

The Presbyterian
GUARDIAN

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Forgiving Sins

By EDWARD WYBENGA

The Paralytic Healed — Lk. 5:17-26

A gain a great crowd of people were gathered to hear the teachings of Jesus as he spoke in a large square room or court in the center of a building. Even the entrance was blocked because of the crowd. To this place four men directed their steps, carrying a bed or mattress upon which lay a very sick man. The man was afflicted with palsy, a paralytic condition, painful, and rendering the sufferer helpless.

Undaunted by the fact that their way to Jesus through the door was closed, the four men proceeded to carry their sick friend up the outside stairway to the roof of the building. (Houses in Palestine were commonly built with flat roofs affording a place for conversation or relaxation or meditation in the cool of the day.) Since the roof was made of tiles, these could be quite easily removed, and entrance gained into the building from the top. This the men proceeded to do; and then, with the aid of ropes, they gently let down the bed into the room below, directly in front of the place where Jesus sat.

These men had courage and determination born of faith. They set us a good example and put us to shame. How much courage, determination, and effort do professing Christians put forth to bring their unchurched friends and relatives into the healing and saving presence of Christ?

The faith of these four men and their sick friend impressed Jesus with deep satisfaction and inward joy. He is always pleased with a true and earnest display of faith. Then, in the record of Matthew, Jesus is heard to say: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (9:2).

With surprise and bewilderment on the part of some, and hateful resentment on the part of others, the people

reacted to Jesus' words. The former reasoned this way: that sick man has come here to have his body healed; that is the thing that requires urgent attention now; his sins can be taken care of later. The latter (those who resented Jesus' words) reasoned this way: only God can forgive sins. How dare this man say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee"? Does he make himself God? Then, indeed, he is guilty of blasphemy, and worthy of death!

They were right: only God can pronounce the final forgiveness of a man's sins; only the creditor can forgive the debtor. This was blasphemy if spoken by a mere man. But they were wrong in supposing that Jesus was no more than a man. They were guilty of blind unbelief.

Here is where modern unbelief is faced with a serious dilemma. Either the deity of Christ must be admitted, or else we must side with the Pharisees and conclude that Jesus has committed the sin of blasphemy. There is no middle ground.

Returning to the sacred narrative, we ask: What caused Jesus to say first of all, "Thy sins are forgiven thee"? Why did he not first remove the malady afflicting the man, causing him so much pain, and making him a helpless paralytic? It is because Jesus saw that his real need, his greatest need, was the condition of his soul rather than that of his body. And should not the soul be given first consideration also with us? Do not our spiritual interests come first? Did Jesus not say: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"? Why then are we more concerned about the comforts of the body than the interests of the soul?

One thing is clear: the man was conscious of his spiritual need; he was burdened with moral guilt. He feared that because of the sin in his

soul, Christ would not heal the disease of his body. Therefore, Jesus first removed the fear of the man by saying, "Be of good cheer." Then he frees the man from the burden of guilt by assuring him, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." And so we learn again that at the bottom of all human ills and maladies lies human sin. Were there no sin in the world, there could be no sickness, pain, sorrow, or death. The problem of sin must first be dealt with.

The words of Jesus brought new hope, courage, assurance, joy to the heart of the paralytic. He now had a sense of reconciliation and forgiveness which was absent before. At the same time, these words aroused deep resentment and evil thoughts in the minds of the Pharisees. Jesus, in his divine omniscience, was aware of that; and he immediately dealt with it, asking, "Whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Rise up and walk?" Neither is easy to do; but it is easier to claim the power to forgive sins than to claim the power to perform a miracle. In the former, no objective proof could be offered — forgiving sins is a spiritual and invisible matter between God and the soul.

Performing a miracle, however, is something objective that all can see with their own eyes. Therefore, to prove his power to forgive sins Jesus will show his power to heal the paralytic. Accordingly, he commands: "Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house." Had his command failed to produce the desired effect, Jesus would have shown himself to be a deceiver, a man who made false claims about being God. But Jesus had no doubt about the outcome. Immediately the once helpless paralytic took up his mattress that had so long carried him, and went his way glorifying God!

How did all this affect the people? First, the people were amazed — they were stricken dumb with surprise. Next, their astonishment deepened into religious awe — they were "filled with fear." They felt themselves to be in the presence of God!

"That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins." The Son of Man is also the Son of God, that is, He is God!

“... the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

— I Timothy 3:15

Why This Orthodox Presbyterian Church ?

By ROBERT L. ATWELL

Paul's concern that Timothy should "know how to behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" provides us with something approximating a Scriptural definition of the church. In speaking to you on "Why This Orthodox Presbyterian Church?" I am simply expounding this text as applied to our own situation.

It is quite possible that Timothy was discouraged as he ministered to the church in Ephesus. In the eyes of men it was doubtless insignificant indeed. As Timothy went to and fro upon his pastoral rounds, looking after his church in which there were not many noble and not many great, and saw the sun reflected from the white marble tile of the temple of Diana, he was to remember that he was the minister of a grander temple, the temple of Christian truth, for the church of the living God is the pillar and the ground of the truth. That temple of Diana was indeed one of the architectural wonders of the ancient world. But its grandeur did not compare to that of the church of Jesus Christ. The glory of that church is precisely in the fact that it is the pillar of the truth.

Therefore the first thing we note about the church is that it is always to be defined in connection with the truth. Its one purpose is to hold aloft the truth. Paul's figure was drawn from the great Corinthian pillars which held up the roof of the temple. Just so the church has its function in holding up the truth. Another great passage concerning the church — Matthew 16:13-26 — also makes this clear. There Peter has professed the truth and Christ has denominated him the first of the foundation stones as a consequence.

At this point it is well to ask, "What is truth?" and note that Scripture supplies us with two answers. While these answers do not contra-

dict they do supplement one another. The first is that of Christ when (John 14:6) he declares, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." The other is that found in his prayer in behalf of his church (John 17:17), "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." The truth then according to Scripture is that which comes to expression in the Bible, the Word of God written; and it is that which is exemplified in Christ, the Word of God incarnate. When Peter professes concerning Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," he is confessing the truth incarnate. When Paul speaks of the church as "the pillar of the truth" he is declaring that the church's task is to make known by word and life the truth set forth in the written Word.

The church is also characteristically defined in Scripture as the body of Christ. The force of this figure is familiar. It is through a man's body that his mind and spirit expresses itself. Whatever a man wants to do in this world he must do through his body. So the church, the body of Christ, is the organism through which Christ speaks to the world and does his work in the world. Indifference to the church is impossible to one who loves the church's Head. It follows too from this figure that apart from Christ, and obedience to Christ, the church is dead — it has no living existence.

Men commonly define the visible church as all those who profess the true faith together with their children and when they use such a definition

This sermon was preached by Mr. Atwell a month after his mid-summer arrival to begin his labors as home missionary in southwest Miami, Fla. It may help answer the question of the title for our readers as well as for the hearers.

it is clear that they are following Scriptural guides. It is just this profession of the truth — revealed to him as it was by the Holy Spirit — that made Peter the first member of the New Testament church and just thus that Christ continues to build his church by adding other living stones.

Propagating the Truth

Further, the church in her best days has always understood as her task simply the propagation of the truth. She has thought of herself, and of each of her members, as ambassadors for Christ and with Paul (II Cor. 5:20, 21) has earnestly entreated, "As though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." She has considered it her task to make that truth known to two great ends, both of which are essential to the building up of the church: 1) the edification and comfort of believers; 2) the bringing of precious souls, now lost in the darkness of sin, to the glorious light of the gospel, to the blessedness of salvation in Christ.

One further essential thought is emphatic in this text. It is that this church which is the pillar and ground of the truth is the church of the living God. It is equally emphatic in that other classic passage concerning the church, Matthew 16, when Christ declares, "I will build *my* church." It is in recognition of this that the basic difference between Romanism and Protestantism is found. The Roman Catholic is called upon to obey the voice of the church speaking through its pope and councils. The Protestant is called upon to believe and to obey the voice of God as he speaks directly in Holy Scripture.

It were doubtless a happy thing if those two voices were one. But from

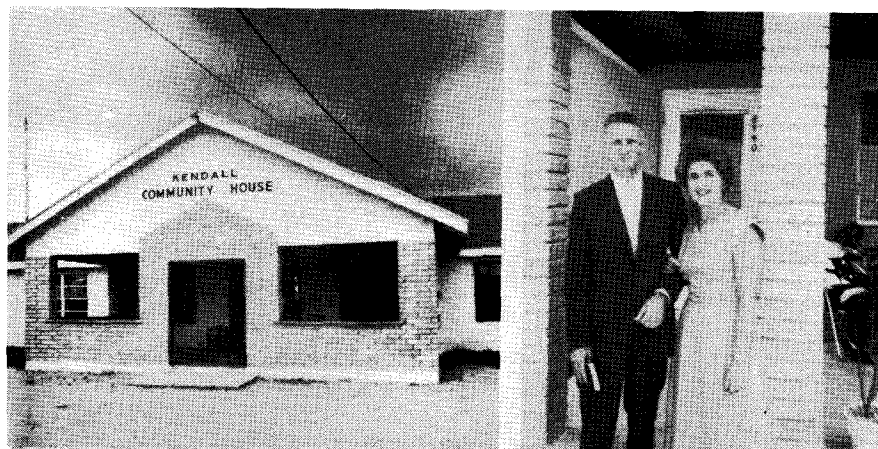
the earliest days of the New Testament church this has not been so. I refer you only to the Matthew 16 account. In verse 17 Christ pronounced Peter blessed because he had echoed that which God himself had revealed to him. But in verse 23 Christ rebuked the same Peter for his suggestion that the cross was unnecessary — a suggestion that had sprung, so Christ insistently declared, not from God but from man. It is not simply the right, it is the duty of the Protestant to refuse the voice of man and to obey the voice of God. When the Romish church refused to allow Luther or any other to appeal to Scripture as final authority the Protestant revolt was essential, for "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men . . ."

Reformed in Doctrine

So far brief and sketchy but sufficient evidence has been adduced that the Bible calls for a Protestant church that shall serve as the pillar of the truth. That the Bible indeed calls for a Presbyterian church, whether or not called Presbyterian, must for the present, due to the limitation of time, be inferred from the description which I am about to attempt of a Presbyterian church. A Presbyterian church is a church which is Reformed in doctrine and Presbyterian in polity. Such a church subscribes to one supreme standard and to a set of subordinate standards. That one supreme standard is the Word of God, the Bible, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. A Presbyterian church's subscription to this standard is absolute, exclusive and unqualified.

The subordinate standards include the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as setting forth the system of doctrine taught in the Scriptures, and a Form of Government, Book of Discipline and Directory for Worship, all of which are used as aids in carrying out the work of the church. It is also to be noted that Presbyterian churches have been, historically, confessional churches in the sense that they required their office bearers to subscribe to the subordinate standards.

Time permits one further word concerning the above assertion that a Presbyterian church is Reformed in doctrine. That is the same as saying that a Presbyterian church is Calvin-



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istic in her doctrine or that she finds all her teachings, in conformity to the teaching of the Bible, solidly grounded in the sovereignty of God and particularly in the sovereign character of divine grace. This affirmation Presbyterians share, so far as official documents go, with the great body of Protestants. It is, for example, just this Reformed doctrine that is set forth in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Episcopal Church; in the Catechism of Keach widely used among the Baptists; in the Canons of Dort, the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism used by churches bearing the name Reformed.

It is good too to remember that, with no single exception, when attempt has been made to formulate the truth with appeal to no other source than Holy Writ, the doctrine formulated has been what we speak of as Reformed. James I. Packer is gloriously accurate when he declares, "The only theology that the Bible knows is the Reformed faith." And Henry Preserved Smith also spoke truly when he said, "The only claim that Presbyterians can make to the allegiance of God's people is that they endeavor to set forth Biblical truth in Biblical proportion and with Biblical emphasis."

Presbyterian in Polity

As to polity it is to be remarked that whereas there is in Presbyterianism the greatest possible stress on individual responsibility — the immediate responsibility of each man for his every single thought, word and act, to the one, only sovereign God — there is at the same time in Presby-

terian government the recognition of *corporate* responsibility. Presbyterian government is as far removed as possible from independency. This also is true because Presbyterianism is shaped by Scripture. Not only the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 but the basic teaching that we are our brother's keepers and that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves requires this. As a presbyter I am just exactly as responsible for what is taught from the pulpit and in the Sunday school of Sharon Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Hialeah as I am in the one where I am myself pastor.

Assuming then that the Bible itself requires that believers should constitute a church, that it further requires a Protestant church and even that it calls for such a church as that which I have described as Presbyterian, my subject requires me still to answer two questions. I shall attempt to do this briefly but none the less clearly. These questions are: 1) Why an Orthodox Presbyterian Church (denomination)? and 2) Why *this* Orthodox Presbyterian Church?

The Auburn Affirmation

A small part of the answer to the first question is found in a 520-page book which I hold in my hand. It is *J. Gresham Machen* by Dr. Ned B. Stonehouse (and you may borrow it if you like). Of a great many reasons let me cite only three. 1) A situation had developed in the Northern Presbyterian Church which caused its Assembly in 1923 to publish a pronouncement declaring that five particular doctrines — the infallibility of

the Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, his bodily resurrection and his miracles — were each “an essential doctrine of the Word of God and our standards.” This resulted in a protest which was signed by some 1300 ministers of the church — and in subsequent years it became an established fact that the church in all her boards and agencies and in her entire official policy was in control of this group and other who substantially agreed with them.

This protest, first prepared in Auburn Seminary, was known as “The Auburn Affirmation.” It declared that it was not needful for a minister’s good standing in the church, that he believe in any of those particular “theories” — as it called them — and it singled out the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture as especially erroneous and harmful. Now the meaning of this ought not to be missed. It is one thing, and it seems to me a very bad thing indeed, that a minister in a Christian church should call in question any one of these doctrines which are so clearly asserted in Scripture. But it is a far worse thing, a thing that cannot but be destructive of the church which is the pillar and ground of the truth, to assert that it is a matter of indifference in a Presbyterian Church whether or not a minister believes those doctrines. This is so because it is a denial that the truth is a matter of importance.

The first vow requisite to the ordination of such a minister is, “Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?” And the second asks, “Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of this church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?” Those confessional standards most explicitly set forth the five doctrines in question. Is there anything that has been more subversive of all that is good in our society than this idea that a man may take a solemn vow that he believes in and will give his life to upholding certain beliefs and principles, but that it is a matter of indifference whether he actually does hold those beliefs or in his official life, into which he has entered by solemn vows, actually upholds or subtly undermines those principles?

What could be more subversive of the church which is the pillar of the truth than this attempt to set truth and error upon a level?

Forsaking the Gospel

2) The influence of the National Council of Churches (formerly the Federal Council), which still today so effectively promotes the so-called “social gospel” and champions various forms of neo-orthodoxy, had already largely vitiated a great part of the testimony of the Northern Presbyterian Church as it was expressed in her educational publications and, to only a less extent, as it was carried out on the mission fields. Two examples of this will suffice for now. The Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church rightly declares (31:4), “Synods and councils are to handle and conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth . . .” yet the Presbyterian Church formed the habit, in her General Assemblies, of giving advice to the government in all kinds of economic, social and political matters and compounded her transgression by frequently giving *bad* advice.

As to the so-called “social gospel” it is to be noted that it is not wrong because it exhibits a concern for correcting the ills of society but that it is wrong because it contains no real gospel. It has done perhaps more than anything else in our day to the destruction of good order in matters alike moral, social and economic because it has obscured or has blatantly denied the basic truth of individual responsibility and the obvious fact that there is no changing of society apart from the changing of the individuals who compose it.

3) In the trials which culminated in the suspension by the 1936 General Assembly of Dr. J. Gresham Machen and others the Presbyterian Church U. S. A., by administrative decree, nullified its own constitution. The 1934 General Assembly had passed a “Mandate” placing support of the church’s agencies on the same level as obedience to Christ’s command, “This do in remembrance of me.” Dr. Machen was not allowed to appeal either to Scripture or to the Constitution of the church to explain his refusal to obey that mandate. Since the several cases had been appealed from Presbyteries through Synods to the

General Assembly and no further appeal was possible, the conclusion was inescapable that the church had forfeited her Presbyterian and Protestant character. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is simply the spiritual succession of the then Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (now United Presbyterian).

The Need Today

Now, at last, why *this* Orthodox Presbyterian Church? Simply stated because several families in this area asked that the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension of the denomination should establish a church in this vicinity. It ought to be remarked in passing that, strictly speaking, this church does not yet exist but is to be organized within the next few months. These families believed that there was need for such a church here — need because of the throngs of men about us without that gospel of Christ which alone is the power of God unto salvation. There is a tremendous opportunity for a church that proclaims the whole counsel of God in the midst of this growing population.

I would be careful to recognize that the decisive repudiation of its own constitution which occurred in the Northern Church has not occurred in the Southern Presbyterian Church. I am prayerfully concerned that the establishment of Orthodox Presbyterian Churches in the southland will strengthen and encourage those in the Southern Church who are determined to honor Christ and to preach the Bible. But I would be less than frank did I not say that I am unspeakably grateful that I can labor in a church which is free from the embarrassment of National Council affiliation, that can unashamedly recommend its publications as thoroughly biblical, and whose courts have one over-riding concern, namely, to discover what God requires in his Word to the end that the church may obey that Word.

The families that have asked for the formation of this church are persuaded that there are many others in the community that share their concern. I covet for you the joy and fruitfulness of being part of such a church that may minister to your Christian nurture and to that of your children, and to the salvation of your neighbors — and all to the glory of our sovereign God.

The Minister's Devotional Life

By LEROY B. OLIVER

My subject is "The Devotional Life of the Minister of the Word." I assume that most of you will some day be engaged in that ministry, but it is my hope that the thoughts may be of benefit regardless of your calling. We shall consider this theme in three parts: what is involved in the minister's devotional life, what is its relation to his preaching, and what is its relation to his pastoral work.

The devotional life of a Christian, or his acts of worship, may be divided into two parts, private and public, or personal and corporate. It is the former upon which I wish to dwell today. To be sure, the importance of the communion of believers with each other and with the Lord can hardly be overstressed as a means of grace, but it would be difficult for the minister of the Word to avoid concentrating on that which would be at the heart of his work. On the other hand, his private and personal communion with the Lord is by its very nature unseen by his fellow-believers and the practice of it does not come under the pressure of convention and public scrutiny. There is more likelihood that this aspect of his ministry will be neglected unless he be compelled not only by a sense of duty but also by a hunger for power to perform his public labors seriously and to seek the Lord face to face, alone.

For the performance of your obligation to lead God's people in public worship your conscience will have abundant assistance. In the cultivation

Mr. Oliver gave this address, here slightly condensed, on the occasion of Westminster Seminary's annual Day of Prayer last spring. We know it will be welcomed by our readers for their own devotional life. It will also help in your understanding of your pastor's needs, and in your praying for him.

of your soul's welfare when you are not behind the sacred desk you will require the God-given compulsion that is energized and fed only by its practice. So it is with three aspects of personal, private devotions that we shall be concerned. First, the reading of the Word, secondly, meditation upon that Word, and thirdly, prayer.

Reading the Word

That the nurture of the soul is by the Word of God is a principle of long-standing in Scripture. Moses reminded the covenant people that when they had received manna in the wilderness, Jehovah had a twofold purpose: to keep them alive but also to make them know that man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. Our Redeemer when faced with the temptation to follow the devil's counsel fitted this principle perfectly to the need of the moment.

On this and other occasions it was demonstrated that the Lord Jesus Christ had hidden God's Word in his heart that he might not sin against God. And his prayer for his disciples was, "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth." Again Jesus said, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Also, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

In the Parable of the Sower — or the Parable of the Soils — much of the parable is taken up with observations concerning the unfruitfulness of the packed earth, the rocky soil, and the weed-choked soil. But let us not forget that the ground that brought forth plentifully, while prepared and fertile, had received the seed of the Word. It was productive because the

seed of the Word had been sown in it. Many other passages might be cited to show the necessity of the Word for growth in grace, but these may suffice.

But if the Word is to take root and blossom and bear fruit, if Christ's Word is to abide in us, if we are to be nurtured by it, that Word must be read and studied. It must be read and studied not simply as an academic chore, not simply to gain the "stuff" of a sermon, but as food for the soul. The reading of large portions of Scripture, even whole books at a sitting, so as to become acquainted with the text, memorization of particular passages, concentrated study of small portions, application of the commands, warnings and promises of Scripture to one's own personal life are all to be commended.

While neither my own personal experience or the custom of any other minister of the gospel may be set down as a norm, it was the practice of the pastor under whose ministry I fortunately sat during the years of my seminary training, to write down his understanding of Scripture portions he had read in his personal devotional reading. Others have marked their Bibles in the margin. The important thing to remember is that this reading of Holy Scripture is for personal delight and profit.

Meditation Upon the Word

That the reading of the Bible may be personally profitable there must be joined to it the art of meditation. Unless there is reflection upon what has been read, there will be little of permanent value in the reading. God commanded Joshua: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate thereon day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt

make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." There was to be not mere acquaintance with the words of the law but what has been called a "ruminating" — a chewing of the cud, a musing or pondering of that law. And the consideration of the words again and again was to have as its purpose the doing of God's will.

The godly man of the first Psalm is he who meditates on Jehovah's law day and night. Someone has written: "It is not hasty reading, but seriously meditating upon holy and heavenly truths that makes them prove sweet and profitable to the soul. It is not the bee's touching on the flowers that gathers honey, but her abiding for a time upon them, and drawing out the sweet. It is not he that reads most, but he that meditates most on divine truth, that will prove the choicest, wisest, and strongest Christian." The observation has been made, moreover, that it is easier to walk six miles to hear a sermon than to spend one-quarter of an hour meditating on it at home.

In a day when the din and clamor of hi-fi, radio, television and other noise-making gadgets make silence a rare commodity, you will have to arrange your schedule so as to read your Bible early in the morning or late at night. It may be that only in the calmness of that hour will meditation be possible. Only then will you be able to think of what God is speaking to you. You will have to tremble before the threatenings of the law, gladly give your heart's reply to the commandments of the Word, and rest upon the promises of God in the private of your own soul — if that Word is to dwell richly in you.

What Is Prayer?

The third element of the minister's devotional life is prayer. The Westminster Shorter Catechism answers the question "What is prayer?" thus: "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies."

That private personal prayer is commanded in Scripture should be acknowledged without dispute. The Lord Jesus has told us, "When ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men.

Without prayer there is no communion with God . . .

Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee."

It was our Savior's custom to go apart from his disciples for prayer, sometimes upon a mountain. We read of Peter's going up to the housetop. Matthew Henry's comments on this point are well taken: "Secret prayer is to be performed in retirement, that we may be unobserved and so may avoid ostentation; undisturbed, and so may avoid distraction; unheard, and so may use the greater freedom."

The scope of private prayer may be greater than public prayer. Personal confession of sin induced by personal application of the Word to one's own life, may be made privately. Intercession for others and for their own personal problems which have been confided to you as pastor may be more properly mentioned in your private prayers.

Prayer and the Word

In order that prayer may be part of worship it must be joined with meditation upon the Word. Prayer may be joined with reflection upon the attributes of God, so that praise will spontaneously burst forth from the soul. He who has been led into green pastures and beside still waters will desire to speak of the mercies of the Lord. The reading of the Word and

reflection upon it may not be separated from prayer except to the detriment of the soul. Reading of the Word alone may be a sterile exercise. Reading of the Word with meditation upon it is better but without prayer there is no *communion* with God. Prayer apart from the Word is undirected and may be reduced to sentimentality. Let us seek to achieve balance in the matter of personal devotions.

A stated time and place are great aids to the practice of personal devotions. Of course we must guard against perfunctoriness. But if our desire is personal piety, consistency is an aid. Well might we listen to the words of Andrew Bonar concerning Robert Murray McCheyne: "His incessant labors left him little time, except what he scrupulously spent in the direct exercises of devotion. But what we have seen of his manner of study and self-examination at Larbert, is sufficient to show in what a constant state of cultivation his soul was kept; and his habits in these respects continued with him to the last. Jeremy Taylor recommends, 'If thou meanest to enlarge thy religion, do it rather by enlarging thine ordinary devotions than thy extraordinary'. This advice describes very accurately the plan of spiritual life on which Mr. McCheyne acted. He did occasionally set apart sessions for special prayer and fasting, occupying the time so set apart exclusively in devotion. But the real secret of his soul's prosperity lay in the daily enlargement

To the point are the words of Archbishop Trent:

"Lord, what a change within, one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make —
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take;
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stand forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;
We kneel how weak, we rise how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others — that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care;
That we should ever weak and heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage, are with Thee?"

of his heart in fellowship with his God. And the river deepened as it flowed on to eternity; so that he reached that feature of a holy pastor which Paul pointed out to Timothy (4:15) 'His profiting did appear to all'."

God's Word and Preaching

But now we rise from the study and closet to ascend the steps to the pulpit. Is there a direct relationship between the soul's cultivation in private devotions and the public preaching of the Word? If preaching is "the official declaration of the Word of God by man to man for eternal life" — a definition which I must credit to my beloved and honored Professor R. B. Kuiper; if preaching is the communication of truth by a personality, then there is a direct relationship between the nurture of the preacher's soul and his official task of communicating the Word of God to men that they might be saved.

If preaching is more than the imparting of information, if its purpose is to move to thought and action, then the preacher himself must be moved by the Word. Timothy was counselled by the apostle Paul, "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things (that is, the doctrines of demons, the ban on marriage and eating of meats), thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed." He who seeks to nurture others in the faith must himself be in a continual state of nourishment in and by the words of faith and good teaching.

Permit me again to refer to Bonar's words concerning the saintly McCheyne: "He seems invariably to have applied for his personal benefit what he gave out to his people. We have already noticed how he used to feed on the Word, not in order to prepare himself for his people, but for personal edification. To do so was a fundamental rule with him; and all pastors will feel that, if they are to prosper in their own souls, they must so use the Word — sternly refusing to admit the idea of feeding others until satiated themselves."

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the

mouth speaketh." Well might we pray the prayer of McCheyne, "Enlarge my heart, and I shall preach." Bonar reminds us that in that prayer "we see the germ of his remarkably solemn ministry. His heart was filled, and his lips then spoke what he felt within his heart. He gave out not merely living water, but living water drawn at the springs that he had himself drank of; and is not this a true gospel ministry?"

Westminster Seminary was chartered "to provide for the Church men who shall be able to defend her faith against infidels, and her doctrine against heretics, to unite in those who shall sustain the ministerial office, religion and literature; that piety of the heart which is the fruit only of the renewing and sanctifying grace of God, with solid learning; believing that religion without learning, or learning without religion, in the ministers of the gospel, must ultimately prove injurious to the Church." The tendency to lecture in the pulpit and substitute the theological essay for preaching is not a new one. But this was not so with the apostle Paul, the great theologian of the New Testament. He was deeply stirred by every thought of the grace of God. In his fatherly way he reminded Timothy, "Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee."

From the Heart

Bonar writes: "Some venture to try what they consider a more intellectual method of addressing the conscience; but ere a minister attempts this mode, he ought to see that he is one who is able to afford more deep and anxious preparation of heart than other men. Since the intellectual part of the discourse is not that which is most likely to be an arrow in the conscience, those pastors who are intellectual must bestow ten-fold more prayerfulness on their work, if they would have either their own or their people's souls affected under their word. If we are ever to preach with compassion for the perishing, we must ourselves be moved by those same views of sin and righteousness which moved the human

practical theology

Yes, it is a misnomer. All theology is practical: the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Not general "practice" but individual ministry is the concern of this department. What is your calling from Christ? How does the Word of God direct you in it? Arts and techniques are taught, but the focus is theological and personal: your Lord and your service.

Edmund P. Clowney, S.T.M.

Under this professorial pseudonym, **Eutychnus of Christianity Today** teaches courses in preaching, missions, the biblical doctrine of the church, and Christian education. This double life is reflected in his recent books, **Eutychnus (and his pin)** and **Preaching and Biblical Theology**. He is also the author and editor of vacation Bible school courses.



John W. Sanderson, Jr. A.M., S.T.M.



On the record, versatility is Professor Sanderson's mark. His doctoral thesis at the University of Pennsylvania is on Plotinus; his teaching includes evangelism, worship, cults, pastoral counseling and Greek. In person his disarming friendliness makes his learning seem less formidable. He is a genuine counselor, a practicing theologian.

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soul of Jesus."

If the preacher has been face to face with God, like Moses whose face shone, his whole manner of preaching

(continued on page 163)

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No Place for Religion!

A Christian family settled this summer in a certain community in an eastern state, and one of the children was enrolled in the local junior high school. Classes began on a Wednesday, and on the first Friday in a science course the teacher made the flat assertion that man had descended from monkeys (an outmoded idea even in evolutionary circles which of course posit some earlier common or manlike ancestor).

In any event, the child raised her hand and simply stated that she could not accept such a statement since she believed that man was created by God. (Brave girl for heeding the Savior's warning not to deny him on earth!) The teacher threw her arms up—we have this report well authenticated—and loudly proclaimed, "We'll have none of that in this class. That's religion, and there is no place for religion here!"

To what disturbing lengths a proper concept — separation of church and state—is carried in such a situation. Fear of giving aid to a particular religion becomes discrimination against truth and conscience. Teachers by the thousands can glibly set forth evolutionary theory, and yet deny so much as the right of objection on the part of a conscientious Christian. Atheism, evolutionism, neutralism toward God—these are all religious concepts, and false ones at that, and they can be taught and are being taught in schools across America. Is it only the true religion that is to be separated from the state?

The devil's lie gets a hearing, legally and openly. The truth is despised, choked, ridiculed—legally and openly. Perhaps some Christian parents ought

to carry a case like this to the Supreme Court to find out whether in this land of the free and home of the brave a Christian has as much freedom as an atheist or an evolutionist, and whether a courageous child has at least the right to be heard!

Propaganda For Evolution

Speaking of evolution, we are reminded of a piece of mail that came to the office the other day from the editors of *Life* magazine. The circular announced the publication of *The Epic of Man* (sequel to *The World We Live In* and *The Wonders of Life on Earth*) based on a series of articles which appeared in *Life* from 1955 to 1957, but with much new material added.

Now it goes without saying that there is a great deal of valuable information in these books, but the point we wish to make here is that once again the basic assumption is evolution. If there is any place for 'God' in this story of man it is so far back or so far removed as to be incidental and without significance.

Note a few quotations from the prospectus:

"Here is Neanderthal man, hunting the giant cave bear and the mammoth, armed only with a sharp-pointed stick . . .

"Here are the caves that were man's first homes and sanctuaries . . .

"Here is the miraculous moment when one tall creature, more curious and less fearful than the rest, paused in his flight from an erupting volcano to pick up a burning brand — and bring man fire . . ."

The accompanying illustrations tend to give the usual portrayal of early man, half-clothed, long-bearded, stoop-shouldered as he takes what is called his "upward journey through a million years." One of the drawings—a scene supposedly about 6,000 B.C. in the Baltic area of northern Europe—makes it appear that even after 990,000 years he hadn't yet learned to make enough clothing to keep himself warm in the cool of the day.

In one sentence, whose significance the million-year evolutionists obviously don't see, the pure supposition and preposterous guesswork of much of this *Epic* is revealed: "In some of the most astonishing photographs ever taken, you will meet *present-day humans* whose modes of living corres-

pond almost exactly to those of Ancient Man—the Aborigines of Australia, the Eskimos of central Canada, the Berbers of north Africa."

The plain fact of the matter is that there is no "upward journey" in the sense of this *Epic* at all. It would be more accurate to speak of man's downward journey since the Fall (Gen. 3 and Rom. 1)! Furthermore, in ancient times as well as today one can find a wide variety in civilizations or cultures existing simultaneously: from primitive to highly developed, some rural, others urban, some idealistic, others barbaric.

The prospectus also has something to say about the sections in *The Epic of Man* on "The Dawn of Religion": "Awed by the phenomena of nature and the mysteries of life and death, Ancient Man evolved a belief in higher powers and sought ways to honor the spirit world. In this chapter you see the rites that initiated Cro-Magnon boys into the tribe as men; you see the hunting rituals used to ward off famine and the funeral ceremonies used to protect the living from the dead; you see the beginnings of art in the paintings and carvings man made to appease the spirits of the animals he had slain."

These evolutionary concepts are far removed from that which God has revealed in his Word and describe rather the "decline" than the "dawn" of religion as men "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, . . . who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator" (Rom. 1).

A Satanic Theory

Some years ago the late Whittaker Chambers, then an editor of *Time*, wrote an unusual article for *Life*. In it he imagined that he overheard a conversation in a New York nightclub on a New Year's Eve, a conversation between a pessimist and Satan. The devil was discussing his Five Hundred Year Plan in Three Hundred Years, during which he had been operating 'underground' — having convinced most people that he didn't exist. Perhaps Chambers spoke more truly than he knew when he put these words into the devil's mouth:

"Shall I ever forget the day when the prodigious thought of Evolution popped into my head? . . . It was but

the work of a moment to transmit the idea to a human brain. Of course if I had called it adjustment or adaptation, nobody would have bought it. But Evolution—man, with his incurable, divinely inspired obsession with perfection, could not fail to snap it up—one of my sublimest strokes, for the only trouble with it is that, as far as the human race is concerned, it simply ain't so." The Devil uttered a shrill cackle.

"... And how the little monsters snapped at the bait! In less than a century I had undone the work of more than a thousand years and knocked the studs from under the religious culture of Europe. Why? Because Evolution explained the universe without *Him*. They wanted to get rid of *Him*. Then I knew the secret longing of their nasty hearts. Then I knew I had them."

It is regrettable that the editors of *Life* do not realize the tragedy of perpetuating Satan's lie, which purports to explain the story of man apart from God. What a paradox, that a "special pre-Christmas offer" should ignore the very Christ by whom "all things were made" (John 1:3). The epic of man has no meaning apart from the Word who became man that He might redeem us from our sins.

R. E. N.

EDITOR'S MAIL BOX

Dear Sir:

I have read your article in the June issue of *The Presbyterian Guardian* on the fraternal greetings from the Gereformeerde Kerken in Holland, and the speech of Dr. G. Brillenburg Wurth. I have also read your footnote to the effect that about 100,000 people have left the Gereformeerde Kerken with the late brother Dr. K. Schilder, which fact appears to be much deplored.

Please note that it is quite painful to see the Lord's work in Holland thus referred to. I happen to have lived in Holland a long time, and have noted how this so-called schism was nothing else but the Lord's work, who always leads His people out of modernistic churches and congregations, exactly as happened in this country back in 1936.

With the means of communication we have it would be about time we knew what is going on in Europe.

Cordially yours,

HARRY H. SCHAT

Fair Lawn, New Jersey

SUNDAY EVENING

By G. I. WILLIAMSON

During our vacation trip there was one incident that made quite an impression. We were at the service station (did you ever calculate the amount of time spent there?) while the car was being greased. Meanwhile a total stranger was also idly waiting while his car was being serviced. And before long we were talking about—you guessed it—religion! When he discovered that he was talking to a minister, he went on to ask a question and make a few observations. He indicated that he attended many different churches—from time to time—but belonged to none. His lodge pin and his remarks indicated something of his preference.

But one cannot deny that his question was telling, as were his remarks. His question was this: "Why are all the Protestant churches dark and empty on Sunday evening?" I was glad to be able to state that not all Protestant churches were dark and empty on Sunday evening; in fact I invited him to worship that very week—on Sunday evening—at the Christian Reformed Church. (No, he didn't come!) But I had to admit that there weren't many Protestant churches that were open, let alone filled, on Sunday evening. He went on to observe that things were not that way when he was a child.

Then he ventured a prophecy: "In a few more years they will, in many cases, be closed all day Sunday." He reasoned as follows: When he was a boy they were open and well attended both morning and evening. Now they are closed in the evening, and (especially in the summer) not well attended in the morning. He emphasized this point by mentioning a church he attended with a friend. The friend boasted that there were about 3,000 members. But there were only two or three hundred present at the morning worship service. If that trend continues what will the end be?

When even those who are outside the church can see so clearly that these things are miserable defects in the life and witness of the church we are amazed that those who are members cannot see it. And yet the obvious fact

is that the children of this world are often wiser than the children of light.

Yet it must be admitted that even among us there is at least the strong temptation to believe that conformity to the 'trend of the times' in this matter is nothing to get alarmed about. This temptation does not usually present itself under the thought that 'the church as a whole' could do well to cut out one service on the Lord's Day. Rather, it usually presents itself in the form of the thought that 'I personally' do not need to keep such a high standard for the Lord's Day. Some may even believe that it is a 'good thing' for the church as a whole to maintain the witness of two worship services on the Lord's Day, and yet not see at all that it is a 'good thing' for them personally.

Scripture does not, of course, prescribe the exact time or number of services for the Lord's Day. We know of strong Reformed churches in rural areas that still have services in the morning and afternoon. Back in the early days of the predecessors of those who now constitute our Nashua Church, families met for morning worship, then ate their lunch together and enjoyed a second worship service before hitching up the team to return home. And even with such slow transportation they managed to listen to two sermons that lasted over three hours, and got the chores done also. With our modern transportation, and labor saving conveniences, we can make only feeble excuses for finding a meager two hours of worship too arduous to endure.

The Sabbath is the Lord's. The whole day is to be spent in the public and private exercises of divine worship, except for works of piety, necessity and mercy. And a faithful attendance upon the appointed means of grace at the two services of the Lord's Day can only be regarded as a small beginning of that duty which we owe the Lord.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Do these words of the Psalmist find an echo in your heart also on Sunday evening?

Devotional Life

OLIVER

(from page 160)

will manifest sincerity. No amount of polished phrasing, no plenitude of apt illustrations, no well-modulated voice can make up for a lack of sincerity. The preacher who feels deeply about what he is saying will have an attentive audience. Never will the minister of the Word be more effective than when he is preaching on a text, the truth of which has been applied to his own life. (Not that the truth stands or falls with his having been affected by it — Our experience does not establish the truth.) But the Saul who had become Paul, the persecutor who had become the soldier of the faith, the chief of sinners who had become the apostle to the Gentiles, could electrify the Christian community by earnestly preaching the faith he once sought to destroy.

David, the penitent, prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit: then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." As John Eadie writes: "There is an appropriate efficacy in the thought that he who invites has himself been welcomed — that he who reasons has been induced by the force of his own arguments — that he who warns has known, but escaped the dangers against which he instructs — that he who encourages has felt the joys he proposes, or the perplexities he attempts to unravel. He believes — therefore he speaks; his audience hear, and are inclined to believe. What in other teachers is enthusiasm, is in him but sobriety."

Let us not forget that sincerity cannot be produced by an effort of the will. The soul of the preacher must have been penetrated by the truth, his desire for the living God must be satisfied, or his words will be lifeless.

Devotions and Texts

Now to come to a very practical matter. Personal devotions pay their dividends. Faithful reading of the English Bible (or in the original languages) and the application of the truth of that Word to one's own life will provide the minister with a wide choice of texts. Every pastor has gone through the ordeal of answering the question, "What shall I preach?" Some are foresighted enough to plan their sermons for a long time in ad-



LEROY B. OLIVER

General Secretary, Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

vance. Others agonize more frequently in choosing a text or subject. Is there an answer to this distress? There is an abundance of source material for him who drinks deeply of the Word for his own soul's good.

The minister who has been touched by the truth of a text will be many jumps ahead of him who comes to that Word cold. If sermon preparation is a burden, it is not made lighter by a superficial knowledge of the text. This is not to say that you will preach only on such passages as have to do with the subjective aspects of salvation. But as the late Professor Volbeda has pointed out in a recent volume, "Surely the written Word of God is pastoral through and through in its message, spirit and purpose." Reflection upon the historical portions of Scripture, and the most profound mysteries of redemption must find a response in the heart if they are adequately to be brought to men.

For ourselves and for all who would seek the sacred office we pray:

"Send Thou, O Lord, to every place
Swift messengers before Thy face,
The heralds of Thy wondrous grace
Where Thou Thyself wilt come.

Send men whose eyes have seen the King,
Men in whose ears His sweet words ring;
Send such Thy lost ones home to bring;
Send them where Thou wilt come."

Shepherd and Undershepherd

The minister of the Word, however, must again descend from the pulpit to walk among the people over whom the Lord through his church has made him the overseer. The Shepherd and Bishop of the flock of God would have the undershepherd feed and tend the lambs and sheep. And at this point it is of the greatest importance that the pastor have a personal and vital relationship with the Shepherd. At no other point in his ministry will God's servant draw so frequently and so deeply upon the resources of divine grace and wisdom.

First of all, a regular and meaningful devotional life will tend to mold the minister as a man of God. We are renewed by the Word of God, we are sanctified through the truth. Thus a holy life and an example of godliness may not be divorced from the nurture of the soul by the Word and prayer. The life of the minister of the Word as he walks among his people and in the community about him will reinforce his preaching and pastoral work. A shallow life will detract from his efforts.

We vigorously dissent from the words of Abraham Cowley who wrote, "His *faith*, perhaps, in some nice tenets might

Be wrong; his *life*, I'm sure, was in the right."

Or Alexander Pope's,

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,

He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

Faith and practice come from the *knowledge of the truth*, from communion with Him who is the Living Word through that written Word which he has given us. And that life which is molded by the Word powerfully supports the pastor who would care for his flock.

The Well of Compassion

Secondly, inward piety which is fed daily from the Word and by the Holy Spirit will enable the pastor to "have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way" and at the same time to be jealous for the honor of God, the King. Christlike compassion for the sick, the sorrowing, and the penitent cannot be turned on and off as you turn a water faucet. It will be the spontaneous reaction of one who sees the needs of men through the eyes of the Man of Sor-

rows, with that One who has borne our griefs and carried our woes.

Nor will holy indignation and the rebuke which the bold and unrepentant sinner merits be produced at will. Only he who has beheld Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire can feel godly revulsion at the sight of ungodliness and unrighteousness. Only he who meditates often and long on the Savior's love for the needy will be able to manifest that love to those to whom he seeks to minister comfort and healing of soul. McCheyne once said that he supposed the reason why some of the worst sinners in Dundee had come to hear him was, because his heart exhibited so much likeness to theirs.

Humility must characterize our dealings with men if we are to assist them toward the Savior and in the paths of holiness. Yet this humility will not be put on and off as a coat. It will be an aura, an adornment of the soul which has first mourned before the Savior and has known his word of forgiveness. As John Eadie notes in his work *Paul the Preacher*, there is an "eloquence that springs from experience."

The instruction of your Professor

of Poimenics will come in handy when pastoral problems arise, but he cannot supply you with the heart response and the attitude of compassion which you will need to tend your wandering and suffering sheep. When your people call you to counsel with them, when you do not have to remind them to tell you when they are sick and need the comfort of the Word and prayer, then you will have reason to believe that they have recognized you as one to whom they may turn, one who has a sympathetic ear. They will sense that your concern is a concern for their needs, a concern that flows from your own commitment to Him who is called the Servant of the Lord and who calls you to be among your people as one who serves.

First Things First

Unfortunately there is professionalism in the ministry. It will be avoided, however, only as we keep before us the calling with which we have been called. Charles Spurgeon once told his students at the Pastor's College: "I have frequently said of myself that I would not go across the road to hear myself preach; but I will venture to say of certain brethren that

I would even go across the road in the other direction *not* to hear them preach. Some sermons and prayers lend a colour of support to the theory of Dr. William Hammond, that the brain is not absolutely essential to life." Some attempts at the performance of ministerial and pastoral duties seem to assume that little or no heart is essential to a vital ministry, either.

That brings me finally to a matter to which I have already alluded. Personal piety and its cultivation through regular devotional practice will be reflected in attention to one's daily duties. It will be reflected in the abundant energy, both physical and spiritual, which will be available to you in your labors. Peter exhorts: "Adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

A clear conscience releases one for service. He who has the peace of God will find himself free to work for God. The man who has engaged in earnest prayer concerning his work will labor the harder to achieve it. Daily may you cry, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God."

THE BIBLE FOR OUR TIMES

"Let us . . . come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16).

The writer of the book of Hebrews encourages us to exercise the privilege of prayer: "Seeing . . . that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (4:14-16).

In this passage we are given the great reason why God answers prayer. If, in the last analysis, answer to prayer depended upon my faithfulness or earnestness in intercession, I fear that I should be disappointed. The heavens would remain silent. For even in my most holy exercises, even when I am bowed in worship and prayer in the presence of God, I sin. I am utterly incapable, even at the highest levels of service before the Lord, of conforming to his will. His standard requiring me to be holy even as he is holy is infinitely beyond my reach. Thus I am forced to plead for divine mercy.

It is true at every point in my redemption that I am saved by grace, through faith, and that not of myself. It is the gift of God. It is not of works, lest I should boast. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

God answers prayer, then, simply because his mercy in Christ Jesus extends to every part of my union with him. All this being true does not exclude hearty and persevering prayer on my part. Rather, it is the guarantee that when I pray, I shall be heard.

RALPH E. CLOUGH

Army Needs Chaplains

Additional chaplains are needed immediately to provide religious services in the Army, according to Chaplain (Major General) Frank A. Tobey, Chief of Army Chaplains. "Chaplains are volunteers," he said, and "we must keep it that way."

It is reported that the urgency now extends to many denominations. The immediate need is primarily for men under 33 years of age.

Changes of Address

Rev. Arthur B. Spooner, 633 Edgehill Rd., Ardsley, Pa.

Rev. George G. Weeber, 1900 Jefferson SE, Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

Rev. Raymond O. Zorn, 9 Duncan St., Frankton-Junction, New Zealand.

THE CHANGING SCENE

By HENRY W. CORAY

It is a dictum of science that to every action there is always an equal or opposite reaction. The magazine *Time* recently hinted that the boom in North American Protestantism may be tapering off. This is to be expected. When the public awakes to the sad fact that in multiple quarters it has been fed with stones and not bread for lo these many years, a groundswell of skepticism will inevitably set in.

Dr. Warfield points out that such was the case with the Charles Finney revivals. Finney, probably the most overrated of all evangelists, pummeled people with frothy platitudes under the guise of biblical preaching, coercing them to give lip loyalty to God and His Christ. With what effect? When his alleged converts came to themselves and realized that their experience had been founded on a shallow emotionalism they turned away from all religion. A coldness of heart supplanted the warm glow they had known when they went forward at the meetings. The areas Finney evangelized, Warfield says, were like a burned over prairie. Unbelief and cynicism followed in the wake of a false revival.

Statistically, America has been enjoying a field day since World War II. Men and women, sick at heart over the horrors of war, have given the professing church an unparalleled opportunity to present the pure gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It has not been unusual for the more prominent churches to hold two and three services of worship on the Sabbath morning. Never have the church rolls been more loaded with names than in the last fifteen years. Feverish building programs have been in progress as the great ecclesiastical juggernaut rolls on conquering and to conquer.

Alas, the message sounded from so many pulpits has not been the authoritative, ringing, "Thus saith the Lord." As Huston Smith of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has indicated, the vibrant preaching note now is, "This community of faith in-

vites you to share in its venture of trust and commitment." And as in the days of the minor prophets there is famine of the proclaiming and hearing of the message of God.

Nobody can with certainty predict the dimensions the falling away may take. In physical illness a relapse is often more serious than the original ailment. It may very well be the case in the spiritual realm. It behooves those who have committed their lives to the true gospel to accelerate their efforts to radiate the light of Christ's truth as the shadows of evening stretch out into the night of judgment.

* * * * *

James Harvey Robinson, in a penetrating essay, shows that there are four types of thinking. There is first of all reverie, or daydreaming. Most of us expend our intellectual powers in this quite profitless form of mental exercise, or lack of it.

There is the kind of thinking that calls for decisions. Shall I write letters or not? Shall I take the train or bus? Shall I dine at 7:00 or 7:30? This species calls for effort and as a rule we resent it. Nor does it add anything to our store of knowledge.

A third class of thinking involves conviction or opinion. By nature, Robinson believes, we are stubborn and very prone to defend our cherished ideas. "The result is that most

* * * * *

This morning I observed in our kitchen
That a member of my family
Who loves bargains
Had truly been on the rampage.
The coffee can was marked 15C OFF!
A soap wrapping said SAVE 8 CENTS.
The ammonia bottle shrieked YOU SAVE 18 C.
The peanut butter jar reported a 12-cent saving.
A cereal box promised a 25-cent refund.
I calculated that we had netted
A saving of 78 cents.
Well, I thought, this is good,
But why should I not take that extra 78 cents
And put it in the mission fund?

The Old Chinese Philosopher

of our so-called reasoning consists in finding arguments for going on believing as we already do." Temper, wounded pride and aversions often lie at the base of such argumentation. Milton wrote his treatise on divorce as a result of difficulties with his seventeen-year old wife. Paul warned against prejudicial thinking when he wrote the Philippians: "Let your moderation (literally, your sweet reasonableness) be known unto all men."

Finally, there is the type of thought that leads us to change our minds. Call this creative thinking, for so it is; reconstructive thinking, if you will. Galileo noticed cathedral lamps hanging on long chains from the ceiling. They swung to and fro as Galileo studied them. Did their oscillations, whether long or short, occupy the same time? He tested the hypothesis by counting his pulse beats. Result: the invention of the highly accurate pendulum clock. Faraday wondered what would happen if he mounted a disk of copper between the poles of a horseshoe magnet. He made the disk revolve and this produced an electric current. The world of dynamos and motors came to birth.

From the scriptural point of view this creative thinking derives from the divine image in man. Marred as the image is because of sin, it is nevertheless being restored in and through Christ. It needs to be developed by every one of God's children, whether in the field of science, art, music, cooking, writing, or what will you? Newton expressed the point so beautifully when, upon poring over God's handiwork in the stars he cried, "O God, I think Thy thoughts after Thee!"

A Page from a Translator's Diary

Monday, November 14, 1960

Taipei, Formosa

By EDWIN C. URBAN

The account that follows is one of the most thrilling contained in the records of modern missions. It never fails to stir the hearts of those in Zion who long to see the glory of the Lord manifested in the salvation of precious souls. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that while this account has to do with the grace of God manifested in one aboriginal woman, it has to do with one of the most profuse outpourings of the Holy Spirit in our times.

The name of the aboriginal woman was Chi-oang, a woman of the Taroko Tyals, so frail at times that she had to be carried from village to village on the backs of strong young men of her tribe. But God used this frail earthen vessel in a remarkable way to show to all that the exceeding greatness of the power that effected what has been called "The Formosan Pentecost" was the power of His Word and Spirit and not the power of men.

A Woman Prepared by God

For many years before Chi-oang came to know Christ, the Great Potter was busy molding and shaping her to be a vessel meet for the Master's use. His hands were actively preparing her for a high and noble task, that of bearing the beaten oil and the flame that never dies into mountains upon which the gross darkness of heathenism and head-hunting had settled. Knowing what difficulties she would face in the future witnessing to her people under the rule and administration of the Japanese, God put her into a position to render a service to both and so to gain the respect of her people and the gratitude of the Japanese officials.

In 1895, when Formosa was ceded to Japan by the Treaty of Shimonoseki, the new government met with some opposition from the Formosan Chinese. The Japanese promptly landed forces to establish their rule over the island and quickly quelled the opposition of the local government. But the aborigines living in the mountains were not so easily subdued. They resisted stubbornly and continued the

fight against the Japanese for many years. They resented deeply the intrusion into the great mountain fastnesses which they considered their own. Fighting as guerillas in the dense thickets and deep gorges of the mountains with their head-hunting knives and captured firearms, they took a heavy toll of the Japanese troops sent against them and vowed that they would never surrender.

But after more than ten years of fighting against superior arms and numbers, the tribal leaders, feeling that their valor had been sufficiently vindicated, sought to negotiate a peace. The Japanese, eager to exploit the mountain forests of their camphor trees and hardwoods, were more than willing to conclude an honorable peace with these fierce fighters. The Tyal leaders chose Chi-oang, then 36 years of age and married to a Chinese merchant, to act as their interpreter and representative. A wise choice it was, for she was an intelligent woman of sound judgment and could speak, as well as her own tribal tongue, Chinese and Japanese.

Through her mediation a pact of peace was concluded between the warring parties to their mutual satisfaction. So it was that her name was held in high regard among the tribesmen and gratefully remembered by the Japanese. Little did she realize then that God had chosen her for an even greater ministry of reconciliation — the reconciliation of men to God.

Ministry of Reconciliation

It is not plain how Chi-oang became a Christian. If not her husband, then her mother-in-law certainly was a Christian. Two Canadian Presbyterian missionaries had some slight contact with her as early as 1929 and one, the Rev. James Dickson, urged her to attend Bible school. At that time she was advanced in years, being 58, and not in good health. Understandably she was reluctant to begin the study. She was also very sensitive about the tattoo marks that disfigured her face and feared that she would not be accepted by the

other students. But at last she was prevailed upon to enroll for the two-year course.

In 1931, after completing the two-year course at the age of 60, Chi-oang travelled to the east coast and settled in a small village at the base of the towering mountains along the coast. From that point she began her quiet ministry to individuals and small groups in the Tyal villages high up in the mountains. Only one who has himself reached the point of absolute physical exhaustion climbing these steep trails can begin to appreciate the physical accomplishments of this old woman with failing health. The only answer is that the Spirit of God filled her feeble frame with a strength not her own. Climbing for hours through the steaming hot valleys to the shivering cold of the damp forests high in the clouds, she labored to bring the light of the gospel to her people.

God's Providence

When the police discovered her activities and tried to prevent her from holding meetings, she travelled at night, secretly from place to place, holding meetings by the light of the village fires. Time and time again she miraculously escaped the police, being spirited away on the backs of the strong young men who counted her as their spiritual mother. In the midst of the most violent persecution, when Tyal believers were beaten with bamboo rods and left to lie in their own blood, when they, rather than deny Christ, were cast in stinking prisons to rot, God did not permit one hair to fall from the head of Chi-oang.

The higher officials were strangely reluctant to press charges against her, perhaps for fear of a tribal revolt, but perhaps because they remembered with some gratitude what she had done more than 20 years before in mediating the peace between the Japanese and the Tyals.

God gave Chi-oang 14 years to labor for him in the Formosan highlands. Then, just a few months before the missionaries were able to return to the island, in the spring of 1946, Chi-oang died at the age of 74. The vessel lay, shattered pieces in the dust, its form departed to a better place.

But what of the flame? Where had it gone? It had lighted on a hundred mountains and was dispelling the darkness of heathenism. When those

who hated the light tried to stamp it out, the cloven tongues divided and lighted upon a hundred more. It had lighted upon untold thousands of heads in all of the tribes, so that all of the tribespeople heard spoken in their own tongues the wonderful works of God. It had come to light upon the altars of untold thousands of hearts, so that in scores of villages the aborigines were moved to gather stones from the riverbeds and timbers from the forests to build their places of worship.

In literally hundreds of villages each Lord's Day spiritual worship

ascended in the form of prayers and hymns hastily set to familiar mountain melodies. Only God knows for certain how many became believers in those days, but it would not be an exaggeration to say that *tens of thousands* were reconciled to God through the direct and indirect ministry of Chi-oang and granted a greater pact of peace having this seal:

"For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed: but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

Isaiah 54:10

Here and There in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Philadelphia, Pa. — The Rev. and Mrs. Egbert Andrews are scheduled to leave in October on an itinerary which will take them through the Midwest to California and Oregon and back again by mid-December. Arriving on furlough from Formosa in July they spent a few weeks with relatives in Michigan and on the New Jersey shore before participating in the French Creek Senior High Camp.

Whitinsville, Mass. — Mr. and Mrs. Paul MacDonald are the parents of a daughter, Priscilla Lois, born on August 28. Mr. MacDonald is teaching in the Whitinsville Christian School this fall.

West Collingswood, N. J. — Members of Immanuel Church turned out in large numbers at a mid-summer farewell for the Kenneth Avis family who have moved to Memphis, where Dr. Avis is to teach in the University of Tennessee. Elder Avis was Sunday school superintendent, and president of the Camden Christian School Board. He is also a member of the denomination's Committee on Christian Education. Mrs. Avis was a Sunday school teacher, and a daughter, Carolyn, was graduated in June from Philmont Christian High with an award for outstanding achievement in music.

The Avises were called back to New Jersey early in September when his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Avis, were involved in a head-on collision

near Elmer, N. J., as a result of which both lost their lives.

Elder Wm. Gooch was appointed to take Dr. Avis' place as Sunday school superintendent. Pastor of Immanuel Church is the Rev. George Knight.

Hialeah, Fla. — Sharon Church welcomed 11 communicant members and eight covenant children into its fellowship on the last Sunday of August. Thirty-five young people from the church attended the Southland Bible Conference, and a number of

them accepted Christ as their Savior, reports the Rev. Glenn Coie, pastor.

Kirkwood, Pa. — The Sunday evening Bible Institute continues with a program for all the family including a hymn sing, Machen Leagues, an adult Bible study, and worship. A portion of the Institute this fall is a 13-week sound film series by Dr. Peter Eldersveld, speaking on the theme of the Lord's Prayer. Pastor of the Kirkwood Church is the Rev. Lester Bachman, who is making plans for a study class on the subject, "What does it mean to confess Christ and unite with the Church?"

Bangor, Me. — The Rev. George Weeber, who recently resigned the pastorate of Pilgrim Church, has recovered from serious surgery. Mr. and Mrs. Weeber have gone to Michigan where he is in training for the work of a hospital chaplain.

Branchton, Pa. — New Hope Church was host to the spring meeting of the Ohio Presbyterial which decided to "adopt" a Korean orphanage of 237 children for Christmas gifts with the help of the women of the five churches.

A prayer circle preceded a timely and informative panel discussion, according to Mrs. June Lyness, who sent the report. Participants on the subject of "Reaching our Children and Young People for Missions" were the four ministers' wives — Mrs. Kress, Mrs. Cummings, Mrs. Tyson, and Mrs. Morton. Mrs. Dean Couch, Pittsburgh,

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gave a short talk, "What about the Ecumenical Movement?"

Guest speaker in the evening was the Rev. LeRoy Oliver, whose message on "The Past, Present, and Future of Home Missions" was illustrated by colored slides.

New officers of the Presbyterian are Mrs. Reid Miller, president; Mrs. Stephen Gabrielse, vice-president; Mrs. Clyde Taylor, secretary; and Mrs. Paul Rainey, treasurer.

Cranston, R. I. — Calvary Church has scheduled a series of evangelistic services from October 1-4, it is announced by the Rev. Wendell Rockey, pastor. The gospel messages are being brought by the Rev. LeRoy Oliver, general secretary of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension.

Oostburg, Wisc. — Bethel Church celebrated its 25th anniversary on August 17th with a dinner at the Oostburg High School gymnasium. Music was furnished by the band made up of 35 young people of the congregation, with Roger Bloemers as director. A male quartet sang and also the choir, under the direction of Harvey Nyenhuis, who has served in this capacity for 17 years.

Speakers were Mrs. Oscar Holkeboer, widow of the former pastor, now teaching at Calvin College; Ivan De Master, now a senior at Westminster Seminary, who spoke especially to the young people; and the Rev. John Verhage, pastor of the church. Mr. Howard Le Mahieu was chairman of the evening program.

Pictures were shown of interesting incidents from the church's history, with Mr. James Doane as narrator. Special worship services commemorating the anniversary were held on September 3, with the Rev. Calvin Cummings of Pittsburgh preaching at both services.

Hatboro, Pa. — Trinity Church has voted a call for the pastoral services of the Rev. Arthur B. Spooner. After action by the Presbytery of Philadelphia the call must be transmitted to the Presbytery of New Jersey, of which Mr. Spooner is a member. Moderator of the Session is Dr. Robert Knudsen.

Willow Grove, Pa. — The Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Duff arrived in early September on furlough from Eritrea. After a short visit with Miss

Margaret Duff in western Pennsylvania they settled in their home on Old Welsh Road. They expect to visit their daughter (Mrs. Wm. Brown) in California before intineration in the East.

Summer Bible Conferences

More than 60 young people with a staff of 17 enjoyed the 3rd annual Southland Bible Conference sponsored by the Presbytery of the South of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Held again this year at Camp Rotary near Auburndale in central Florida from August 14 to 19, the program featured the new missionary to the Southwest Miami field, the Rev. Robert Atwell, as evening speaker. Other members of the Presbytery participated, with the Rev. Glenn R. Coie serving as director.

French Creek maintained its popularity among the young people of the Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Long Island area with a total of nearly 500 attending the four conferences from August 14 through Labor Day. A host of fine speakers and counsellors, to say nothing of mattresses instead of hay-filled ticks, contributed to the pleasure of the campers.

The conference closed with the annual missionary rally on Labor Day, at which the Rev. Egbert Andrews of Taiwan was the speaker.

In southern California the junior and senior conferences met concurrently for a worthwhile week in August at Wrightwood in the San Bernardino Mountains. The camp was marred by a serious mishap to Duncan Lovik, 13-year-old son of the Rev. Paul Lovik of Manhattan Beach, who fell from a scenic ski-lift in the area,

breaking both legs, one arm, and a vertebra in his lower back. It was six hours before he reached the hospital, but with the blessing of God and the skill of a team of three surgeons, two weeks after the accident he had been moved to a hospital in Redondo Beach near his home and was reported to be making a surprisingly good recovery.

Deerwander Bible Conference in Maine had a large attendance this summer with a number of families of staff members also present. One Orthodox Presbyterian pastor wrote that "in many ways it was more informative and worthwhile" than any he had attended. Among the features were panel discussions and a motion picture showing certain rites of pagan religions in the Orient.

About 70 campers from four Oregon churches attended the annual White Branch Camp in July. Besides the Orthodox Presbyterian pastors from Bend and Portland, the Rev. Howard Spaan and his wife, of the Calvin Christian Reformed Church of Portland, were on the teaching staff. The Rev. Herbert Butt of Portland's Hillcrest Chapel brought the evening inspirational messages.

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