

GUARDIAN

Orthodox Presbyterian Assembly Makes Declaration on the Confession of 1967

The approval of the proposal to revise the confessional position of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America by two-thirds of the presbyteries of that church brings near to completion a long process of departure from the position of a catholic, evangelical, and reformed church. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church was brought into existence when believers who sought to resist this departure a generation ago were thwarted in their efforts at reform and were forced to withdraw from the church. The Thirty-fourth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, meeting at Long Beach, California, on April 28, 1967, regards it as its solemn responsibility, therefore, to make the following declaration concerning the proposed constitutional revision of the United Presbyterian Church:

1. The proposed constitutional revision — including the Confession of 1967, which is designed to give expression to the faith of the church today, and the revised forms of subscription — effectively removes the Bible from its position as the only infallible rule of faith and life, and thereby repudiates the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, King and Head of the church. The Confession of 1967 disallows written revelation; it refuses to speak of the Bible as inspired by the Holy Spirit and therefore the Word of God; it speaks of the Bible as the “word of God” only in the context of its reception and interpretation by the church.

2. The repudiation of the doctrine of Scripture of the Westminster Confession of Faith is but one aspect

(continued on page 55)

Two Sisters

GRACE HARD

I'm going to tell you a story about two little girls in Korea. Now, maybe this conversation never took place just as I've set it down here, but from what I know about Korea and Koreans, it very well *could* have happened this way. The girls are Bong Sook, eleven years old, and Kyung Sook, nine years old.

K.S.: (running into her yard) Big sister! Big sister! Guess what I saw down at the Christians' worship building! There's a big sign out front that says they are showing pictures tonight. Do you think Mother will let us go?

B.S.: I don't know; let's ask her. But let's not let Grandmother hear us ask. You know that she doesn't want the family to have anything to do with Christians because she thinks the village spirits will get angry with our family. Remember what she said about Mrs. Sim? — that Mrs. Sim has only had bad luck since she became a Christian, and that her only cow wouldn't have died if she hadn't made the spirits angry by becoming one of those Jesus-people.

K.S.: Yes, but I don't think Mother would mind our going. She's always talking about the big change that came over Mr. Kim since he became one of those Jesus-people. Why, he doesn't even go to the wine shop any more, and remember how he used to be so mean to his wife and children when he was drunk? Father says he can't be bribed any more to get special favors from the government for his friends.

Many Questions

K.S.: Aren't you a little scared to go into the Christians' worship building?

B.S.: Scared? Why should I be? Don't lots of our friends go to Lord's Day school there?

K.S.: Maybe we won't know what to do. The Christians do some strange things. For instance, they call it Lord's Day school. Why don't they call the first day of the week 'First Day' like everybody else does?

B.S.: Yes, that is strange. But it must have something to do with their religion. I've even heard them call First Day, 'Rest Day.' And you know that the Christians do rest on that day and don't do any work they don't have to. I guess it's all just part of being a Jesus-person. Anyway, don't worry about it, there are going to be a lot of children there that never went to church before. They won't know what to do, either.

K.S.: I suppose I shouldn't feel strange; I've watched enough of the services through the windows. Why, I believe I could even sing some of their songs!

K.S. (in a whisper): My! The place is crowded already. (But an old woman near the door points out a little empty spot on the floor and the two girls wriggle into place there.)

K.S.: Bong Sook, look how tall that man is who's talking. He must be an American. What is he saying?

B.S.: What do you mean? He's talking Korean; can't you understand your own language?

K.S.: Korean? How can a long-nosed foreigner be speaking Korean?

B.S.: I don't know; I guess he learned it. Be quiet and listen.

The Foreigner Speaks

Mr. Hard, the strange foreigner about whom the girls were speaking, is closing his sermon with a prayer. As those in the church sing the closing hymn of the worship service, the minister asks them to move forward to make room for those coming in just to see the pictures. Even though the girls thought the place was crowded when they came in, by jamming up close to each other, they can make enough room so that almost twice the number of people can now be seated! The room is buzzing as more and more children crowd in and Mr. Hard gets the filmstrip projector ready to work. After some words of introduction, the lights go out and the children sigh, for the pictures they

have come to see are about to begin.

The filmstrip told the story of Daniel's three friends who had to face the fiery furnace because they would not bow down to the king's idol. Kyung Sook grabbed Bong Sook's arm in fright when she saw the picture of the terrible fire into which the three young men were to be thrown, and they both gasped in surprise when the three were found alive. Kyung Sook couldn't help asking a question even though the "tall man with the long nose" was talking:

K.S.: Do you really think God could take care of his believers like that, so that they wouldn't be burned in such a terrible furnace?

B.S.: Hm-mm. I don't know. If God is so powerful, why did Mrs. Sim's only cow die after she believed in him? But the pictures showed that this God is able to do wonderful things. Maybe we'll have to come to the Lord's Day school and learn more about this.

K.S.: Sh-h, they've asked the American man to show some more pictures.

Another Bible Story

A little shiver ran through the girls as the title of the next filmstrip was announced; "Naaman the Leper." But soon the two girls were putting themselves in the place of the little servant girl who wanted to help her kind master get rid of his terrible disease. On the way home, the girls talked about what they had heard at the end of that story.

K.S.: I'd hate to be a leper, even if I know God could heal me.

B.S.: Yes, but don't you remember that the preacher said everyone is like a leper inside if his heart is not clean? He said our sins make us unclean before God. That's even worse than being a leper.

K.S.: But if God could heal the leper, couldn't he get rid of our sin, too?

B.S. I think so. Isn't that what the preacher said? — something about believing in Jesus to have our lives freed from sin. Kyung Sook, we'll just have to go back to the church next week and learn more about this Jesus-way, because I want to be made clean from my sin that makes me ugly in God's sight.

K.S.: Yes, let's do. I want to be clean inside, too.

Captain with the Mighty Heart

HENRY W. CORAY

Chapter 3

THE SCHOLAR

Two Princeton Seminary students walked out of Machen's class in Beginners' Greek.

"I can't stand that man," one of them said.

"Why?" the other asked.

"Well — he's such a perfectionist he gets me upset."

"That's why I like him," said the second. "You have to admit he makes you learn."

Shakespeare in his *Henry VIII* offers an earthy definition of scholarship. He has Griffith say of Cardinal Wolsey:

He was a scholar, and a good one;
Exceeding wise, fair spoken and persuading:

Lofty and sour to those who lov'd
him not;

But to those who sought him, sweet
as summer.

Which things one may transfer from Wolsey to Machen in a figure. I have observed certain students, as the complainant mentioned above, storm from his classroom savage in their criticism of his uncompromising thoroughness. On the other hand, those who appreciated him would come away from his lectures as exhilarated as bathers slipping from a cold shower.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* records this of him:

Machen enjoyed a world-wide reputation as a Greek scholar and learned Christian apologist. His theological position, he was wont to emphasize, was not fundamentalist, but the Reformed Faith of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Doctrine of Scripture

In the field of Biblical criticism he took his starting point squarely on the Bible as the infallible Word of God. From the beginning of his labors this was for him the specific framework of truth. He never budged from it. Now, some thirty years after his passing, the doctrine of Scripture is still a storm center of controversy. Even in evangelical circles there is increasing reluctance on the part of theologians and ministers to affirm confidence in plenary or total inspiration. On this point

Dr. Machen was unyielding. In his *Christian Faith in the Modern World* he has this to say:

I hold that Biblical writers, after having been prepared for their task by providential ordering of their entire lives, received, in addition to all that, a blessed and wonderful and supernatural guidance and impulsion by the Spirit of God, so that they were preserved from the errors that appear in other books and thus the resulting book, the Bible, is in all its parts the very Word of God, completely true in what it says regarding matters of fact and completely authoritative in its commands.

That is the doctrine of full or 'plenary' inspiration. It is not a popular doctrine. It is not in accord with the wisdom of this world. A man cannot take it seriously (and really act in accordance with it) and at the same time enjoy the favor of the world or the favor of the ecclesiastical authorities in many of the churches of the present day. Yet it is a very blessed doctrine all the same, and if a man founds his life upon it he can be very

joyous and quite undismayed in all the sorrows and all the battles that may come upon him in the world.

In *Christianity and Liberalism* you will find this ringing affirmation:

The doctrine of plenary inspiration . . . supposes that the Holy Spirit so informed the minds of the Biblical writers that they were kept from falling into the errors that mar all other books. The Bible might contain an account of a genuine revelation of God, and yet not contain a true account. But according to the doctrine of inspiration, the account is as a matter of fact a true account; the Bible is an 'infallible rule of faith and practice.'

An Exciting Course

One of the books I treasure most in my library is a copy of *The Origin of Paul's Religion*. On the fly leaf are the words, "With the warm regards of the author, J. Gresham Machen; October 7, 1930."

Origin, published in 1921, was used as our textbook in his elective course, "Paul and his Environment." I could never understand why every Princeton student did not enroll in the class. I thought of the course then, and I think of it now, as the most exciting one of all my seminary days.

C. S. Lewis, in the introduction to Phillips' *Letters to the Young Churches*, has an illuminating comment on Liberalism's assault on the apostle Paul:

In the earlier history of every rebellion there is a stage at which you do not yet attack the King in person. You say, "The King is all right. It is his Ministers who are wrong. They misrepresent him and corrupt all his plans—which, I'm sure, are good plans if only the Ministers would let them take effect." And the first victory consists in beheading a few Ministers: only at a later stage do you go on and behead the King himself.

In the same way, the nineteenth century attack on St. Paul was really only a stage in the revolt against Christ. Men were not ready in great numbers to attack Christ himself. They made the normal first move—that of attacking one of his principal ministers. Everything they disliked in Christianity was therefore attributed to St. Paul. It was unfortunate



that their case could not impress anyone who had really read the Gospels and the Epistles with attention: but apparently few people had, and so the first victory was won. St. Paul was impeached and banished and the world went on to the next step—the attack on the King Himself.

Dr. Machen, as well as Professor Lewis, understood thoroughly the nature of the discrediting of Paul. Out of the matrix of that awareness was born the material that went into "Paul and his Environment." "Explain the origin of the religion of Paul, and you have solved the problem of the origin of Christianity," he used to say.

The Question of Origin

He proceeded to show that certain efforts had been put forth, chiefly by Continental theologians, to resolve the problem on grounds other than that declared by the apostle, namely, that he derived his gospel from no human source. To the Galatians Paul wrote, "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Fundamentally, there are four schools purporting to explain the origin of Paul's theology.

The first is the evangelical or supernatural position to which Machen was committed and which he defended stoutly. He says:

According to this explanation, Jesus was really a heavenly being, who in order to reclaim sinful man came voluntarily to earth, suffered for the sins of others on the cross, rose from the dead, ascended to the right hand of God, from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. If this representation be correct, then there is really nothing to explain; the religious attitude of Paul toward Jesus was not an apotheosis of a man, but recognition as divine of one who really was divine.

The other three schools of thought, while differing in their frames of reference and lines of reasoning, agree in their rejection of the supernatural. The religion of Paul, they assert, was a purely naturalistic phenomenon: it can be understood only when purged of its miraculous elements.

Briefly, this three-pronged genre takes the form of (1) old-line Liberalism, (2) the view of Wrede, namely, that Paul had worked out his doctrine of the person of Christ *prior* to his conversion, and (3) the hypothesis of Bousset, which is that the apostle drew his image of Jesus from certain similar concepts of deity prominent in the "mystery" religions of Paul's day.

Scholarly Approach

While Dr. Machen disagreed vigorously with the three latter views, he was never contemptuous of the efforts advanced to solve the problem on scholarly grounds. For example, he considered Bousset's interpretation so ingenious that he pays glowing tribute to it in this passage:

Since the rise of F. C. Baur, in the former half of the nineteenth century there has been no such original, comprehensive and grandly conceived re-writing of early Christian history as now appears in Bousset's 'Kyrios Christos.'

To which he adds the gentle barb: **The only question is whether originality in the historical sphere is always compatible with truth.**

I must confess that there were moments in class when I almost held my breath. How plausible appeared the formulations spelled out by pundits like Wilhelm Bousset, historian and Biblical critic at Gottingen, and William Wrede, known as Extraordinary Professor of the New Testament at Breslau and Gottingen. Their views, though contradictory, were nevertheless so starkly compelling that I would wonder how anyone could possibly puncture them. Before the end of the course I came to realize that my fears were groundless.

Machen took on his opponents with all the boldness of David as he moved out against Goliath. When he had set forth their arguments with detached fairness he would accept their challenge and go into action. No army engineer assigned the task of removing the pin from an enemy time bomb applied more skill than Das (an affectionate nickname) as he went about the task of demolition. Coolly and systematically he proceeded to take apart the mechanism until the whole was dismantled.

His Strategy

In his piece titled "Christianity in Conflict" in *Contemporary American Theology* (Volume 1, Round Table Press, New York, 1932) he tells us something of his strategy:

I tried to show (1) that the "Liberal" or Ritschlian historians were right over against Wrede and other radicals in insisting that Paul possessed and cherished a knowledge of the real Jesus, but (2) that the radicals were right over against the "Liberals" in insisting that the Jesus whom Paul presupposes is no mere teacher of righteousness but a supernatural Redeemer come into the world for the salvation of men. The true synthesis, I argued, is found only when that

supernatural Redeemer, presupposed in the Epistles of Paul and presented in detail in the Gospels, is held to be the real Jesus who walked upon this earth.

Here we get a clear view of Machen's methodology. It was simply to take the arguments of the two schools of thought he was opposing, the radicals and the Liberals, place one over against the other and allow them to cut each other down, as ancient Abimelech and the men of Shechem destroyed each other in combat. It was brilliant maneuvering.

Thus doth he turn their swords
In their own bosoms . . .

Exposition of Scripture

Nor was his approach merely negative. As Jeremiah was ordered to "root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down" before he was "to build, and to plant," so Machen's challenging of the arguments of the destructive Biblical critics was preliminary to his positive exposition of Pauline Christology. He moved in the currents of the apostle's thought patterns as one who had found great spoil. Many a student sitting in his classes felt his heart burn within him as this man mighty in the Scriptures opened up new vistas on the glory of the person of God's matchless Son.

What Richard E. Day says of the Puritans was also true of him: they were "men who so fed on the Word that they had only to squeeze their minds to fill their alabaster vases with ointment, and these precious vases they broke week after week with prodigal liberality at the feet of their delighted people."

The Origin of Paul's Religion catapulted its author to international renown. Critics abroad as well as at home hailed the work as a valuable contribution to theological knowledge. B. W. Bacon, director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, accorded it "a high place among the products of American biblical scholarship." James Moffat, Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary in New York, wrote, "Dr. Machen is nothing if not acute. He has read thoroughly, presents clearly and fairly his opponent's view and answers it logically."

The Princeton professor was beginning to bear witness to the uttermost parts of the earth.

... to behold the beauty of the Lord ...

When a missionary sits down to write, what does he say? What is the valuable thing taught by God that must be shared? Bruce Hunt and Elizabeth Elliot have thought it through and they have something to say to us.

Bruce Hunt: *For a Testimony. The Banner of Truth Trust, 1966, 159 pp., \$1.00.*

It is December 1941. The Japanese control Manchuria where the Hunts are Orthodox Presbyterian missionaries among a group of Koreans. Just a few hours before the attack on Pearl Harbor the Japanese release Bruce from forty-five days of imprisonment. They plan to deport him immediately. He has told them that they cannot put him out unless God so wills it.

Have you ever thought of how God used Pearl Harbor to keep Bruce Hunt in Manchuria for another seven months? It was not until June 1, 1942 that the family finally left Harbin on their way home to the United States. Indeed, nothing moves on the missionary front except by God's design. This is a major point in Hunt's book. You see it work out during those days in prison and concentration camp. God's choice of cell mates, the amounts of food, the sleeping conditions from night to night, interaction with guards and interrogators all serve his eternal purpose. When a man obviously can make no plans of his own he can see even more clearly that God makes plans—right down to details—for his servants.

Now that God has brought him out of prison, Mr. Hunt gives his thanks to the name of the Lord (Psalm 142:7). This book takes hold of you and you can't put it down. Reading *For a Testimony* is the experience of sharing the inner thoughts of God's man in prison, in his own living room preparing to go to prison a second time, as he watches his twins play outside the prison fence, and in the interrogation room. These inner thoughts are sensitive to the providential hand of God.

What Bruce Hunt shares is, of course, not reserved only for missionaries. God gives to each of his people times when the pressure is great. But when the

tribulum (Roman threshing-sled) is the heaviest, then the richest grain is threshed, for God himself comes close to deepen the believer's sense of his glory. Another missionary once described it this way: "... tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint; because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit ..." (Romans 5:3-5).

Elizabeth Elliot: *No Graven Image, Harpers, 1966, 244 pp., \$3.95.*

One first-term missionary made it her practice to give this novel to her prayer partners. You begin to see why as you read.

As Margaret Sparhawk begins her missionary work in the high Andes, she is young, confident, sincere—and headed for humiliation and weakness. Her goal is to work with the Indians, to bring Christ to them. As the story

develops, she forms a friendship with Pedro Chimbu and his children, learns their language, and begins to translate Mark with their help. One night she is called out to help with the delivery of a baby. Although it came feet first, the child lived—much to the Indians' surprise. One by one, slowly and with great difficulty the triumphs are chiseled into the hard rock of a pagan culture. People begin to listen to gospel stories.

Then the *threshing-sled* appears. It falls almost brutally on Margaret. A routine injection, one that should have ministered life, brings death to the most promising "prospect." The hand of God, which seemed to be leading to missionary victory, is the hand of the thresher. His fan is in his hand. The chaff must go. The grain must be purged.

When God begins with a person, he continues. His aim is the cleansing of character, conformity to Christ. This is more important than professional success. There must be no graven images. He uses weakness, failure, unsought disaster. Paul said this: "... I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak,

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then I am strong" (II Corinthians 12:10).

Elizabeth Elliot writes against a background of God's work in her during a missionary career that included service in Ecuador and the tragedy and triumph of the Auca story. She writes with honesty. What she expresses is not doubt but faith—faith that God's

impact on a Christian's life is real and humbling. She says that then God is seen clearly and his glory is overwhelming. ". . . and when I saw him I fell at his feet as a dead man" (Revelation 1:17).

LAURENCE C. SIBLEY, JR.
Glenside, Pennsylvania

thodox Presbyterian Church in Glenside, Mr. Cottenden worked this past summer in Sonora, California with the Rev. Robert K. Churchill, an experience which was of great value to both Mr. Cottenden and the church. The second Sunday Mr. Cottenden was in Sonora he had an opportunity to preach over the radio! At present he is a licentiate of the Presbytery of Philadelphia and desires a pastorate in one of our congregations.

Former United Presbyterians

Covenant Church of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Second Parish Church of Portland, Maine, and Paradise Hills Church of San Diego, California all had Allen Curry as a summer worker. After graduation from Geneva College Allen began his work in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. Three years later, having been licensed by the Presbytery of Philadelphia and upon graduation from Westminster, he, with his wife Marilyn, now hopes to continue to serve the church in ministering to one of our congregations. Both Mr. Curry and Mr. Cottenden, it may be noted, left the United Presbyterian Church to enter the Orthodox Presbyterian Church out of conviction for its stand.

Paul Doepke, with degrees from both Washington State and the University of Washington, spent four years at Westminster, supporting himself and his wife, Donna, with a job as maintenance man for a dairy. The Doepkes have a daughter, Susan, not quite two years old. Paul has supplied pulpits regularly during the summers, mostly Orthodox Presbyterian churches in New Jersey. The Doepkes' home church when they came east was the Puget Sound Chapel in Seattle. When that formerly independent group, together with their pastor, the Rev. D. Robert Lindberg, entered the Orthodox Presbyterian Church two years ago, the Doepkes thereby became members of the denomination. "This was much to our satisfaction," says Paul, "for by then we were committed to the Reformed faith." After graduation Mr. Doepke will be working with the Puget Sound Church and beginning his trials for licensure in the Presbytery of the West Coast.

There are one or two others among the 20 senior graduates who are giving serious thought to the Orthodox Presbyterian ministry, but their decisions are not final at this writing.

— ALLEN D. CURRY

Seven Seniors Seek to Serve Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Westminster Theological Seminary will graduate seven students this year who plan to enter the gospel ministry in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Of these seven young men, two of them come from other lands. Noel Weeks comes to us from Grafton, Australia. Dan Overduin comes to our denomination from Canada, where he was a member of the Free Christian Reformed Church.

When Mr. Weeks was asked why he chose the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination as a place of service, he replied that when he first came to the United States he tried the United Presbyterian Church because it had ties with his home church in Australia. Eventually, however, he became convinced that his heart and convictions were really with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which he joined because, in his own words, "it is Presbyterian and Reformed and nonschismatic." Now a member of Calvary Church, Glenside, he worked this past summer at Covenant Church in Pittsburgh, an experience which proved to be rewarding both for him and the congregation. This summer he will assist at Covenant Church, Rochester, N. Y., before undertaking a year of graduate study.

Dan Overduin was born in Indonesia, spent some of his early years in the Netherlands, and eventually came to Canada, where he studied for two years at the University of Western Ontario. Subsequently he came to the United States and was graduated from Highland College. After attending Faith Seminary for two years, Mr. Overduin transferred to Westminster. Along with his wife, Dale, he has been active in the life of the Hathboro Orthodox Presbyterian Church. When asked his reason for choosing the denomination, Mr. Overduin answered

that he was impressed by the church's "good potential in the field of evangelism as well as by its sound doctrinal base." The Overduins have been asked to serve as summer assistants with the Hacienda Heights (California) Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

No religious background at all characterized the life of John Bettler until he was saved through the Vacation Bible School of an Independent Baptist Church. After graduating from Philadelphia College of the Bible and taking a year of study at Rutgers University John entered Westminster Seminary. Before he entered the seminary he had joined Immanuel Church in West Collingswood, New Jersey. Stating that he "definitely feels called of the Lord to the gospel ministry," John awaits graduation as a licentiate of the Presbytery of New Jersey.

Varying Backgrounds

Larry Conard, the only graduating senior who grew up in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, is a member of the Valley Church in Santee, California, where his father is an elder. Mr. Conard came to Westminster after serving in the United States Air Force. He has assisted in the Middletown, Pennsylvania Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and at present is serving as an assistant in Mediator Church in Philadelphia. He hopes that his background of practical experience will be of real help in the ministry. With his wife, Bonnie, and six-year-old son Jeff, he is waiting for a call so that they may begin their service.

George Cottenden was related to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church before he was a member! After graduating from Gordon College George married Barbara Benson, daughter of the pastor of our church in Ringoes, New Jersey. A member of the Calvary Or-

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EDITOR

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**Orthodox Presbyterian
General Assembly
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Confession of 1967**

(continued from cover)

WESTMINSTER SYSTEM REPUDIATED

of the repudiation of the whole system of doctrine set forth in the Westminster standards. The proposed new Confession omits any assertion of the virgin birth of Christ, his miracles, his physical resurrection and ascension. Further, the Biblical theology of the atonement is reduced to a series of relative expressions of a truth that "remains beyond the reach of all theory" in the love of God. Not only does the Confession of 1967 omit, question, or deny doctrines essential to the system of faith of the standards; it removes the very possibility of such doctrinal formulation and confessional affirmation as is manifest in all the historic Reformed confessions. These confessions set forth faithfully that truth which God has revealed concerning himself, his relation to man, and the salvation which he wrought for his people through the death and resurrection of Christ; the Confession of 1967 is an expression of the modern view that both revealed words and unchanging truth are impossible and that Christian doctrines are at best situational truths to be dated rather than debated.

Further, whereas the historic Reformed confessions sought to stress the total sinfulness of man in his rebellion against God,



The Rev. Lawrence Eyres, host pastor to the Thirty-fourth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, greets worshippers at First Church, Long Beach, California.

(Tak Hohri photo)

and his need for the sovereign grace and mercy of God available only through the Mediator who died and was raised for his own, the Confession of 1967 obscures such an antithesis with universalizing statements that ground the promise of social renewal in a reconciliation in which all men are included apart from repentance and faith.

The Confession of 1967 is not catholic, for it releases the church from that subjection to apostolic authority in the Scripture which is the hallmark of catholicity; it is not evangelical, for it both obscures the gospel and omits the sovereign work of God by which salvation is wrought and attested; it is neither Presbyterian nor Reformed for it denies the necessity of maintaining any system of doctrine or government in the church.

DOCTRINAL DISCIPLINE IMPOSSIBLE

3. Not only does the constitutional revision set aside the evangelical and reformed doctrine of the church and the inspired authority of the Bible from which it is derived, it effectively removes any confessional foundation for the life and witness of the church. In the revised subscription questions for church officers the promise to labor under the "continuing instruction and

guidance of the confessions of this church" replaces the commitment to "receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of this church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures." The word "accepts" has been deleted with reference to the creeds of the *Book of Confessions* in the final version of the preface to the Confession of 1967 and of the formulas for ordination.

Under such vague terms of subscription, doctrinal discipline is constitutionally impossible. The adoption of the proposed *Book of Confessions* cannot enrich or strengthen the confessional foundation of the church when declarations which have been set aside in the contemporary confession are permitted to remain unamended in the older confessions for historical reasons. The effect of this procedure is to remove the possibility of binding any ordained person to any particular creedal statement.

CONCESSION TO UNBELIEF

4. By the deliberate loosening of creedal subscription and the abandonment of creedal orthodoxy, the gospel is accommodated to current unbelief. Only the supernatural gospel can give answer to the naturalism and humanism of our secular age. By failing to assert the gospel in opposition to the prevailing errors of our time, the proposal undermines the very reconciliation it purports to advance.

Not only does the proposed constitutional revision remove the means for the reformation of the church through doctrinal discipline; it also places an intolerable burden upon the conscience of any officer or member who believes the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and who sincerely receives and adopts the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures. All such are required to seek the peace, unity, and purity of a church that has revised its constitution to join together those whom the Reformed confessions, the Word of God, and Christ himself have put asunder. The model of an inclusivist church requires the joining under an unequal yoke of the

This statement was adopted without dissent by the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church on April 28, 1967 at First Church of Long Beach, California.

The proposed constitutional revision of the United Presbyterian Church, already approved by more than the necessary two-thirds of the presbyteries, is scheduled for final ratification at the UPUSA General Assembly meeting in Portland, Oregon before the end of May.

A full report of the OPC General Assembly will appear in the next issue of the Presbyterian Guardian.

* * *

believer with an unbeliever. No faithful Christian may live with that yoke.

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, humbled by its own sins and shortcomings, expresses its profound concern for those who are compelled to choose between the authority of the Holy Spirit speaking in the Word of God written and the authority of men speaking in ecclesiastical councils. The Church grieves over the multiplying confusion in the professing church of our time and yearns for the open manifestation of the unity in Christ of all who submit themselves to the Lord and to the rule of his Word and Spirit.

THE WORD OF CHRIST

The word of Christ to the church of our time thunders from the Scripture: "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 3:11-13).

TEACHER NEEDED

San Jose Christian School is seeking a teacher for grades 5 and 6. Small school, pleasant climate, in the growing San Francisco Bay area. Address inquiries to Mr. Arnold Larson, % San Jose Christian School, 2350 Leigh Ave., San Jose, Calif. 95124.

EDITOR'S MAIL BOX

Dear Sir:

In recent letters regarding Dr. Schaeffer's article "The Practice of Truth" (*Guardian*, December, 1966) the first one overshot the mark. Schat and Commeret (*Guardian*, February, 1967) push certain remarks of the author a good bit further than he obviously intended.

In rebuttal to this, the three letters from Miller, Clowney, and Elliott (*Guardian*, March, 1967) overshot in the opposite direction. To note the good fruits of Schaeffer's ministry or the good things he has said in this article or elsewhere is beside the point.

Let us agree with the article's main point, that orthodox evangelism must not only proclaim the truth but must also be set forth in clear opposition to error. Let us agree that Schaeffer's work has borne good results in many lives. Let us suggest that this may be so because he has insistently sought to proclaim the truth.

But is there still a problem? In the limited scope of "The Practice of Truth" there is much unsaid that might have been said. Does that constitute a fault?

To this letter-writer it does. Schaeffer speaks of truth, of "truth in the sense of antithesis and absolutes" as in the "classical concept of truth" prevailing before Hegel's day. He wants to have the truth proclaimed "not as an abstract concept, nor . . . as 'religious truth,' but objective truth." What sort of truth does he mean?

It is the burden of Schaeffer's article that we practice the use of the antithesis in order to communicate meaningfully with this modern dialectical age. We are to use "negative statements that clearly say what we do not mean, so that the 20th century man understands our positive statements of what we do mean." Perhaps the author thought it unnecessary to follow his own prescription in addressing avowed Christians, but in failing to do so he left us confused as to his view of truth.

Is truth to be conceived of in accord with some "classical concept"? Is "objective truth" absolute in and of itself, possessing validity in its own right? Is there such a thing as truth apart from its relation to the Creator God? Would that Schaeffer had expressed himself in some antithetical statements here! As it is, he leaves us in doubt.

There is no truth, be it historical truth, "true truth," or otherwise qualified, except as it stands under and in relationship to the Triune God who alone is absolute Truth. It is not a question of what Renaissance man, Greek man, or modern dialectical man thinks of truth, but of what it is as revealed by the Word of God.

If we would speak meaningfully to this modern relativistic age, or to any other unregenerate age, we can do no other than to begin with the Triune God. He alone is the Truth above all principles of verification devised by man. The written Word is truth because God has said it is; the Word incarnate is the Truth, the Revelation and the Revealer of all "true truth." The antithesis to this must surely include the statement that there is no truth "neutral" to or independent of God.

Is there a fault in Schaeffer's approach? In that he failed to follow his own precept, there is something of a fault since he left us uncertain as to his meaning. As to his own understanding of truth, we can only encourage him in his announced intention to make his apologetic system available in printed form in the near future. Personally, I hope that when he does, he will make his concept of the truth abundantly clear by stating what it is and what it is not.

JOHN J. MITCHELL
Roslyn, Penna.

Dear Sir:

As a pastor I am deeply disturbed about young people who are formally committed to the Reformed faith and yet not lending their support to churches of Reformed persuasion in their immediate area when they are away from their home congregations (see a paragraph in "The Changing Scene" for January).

Are the sessions of our churches so negligent in the oversight of their membership that they do not look upon this as a disciplinary problem? Distance in one case prevented me from worshipping in my home congregation, and the session took direct action to see that I attended regularly upon the worship of a sister Reformed church near my residence. I admit that my immediate reaction to session's firm

hand was negative, but subsequent events have confirmed to me the validity and value of their action.

Had I continued to worship in the broadly evangelical context I had chosen and not heeded the session's directive, I am convinced that my commitment to Reformed doctrine would have been greatly decreased. It would seem to me that the vows of membership taken when we enter a church of truly Reformed persuasion not only bind those who take them, but lay upon our church courts the responsibility of exercising disciplinary watch-care over those who pledge due submission in the Lord.

Too often we wait until a situation becomes so aggravated that the only official action a church can take is punitive rather than remedial. Is not our task to "restore such a one overtaken in a fault"?

Aside from this specific issue, may I add one more comment? Would it be possible for a magazine such as the *Guardian* to undertake a symposium on the principles and present state of church discipline in our Reformed communions?

RONALD W. NICKERSON
Reformed Presbyterian Church
of North America
Lisbon, New York

Church Gets New Name and New Building

Formerly the Conservative Presbyterian Church of Harriman, Tennessee, this congregation which affiliated with the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination in June, 1965 adopted a new name as of March 1 — West Hills Presbyterian Church. The Rev. John H. Thompson, Jr. is the minister.

First services in its just completed building were scheduled for March 19. The new site is on Emory Valley Road in the West Hills area of Harriman.

Ruling elders of the congregation are Messrs. Fred Herron, M. W. Walker, Howard Lueking, and Roy Diefenthaler. The latter is a resident of Chamblee, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta, where an Orthodox Presbyterian Chapel has been organized under the sponsorship of the Harriman Session.

Deacons are Robert Lueking, Edwin Arnold, and John Fielder.

Is Economic Theory the Test of True Worship ?

FRANCIS E. MAHAFFY

A great deal has been written about the theology of the 1967 Confession of the United Presbyterian Church.¹ This is a theology radically diverse from that of the Reformers. Its doctrine of Scriptures, Christ, sin and salvation reflects the liberalism and neo-orthodoxy of our age.

The theology to which a man subscribes influences his view of economics; his economic view in turn frequently colors his theological position. It is not accidental that the 1967 Confession articulates an erroneous political-economic view, one far more in accord with the principles of Marxian Socialism than with the moral precepts of the infallible Word of God.

The assertion in the section on "Reconciliation in Society" that there exists enslaving poverty in a world of abundance is deduced from the fact of the reconciliation of man through Jesus Christ.

The reconciliation of man through Jesus Christ makes it plain that enslaving poverty in a world of abundance is an intolerable violation of God's good creation.²

It is because man allegedly has been reconciled, whether or not he is aware of the fact, that makes this enslaving poverty intolerable. Hence we are warned that:

The church cannot condone poverty . . . A church that is indifferent to poverty, or evades responsibility in economic affairs, or is open to one social class only, or expects gratitude for its beneficence makes a mockery of reconciliation and offers no acceptable worship to God.³

After making it clear that the church is under moral obligation to take action toward the elimination of this enslaving poverty, the Confession enumerates the causes of this poverty in the following words:

. . . whether it (poverty) is the product of unjust social structures, exploitation of the defenseless, lack of national resources, absence of technological understanding, or rapid expansion of populations.⁴

This section of the Confession sets forth a theory of economics to which the members of the United Presbyterian Church are committed. This is

the theory that we live in a world of abundance but that this abundance is too unequally distributed. The church must assume responsibility in economic affairs. This responsibility, we are told elsewhere, is assumed "in cooperation with powers and authorities in politics, culture, and economics."⁵ The end of this effort is a more equitable redistribution accomplished in cooperation with the coercive power of the state. Also this beneficence, we learn, must not be given with the expectation of gratitude. (One wonders if the expectation of ingratitude is meritorious or if any kind of expectation is deemed evil.)

Lest some conclude that such economic activity of the church is merely

The Christian is certainly not indifferent to the needs of the poor, and there are many voluntary agencies through which he may give help. He is to seek to do good unto all men, especially to those of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10). The church through its deacons' funds has a particular responsibility toward its own needy. But this is not to say that the church is to cooperate with the civil government in a forced program to try to eliminate all poverty in the nation or the world.

on the periphery of the Faith, it is boldly asserted that to expect gratitude for beneficence or to evade this responsibility in economic affairs "makes a mockery of reconciliation and offers no acceptable worship to God." In other words, to reject the economic policy advocated in the Confession is to identify oneself as a heathen unable to offer acceptable worship to God. This appears to be the one great sin that keeps men from God!

While radically diverse views of God, Christ, Scripture or the atonement erect no barrier to Christian fellowship, failure to adopt the Confession's view of the cause and cure for poverty brands one as a mocker of the gospel. The standard of true Chris-

tianity becomes the acceptance of a particular theory of economics. Members who remain in the United Presbyterian Church and who reject this Marxian theory of economics are already judged as infidels by the standards of the denomination; standards which have little in common with the divine standard of God's infallible Word.

Reality Contradicted

The Confession of 1967 asserts that we live in a world of abundance. This flatly contradicts reality. In Africa where I have served for many years as a missionary, there is an acute shortage of bath tubs among other things. Nor does there exist a superabundance of bath tubs in the United States waiting only for the order of a wise president to see to their distribution. There is, rather, in Africa and the rest of the world also a shortage of bath tubs, land and other natural resources, food, shelter, heat, tools, fertilizer, machines and consumers' goods of many varieties.

There exists also a shortage of labor, brain power, energy and organizing ability to turn nature's raw material into goods for man's use. There is a scarcity of capital available to be invested in producing goods for consumption. The reason the U.S. is economically more advanced than other nations is the fact that here there is more capital invested per person in

1. For example see the following publications of Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Phila., Pa.:

Another Foundation, E. P. Clowney
The Proposed Confession of 1967, Oswald T. Allis
The NEW Confession, Mariano Di Gangi

Thirteen Arguments Against the Proposed Confessional Position of 1967, A. Culver Gordon

2. *The Proposed Book of Confessions*, General Assembly of the UP Church in the USA, 1966, page 184.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*, page 180.

the tools of production. But even here progress is limited by shortage of capital, and with our present extravagant welfare programs, a considerable amount of de-capitalization is taking place which could result in a serious depression. To state as the new Confession does that this is a world of abundance is to assert something which has little relationship to reality.

The causes given for poverty in this imaginary world of abundance omit the significant causes which are lack of capital, savings, hard work, frugality; applying our God-given energies, talents and minds to the creation to subdue it and use it for the glory of God and our own good. The Scriptures extoll the virtues of hard work and thrift and admonish us to care for our families (Proverbs 13:22, 24:33-34, Exodus 20:9, I Timothy 5:8). They urge voluntary charity to the needy but condemn the concept of forced redistribution taught in the 1967 Confession as contrary to the law of the sovereign God which states: "Thou shalt not steal . . . Thou shalt not covet."

Socialist Philosophy

The philosophy of this Confession is that of Karl Marx and the Socialists. It was the existence of owners of property for Marx which kept the poor impoverished. A change in the economic environment, which would bring about the bloody communist revolution, would effect the destruction of capitalism and property, inaugurating the utopia of abundance for all. For Marx and for the 1967 Confession the basic problem is one of distribution, not of production. For Marx the enemies of progress were those who advocated ownership of property.

According to the 1967 Confession the unbelievers are those who deny that a forceful redistribution of an existing abundance, which constitutes a denial of property, will solve the world's economic problems. The principles of this Confession, like those of Marx, demand violence, for it is impossible to refuse to tolerate or condone poverty apart from coercion. Where the less violent but no less immoral "legal" coercion fails, as it must — for Socialism is a system that inevitably produces poverty — the next logical step is the violent revolution advocated by Marx and the Communists and increasingly by many church leaders today.

Those who believe in the free mar-

ket principle of voluntary, rather than coerced exchange, and reject Socialist economics as unworkable and contrary to God's standard of morality, are described in this Confession as people who offer "no acceptable worship to God." Thus it is made abundantly clear that the standard of acceptable worship and thus of true Christianity has become for the church which subscribes to this Confession a purely human, Marxian one.

The Bible tells us, on the other hand, that God accepts the worship of his children who are united to Jesus Christ their Lord by true faith. They have found the mercy of God in

Christ, pardon for their sins, been adopted into the family of God and live by the one final standard of the revealed Word of their God, the Holy Bible.

We may well be grateful for the adoption of the 1967 Confession by the United Presbyterian Church. For now it will become abundantly clear that this church has both officially and actually repudiated historic Christianity and in its place has substituted the religion of secularism. Well may we urge the true sheep of Christ to separate themselves from this church which has clearly repudiated historic Christianity.

Here and There in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Torrance, Calif. — The Manhattan Beach Church, the Rev. Ralph Clough, pastor, has undertaken a branch chapel meeting in the Torrance Family YMCA, 2900 W. Sepulveda Blvd. The Rev. Louis Knowles, a teacher in Valley Christian High School, has been preaching during the five months since the effort began, with Elder John Reynolds doing follow-up calling on visitors.

The Norman Byers, Ralph Cannons, and Duane Hefts, along with the Reynolds family, all of the Manhattan Beach congregation, formed the original nucleus. Torrance is the third largest city in Los Angeles County, but has a scarcity of churches and no Reformed witness whatever, according to a report in the "Southern California Presbyterian." The area is about halfway between Greyfriars Church and First Church.

Trenton, N. J. — A call from Grace Church for the pastoral services of the Rev. Leonard Chanoux has been declined.

Hacienda Heights, Calif. — The Sunday school under Superintendent Robert Kopecky set a goal of a 40 percent increase in attendance during March and April. Following a series of cottage prayer meetings special services with the Rev. Albert Edwards of Portland, Oregon were scheduled for immediately after the General Assembly.

Glenside, Pa. — Calvary Church has issued a call for the pastoral services of the Rev. Henry Coray of Sun-

nyvale, California. Calvary's former pastor, the Rev. Laurence Sibley, expects to work in Ohio with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, following a period of leadership training during July in Madison, Wisconsin. Among others most of the Orthodox Presbyterian seniors at Westminster Seminary have supplied the pulpit in recent weeks. The Rev. Robert Nicholas is moderator of the session.

Thornton, Colo. — Immanuel Church has welcomed its new home-missionary pastor, the Rev. Abe Ediger. After six years in Winner, So. Dakota, Mr. and Mrs. Ediger and their four sons have moved to Thornton.

Portland, Ore. — On the Sunday before the General Assembly Dr. Edmund P. Clowney, president of Westminster Seminary, addressed a public meeting in the afternoon at the YWCA auditorium on the proposed Confession of 1967. He was also the guest preacher at First Church.

Frank B. Smith, first editor of the monthly "Tidings" and for many years an elder in First Church, fell asleep in Christ some months ago.

Westfield, N. J. — The Rev. Robert Atwell has begun his work as the recently called pastor of Grace Church, after five years as the first pastor of Galloway Church, Miami, Florida, which recently became self-supporting.

Silver Spring, Md. — Knox Church profited by a series of expositions of the Sermon on the Mount delivered

Mr. Kenneth Austin
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Elder S. E. York and Licentiate David Hitt (Westminster Church, Bend, Oregon) and Elder Paul Brown and Licentiate (now ordained) Carl Erickson (Brentwood Church, South San Francisco) at the spring meeting of the West Coast Presbytery in Newberg, Oregon.

by the Rev. John Hills of Franklin Square, N. Y. during the second week in April.

Santa Cruz, Calif. — Pastor Melvin Nonhof reports the election by the congregation of two new elders, Messrs. John Bambauer and George Dietz, and of Mr. John Bentz as a trustee. The church is considering an offer from one of its members of a two-acre tract for possible relocation.

Evergreen Park, Ill. — Since the first of the year Westminster Church has been meeting for worship in the chapel of Trinity Christian College as a relocation program gets under way. The church's original property has been sold and a new site purchased 12 miles to the southwest. With the addition of several young families in recent years God has granted "a new lease on life," writes the pastor, the Rev. Donald Parker, who requests the prayers of the denomination "in this work of conquest for Christ."

Newberg, Oregon—Trinity Church, whose pastor is the Rev. Robert Newson, was host to the Presbytery of the West Coast at a two-day meeting early in March, according to the Rev.

Melvin Nonhof, moderator. The Rev. Thomas Champness of Modesto continues as stated clerk, with the Rev. Albert Steever of San Francisco chosen as assistant clerk.

Licentiate David Hitt sustained his oral examination on the floor of presbytery, and is engaged in completing other parts of trial necessary for ordination. He has received a call from Westminster Church, Bend, Oregon.

Licentiate Carl Erickson finished all the parts of trial requisite for ordination and arrangements were made for his ordination in San Francisco, which took place on March 31. He is the new pastor of the Brentwood congregation in South San Francisco. For two years he had served as an assistant in First Church of Manhattan Beach, Calif.

Garfield, N. J. — The Rev. Gordon Mow and a committee arranged for the second annual spring sacred concert for the benefit of Westminster Seminary in the North Jersey area. Soloists were Mrs. Rosemary Commeret, Mrs. Geraldine Mow, Mr. Maurice Penn, and Mr. Eugene Westra. The Seminary choir sang and Dr. E. J. Young spoke. It took place at the First Christian Reformed Church of Paterson.

Waterloo, Iowa — Twin sons born prematurely in late January to the Rev. and Mrs. William Shell lived only a short time. "We have experienced overflowing the love of God and rest in his will," wrote the parents. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21).

Cranston, R. I. — Calvary Church again has a pastor with the ordination and installation of licentiate Richard Horner on April 14.

Lewiston, Maine — It has just been discovered that the oldest child of the Rev. and Mrs. Bernard J. Stonehouse, aged four and a half, is suffering from leukemia. The prayers of the church are urged for young Bernard and the family. There are three younger children.

Bridgewater, S. Dak. — Trinity Church saw a growth of 50 percent during the past year through diligent effort and emphasis on the historic Biblical and Reformed faith in a com-

munity that is predominantly Mennonite and Lutheran. The pastor is the Rev. Howard Hart.

Fountain Valley, Calif. — In February the chapel group was constituted a separate congregation by presbytery, with the Garden Grove Session acting also as its session. The Rev. Edwards Elliott preached for over a year at an early service held in an elementary school, until January 1966 when the Rev. Stanley Allen began preaching. Mr. Allen is fully employed in another job, but Mrs. Gladys Coie has made thousands of calls in the area since October as a half-time employee of presbytery's missions committee.

Services are now held in the Fountain Valley High School, 17800 Bushard. The population of the community, less than 600 a decade ago, is now 20,000.

Portland, Maine — Second Parish's popular "Couples and Singles" group has grown from an original membership of ten to attendances of 50 to 60. Among other active groups for fellowship, study, and work are Young Adults, Mailing Committee, Sunday at Six, Ivy Club Women, and Machen Leagues.

Vienna, Va. — The trustees of Grace Church have been calling on members and friends of the congregation in a continuing effort to secure sufficient loans to begin a \$40,000 building program on their permanent site. They now meet in a Seventh Day Adventist school Sunday morning, a fire house in the evening, and in the manse for midweek services, according to the Rev. Laurence Vail, home-missionary pastor. Loans may be made through the denominational Church Extension Loan Fund.

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