His zeal and vigor for the Lord have scarcely been equaled by any Christian since his day. The straightforward sermons and speeches he delivered would make many a more timid and wavering minister ashamed. The abandon with which he entered into all sorts of adventures in the Lord's service has only a few parallels in the history of the church.

Paul said of himself, "I am set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). He entered the arena, knowing what sort of fight he was in, and aiming to receive the prize. Every motion was calculated beforehand; every opening was utilized that he might deliver the knockout blow.

It is only as the Christian abandons himself in the service of Christ that he follows the example of the apostle and experiences the full joy of the Christian life. He must be thoroughly acquainted with the wonderful message that he has been called upon to proclaim. Then he must not fight weakly and uncertainly; but he should make his every effort count.

How do we fight? Do we fight as one who beats the air? Or do we aim for the knockout blow?

ROBERT D. KNUDSEN

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### Rockeys in Rhode Island

**A**fter a five-year pastorate at Wayside Church, Grove City, Pa., the Rev. Wendell L. Rockey, Jr. left in mid-September for Rhode Island. He is pastor-elect of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Cranston, and the church is located at 1344 Cranston Street in that city.

Mr. Rockey, with his wife and three children, has his residence at 15 Waverly Street, Providence, R. I.

### Son to Knudsens

**A** third son, Richard Mark, was born to Dr. and Mrs. Robert D. Knudsen on September 15th. Dr. Knudsen is instructor in Apologetics in Westminster Seminary.

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