

The Presbyterian Guardian

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Is ~~1974~~ the year of

666

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ANTICHRIST ?

"Keep Christ in Christmas"—?

Both Mr. Keller and Mr. Volz, in "Keep Christ in Christmas" [December issue of the *Guardian*] missed the exact nature of the problem. This is simply that many uninformed nonChristians have used the occasion of the birth of Christ as the occasion to celebrate.

Those of us who love the Lord Jesus Christ become disappointed when we see the conduct of these "Christianized" pagans. We see little in the contemporary holiday that speaks of the sovereignty of God and the sufficiency of the Savior.

But can we blame nonChristians for not behaving in a Christian manner?

Three years ago I wrote a little satirical piece called "Christmas is a Jewish Holiday," and we've been using Christmas as an occasion to evangelize. We have distributed more than 300,000 copies of this particular piece.

One suggestion to "keep Christ in Christmas": Use the holiday season for some form of evangelism to help nonChristians know the full and true message of Christ.

Moishe Rosen, Jews for Jesus
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Ed. Note: Mr. Rosen is a minister with the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference. We've given his address in full so that readers who seek to evangelize Jewish neighbors may contact him for the tract he mentions or other helpful materials.

"Keep Christmas"—?

We believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We believe that "the whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto

which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men." We believe that "the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, . . . or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture."

Yet we allow the traditions and devices of men to exert a strong influence in the celebration of the birth of Christ. We continue to struggle to "keep Christ in Christmas" when there is no prescription for such a celebration in Scripture.

For nearly 400 years the church did not celebrate the birth of Christ, not until the imaginations and devices of men took over. Then the church

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wanted to "help" the weak, young Christians who didn't want to give up the fun and merry-making surrounding the winter solstice, the celebration of the Sun-God's victory when the days began again to lengthen. So the church said, "Go on with your fun and celebration. Only now we'll celebrate the Son of God at his birth."

Are we today too much like those weak Christians then? Is Christmas really so much fun we can't give it up? Or, might we look too fanatical in the eyes of those who do "celebrate" Christmas?

But such questions should have no relevance to a believer in the Reformed faith. If we truly believe that the Scriptures are our *only* rule of faith and practice, and if we truly believe that we should not worship God in any way

not prescribed in Scripture, then I don't see how we can come to any other conclusion: Christmas is indeed an addition to Scripture and should—must—not be celebrated.

Mrs. Susan Z. Duggan
Philadelphia, Pa.

Christ is King Now

I read the *Guardian* with much interest, and particularly so the article by Professor Norman Shepherd on proposed changes to Questions 86-89 of the Larger Catechism [in the proposed plan of union between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod] in the October issue of the *Guardian*.

We confess, in Chapter VIII, 1, of the Westminster Confession of Faith, that God has ordained the Lord Jesus his only begotten Son to be the Mediator between God and man, the Prophet, Priest, and King, the Head and Saviour of his Church. We read: "Yet have I set my king on my holy hill of Zion" (Psalm 2:6); and: "Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever" (1 Timothy 1:7).

The Scottish "Covenanters" suffered and died by the thousands, living in dens and caves of the earth, "of whom the world was not worthy," for the Kingship of Jesus Christ.

We believe wholeheartedly that no man or church or committee has the authority or the ability to change God's eternal decrees, or to postpone Christ's kingdom to a future date. We believe that Jesus Christ is King *now*.

"We have a goodly heritage." I believe it is impossible to change the Westminster Confession and Catechisms without changing the Word of God or its true meaning. We have a great responsibility in our day, and may God help us to be true to his Word.

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The Wisdom^(?) of Babes^(?)

EUGENE GRILLI

Last fall our youngest child began his scholastic adventures. As one might suspect, or expect, he has been coming home with many little sayings — rhymes, songs, and stories. He comes home from school with these little gems and recites them with great excitement and gusto.

Now many of these demonstrations of his newly acquired literary expertise should be "old stuff" to him. We have a variety of books and records to which he has been exposed since birth. Yet he reports home with these little sayings and songs as though they were entirely new.

Should we play the records or read the books — again — he would exclaim, "Huh? When did we get those? I didn't know we had *them!*" — and so it goes. But something of the same sort seems to happen in adult life also.

For example, a church member will become aware of some point of doctrine heretofore unrealized. He may have heard it on the radio, read it in a book, heard it in another church while visiting. He then returns to his own church and one begins to hear all about it — along with, "Why do we never hear anything like that in our church?"

I am sure that many ministers must groan at this even as

parents do with their children. Should the sermons be reproduced immediately, these same people would say, "Huh? When was that preached? I don't remember ever hearing that." — and so it goes.

"He who has ears, let him hear" (Matthew 13:47). "Take heed . . . how you hear" (Luke 8:18). Perhaps we need to pray frequently after this pattern:

"Blessed Lord, who hast caused all the Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in every case hear them, read them, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort from thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast to the blessed hope of everlasting life which thou hast given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen." (Adapted from the *Book of Common Prayer* of the Reformed Episcopal Church, p. 87.)

The Rev. Mr. Grilli is a home missionary-pastor in Rockford, Illinois. We would suspect—expect!—that his experience is hardly unique. May the Lord remove dullness of hearing from the ears of his people!

The Session Book

How can the members of a relatively small session manage to schedule "house visitation" to cover all the members of the congregation? In these days of frequent evening meetings, busy people, and conflicting schedules, it becomes almost impossible to arrange home visits. Some sessions, frustrated by the difficulties, give up even trying to maintain such a program. But the result is that the people and their needs are seriously neglected.

One session has arrived at a compromise that is having some success. They call it "Evening with the Session." The membership of the congregation was divided into nearly equal groups. Once a month the elders meet with one of the groups. They report a healthy interchange of ideas, with people being challenged anew through interacting with the elders and with each other. The session is also available for private meetings with those who request it, and they are able to visit individually with persons having a known problem.

This same session was concerned that "graduates" of the communicants' instruction class, having received rather individual attention from the pastor during the weeks spent in the class, would feel neglected after completing the period of instruction. It was hard to avoid giving the impression that once they were safely "in the fold" no one cared much any more.

Now when new members are received into this church, they are assigned to volunteer "sponsors." The sponsors are older members (in time of membership) and hopefully more mature Christians. Sponsors are asked to con-

sider and act on the following suggestions:

1. Pray daily for the new members you are "sponsoring."
2. Get to know them well.
3. Invite them for dinner in your home or for an evening visit. Show them warm friendship.
4. Bring them to meetings at the church—congregational meetings, the young adults, women's group, Bible study, as appropriate for them.
5. Especially with new Christians, be alert to help them establish family devotions (using *Today*—published by the Back to God Hour—together with Bible reading and prayer).
6. Realize that your own example and mature counsel can have a profound impact. Being a friend in Christ is a costly business, but God may bless your efforts in ways far beyond "what we ask or think."

A Postscript says: Use your own discretion as to whether you should inform them of your "sponsorship." At any rate, genuine warm and prayerful interest is the key.

"The Session Book" is intended to report what sessions do to carry out their responsibilities to shepherd the flock. Almost anything that any session has put into practice may be of help to others looking for answers. Let us have your own session's notes for "The Session Book."

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CARL J. REITSMA

In a few days each of us is going to enter a new year. Time is rushing on! Life is a serious business.

But do you know what life is? It is a series of blessed opportunities to please the Lord, opportunities available to us today, but gone tomorrow. Each of us is filling up page after page in God's own record book. Soon the record of your life and mine will be complete, the book will be closed, and we will stand before the penetrating eyes of a holy God.

Antichrist is coming

Now, we are going to think not only about the end of one year, but about the end of all the years of human history, about the end of the world itself and especially, about the appearance of the Antichrist.

The Bible tells us that we are approaching the most spiritually dangerous period in all of human history and that period is the time of Antichrist. Are you ready for it?

One thing is certain. If at the present time you play with sin, you will most certainly perish in it when Antichrist appears. Nothing less than wholesouled dedication to the Lord right now, and a determination to be absorbed in the truth and love and joy of the Lord from moment to moment, will prepare us for the great tribulation that is coming.

So, let us be on our guard against the Antichrist and let us examine what the Bible has to say about him. In 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 we are told (1) who the Antichrist is, (2) that his coming is delayed, and (3) that he will finally be destroyed.

Who is the Antichrist?

The Bible tells us that before the Lord Jesus returns to earth certain "signs of the times" must be fulfilled. One of these signs is the appearance of the Antichrist.

When we survey the field of history we find that the Antichrist has been identified with Satan himself, various earthly kings, false prophets and evil movements of every description. Some regarded the emperor Nero as the Antichrist. During the Reformation many were sure it was the Pope. In our own times some have thought he was Hitler or Stalin. But all of these suggestions have proved to be false.

Well then, who is the Antichrist and what will he be like? The Bible tells us that *the Antichrist is both a man and a movement*, a person and an attitude of mind, one single individual and a world-wide influence, a someone and a something.

For example, in Daniel 7 and 2 Thessalonians 2 we are told that the Antichrist will indeed be a person. He is

pictured as a man in whom rebellion against God will be concentrated, one definite person living in the end time. "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and he shall wear out the saints of the most High" (Daniel 7:25). In 2 Thessalonians he is described as "the man of sin," "the son of perdition," who "opposes," "exalts," and "seats" himself and will be slain. These words only fit a real person.

But, this is not to deny that there is also an Antichristian power and influence. This spirit of Antichrist is already present in the world today. In fact, it was already present when John wrote, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that the antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know it is the last time" (1 John 2:18). And the apostle goes on to say, "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that (spirit) of antichrist whereof ye have heard that it should come: and even now already is it in the world" (4:3).

To sum up, we can say that everyone who denies that Jesus is the divine Son of God who became man is an antichrist because he shares in the spirit of rebellion against God. It is also clear, however, that the *final* Antichrist will be a definite person living in the end-time, and in this man the spirit of rebellion against God and blatant unbelief will be concentrated and embodied.

The coming of Antichrist

In 2 Thessalonians 2:3 we read that there will be a great "falling away" from the faith at the time of Antichrist. Many who had previously maintained a formal kind of Christianity will abandon it altogether when Antichrist comes. Great numbers of people will leave the church. This is the "apostasy" and it is one of the signs that we should be looking for.

Another sign of Antichrist's coming is the deification of man (verse 4). Antichrist is not only a person who will oppose Christ, but he will imitate Christ. He will try to take God's place and claim for himself the honor due to God alone. Antichrist will try to dethrone God and enthrone himself. This will be a time of complete and radical atheism.

Still another sign of Antichrist is the huge surge of lawlessness that will burst forth and engulf the earth (verse 7). It is called the "mystery of iniquity," or better, the "mystery of lawlessness." As a "mystery" it is something that had been present but was concealed from view and now stands open and ready when the curtains are drawn back. In former times God had restrained sin and lawlessness, but in the time of Antichrist God's restraint will be

withdrawn and lawlessness will be free to run its course unhindered. As a result, the standards of right and wrong in God's law will be turned upside down.

Surely this is the trend today. You have heard of the "new morality"—which is just plain filthy living. Even some clergymen recommend premarital sex as a good preparation for marriage. They are deliberately rejecting the standards of God's law and making vice a virtue. Immorality is the sophisticated thing, and divorce is a mark of distinction.

Finally, the arrival of Antichrist will be attended with a great outburst of satanic power and miracles (verse 9). People will be astonished and deceived by this great show. "Antichrist must be all right if he can do things like this," they will say, and many will be persuaded to accept his claims. They will fail to recognize that this power is that of Satan. This will be the greatest hoax in history as the devil fools masses of people into hell.

We are even told how Satan will manage his hoax, through the "deceivableness of unrighteousness" (verse 10). Sin will be freed from those harmful consequences that have always been its result in the past. People will be able to sin and really enjoy it. Venereal disease will be eliminated and abortions will take care of the rest. People by the thousands will accept Satan's offer, abandon their faith, and take pleasure in unrighteousness (verse 12).

Thus we can say that the final Antichrist will be a real Satan-controlled person whose coming will be attended by a desertion of the church, belligerent atheism, reversal of moral standards, and an outburst of miraculous power by means of which sin will be made entirely pleasing. The appeal of sin will keep growing as Antichrist comes closer. Will you hold the faith? Watch and pray! One thing is certain: If you play with sin now, you will perish in it then.

Coming of Antichrist delayed

But just when shall Antichrist appear? We may put it this way: "You know, therefore, what is now delaying him, so that he should be revealed at his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already working. Except, that he who is now delaying him must first get out of the way" (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7).

If you find the thought in these verses difficult to follow you are not the only one. They have had many interpretations. But a suitable interpretation can be given by looking at the situation in the church at Thessalonica. The people there believed that the Lord's return was just a matter of days. They sold their property and just sat around waiting. Why work, build, save, or plan if the world is going to end so soon? They were nervous and excited, much like those today who want sensationalism in religion.

"Well," Paul is saying, "enough of that. Get to work!" The day of Christ is not yet at hand; certain things have to happen first. One of those is that the Antichrist must first appear. His appearance, though delayed and restrained for now, is coming closer. During this time of delay Christians must make the time count, using the opportunities that are yours. Antichrist cannot hurt you now because he is being held back like a dog on a leash. What comfort and stimulation that must have been to the Thessalonians!

But who is delaying the Antichrist? Whoever he is, he must be capable of keeping the Antichrist in check and thus protecting believers. Who but the Lord Jesus fits this? Only Christ working through the gospel can be the delayer. Only the Almighty Lord can cope with the mighty Antichrist.

No, it is Christ who can and does control the coming of

Antichrist. That is the comfort of God's people in every age. "Thy God reigneth!" That is what the Thessalonians needed to hear; it's what we need to hear now as we prepare to begin a new year. Nothing is going to happen except what Christ permits. We may hear the footsteps of Antichrist approaching, but he cannot reach us except by the will of our Almighty Savior and Friend. We do not know the future, but we do know the One who holds the future.

But what are you doing while Christ is restraining? Are you living for Jesus? Are you putting your faith to work now while the time is ripe? Or, have you really faced the penetrating gaze of Christ? "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" One thing is certain: If we play with sin now, we shall surely perish in it when Antichrist appears.

The destruction of Antichrist

When the Lord Jesus returns to earth he will consume the Antichrist with the breath of his mouth, destroy him with the brightness of his coming (verse 8).

After all that has been said of the power and treachery of the final Antichrist, what a great relief it is to know that God's Word guarantees the ultimate destruction of this last great rebel. We could easily be discouraged at having to face so formidable a foe.

Of course, it is true that many people make the terrible mistake of underestimating the mighty power of Satan and his Antichrist. But we need to see that, though Antichrist will give the Lord's people a fierce battle, he will be no match at all for the Lord of Glory. When Jesus returns there is not going to be any long drawn-out conflict that Christ will eventually win. On the contrary! The issue will be settled instantly. The Antichrist is mighty indeed; but he is nothing before the face of our Lord.

We are told that Antichrist will be destroyed by "the brightness of his coming." He will be completely made useless. And the Lord will do this with the piercing brilliance of his glorious appearance. Our Lord's countenance is as the sun shining in its strength. The very dawn of his coming will destroy completely the dark power of Antichrist.

What a comfort to belong to such an Almighty Lord! He is Lord of lords and King of kings. Though Antichrist may rage, it is Christ who reigns. The Lord will be with us always, in life and death. He will lead us as a shepherd now and afterward receive us into glory.

*Trembling soul, beset by fears, "Thy God reigneth!"
Look above and dry thy tears; "Thy God reigneth!"
Though thy foes with pow'r assail,
Naught against thee shall prevail;
Trust in him, he'll never fail:
"Thy God reigneth! Thy God reigneth!"*

*Church of Christ, awake, awake! "Thy God reigneth!"
Forward, then, fresh courage take: "Thy God reigneth!"
Soon, descending from his throne,
He shall claim thee for his own;
Sin shall then be overthrown:
"Thy God reigneth! Thy God reigneth!"*

The Rev. Mr. Reitsma is a teacher of Bible in the Timothy Christian School in Elmhurst, Illinois. The article above is adapted from a sermon preached to the Sharon Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Hiawah, Florida, of which Mr. Reitsma was formerly pastor.

"Biblical Prophecy" – a review article

Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, J. Barton Payne, Harper and Row, 1973. 754 pp. Reviewed by the Rev. George C. Miladin, pastor of the First Reformed Presbyterian Church of Lookout Mountain, Tennessee. Mr. Miladin's sharp critique of Hal Lindsay's *The Late Great Planet Earth*, entitled *Is This Really the End?* (Mack, Cherry Hill, N.J.) is well worth putting into the hands of anyone confused by the extreme claims of Lindsay's type of Dispensationalism.

This is an impressive book—almost unbelievably so as one ponders the charts, tables, indexes, statistical appendices, summaries, bibliography, etc. Never again will the Bible teacher, upon announcing to his group of seekers that more than 25% of the Bible is predictive, have to experience the fear of being proven wrong by some zealous mathematician in the group. Dr. Payne, professor of Old Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, provides us the precise statistic—27% (p. 681). This is just one of the innumerable pieces of unusual information that appear on several helpful charts.

The main body of the volume devotes itself to a discussion of the prophetic scriptures listed according to their sixty-six books in the order given in the English Bible. Each book is prefaced with helpful introductory material on authorship, contemporary setting, major themes, key verses, and data on those verses that are predictive in nature. There is a wealth of scholarly commentary here (e.g., the author's treatment of Job 19:26 and Isaiah 7:14).

But since this is a book about prophecy, we must concern ourselves with this. A cursory glance at "Summary A" (the biblical predictions in order of their fulfillments) reveals the author's eschatological convictions and conclusions—premillennial (with regard to the second coming), postmillennial (concerning the revolt of Gog and Magog), and mid-tribulation, or pre-vials (with respect to the rapture of the church). Even though the volume exudes a refreshing irenic spirit, there will undoubtedly be those—nondispensationalists—who will be displeased with several entries concerning Christ's second coming and the millennium.

For example: Christ's second coming (Rev. 7:12-17) will cause a temporary suspension of the wrath of God, after which the world misled by Satan will

take up arms against Christ. Jerusalem is ravaged and half the population captured. Jesus' feet stand on the Mount of Olives, his raptured church accompanying him. Another siege (apparently) ensues, but Christ makes Jerusalem victorious and disastrous to its attackers. A flying angel will proclaim the eternal gospel to men on earth, after which the Euphrates and Nile are dried up. On this dry bed, the world's armies assemble against Christ. Young believers willingly offer themselves to Christ for his Armageddon campaign, at which the armies of Antichrist are destroyed. Then God's true Israel will repossess the land of Canaan, unrepentant Jews will be removed, and repentant ones return assisted by Gentiles. There will be peace, abundant crops, and general prosperity. Those not in resurrection bodies will enjoy supernaturally extended life spans. The territory of Judah will be leveled, but Jerusalem elevated. There will be a temple and sacrifice in Jerusalem with Levites serving. Those who escape from Armageddon will evangelize the nations, etc. (Prophecies 611-708; pp. 654-658.)

Though this all might suggest strong dispensational affinities, the author is not a dispensationalist. This is evidenced by his belief in the unity of the people of God in all periods of history. His exegesis (of Jer. 31:33-34; Dan. 9:25-27; Dan. 2:33-40; Hosea 1:10; 2:20; Amos 9:11, 12; Matt. 13:31, 32) places him squarely in the stream of historical premillennialism. More than once the author finds the fulfillment of a particular Old Testament prophecy concerning Israel in "the Israel that is the church" (e.g., Prophecy 97, p. 316; Hosea 1:10).

Payne's methodology

The author's methodological approach to biblical predictions is reminiscent of an exercise assigned this reviewer while a seminarian. He was required to take all the prophecies in

Jeremiah and place them in one of four categories relative to their probable intended fulfillment. The categories: Immediate, near (post Ezra), distant (Christ's first coming), very distant (second coming). Dr. Payne posits eighteen distinct time frames beginning with the Primeval-Patriarchal (1) and concluding with Christ's second coming (15), millennium (16), final judgment (17), and new Jerusalem (18). Every biblical prediction is assigned to one of these!

A most significant and curious factor is the criteria employed in assigning a particular verse to a particular period, especially in choosing between the church age (14), the millennium (16), and new Jerusalem (18).

All the following verses are assigned to the millennium: Ex. 23:25; Deut. 30:8; Ps. 22:27; Isa. 2:4; 9:7; 11:3, 5, 6; 25:3; 27:5; 45:23, 24; 49:7b; 51:5b; 52:13, 15b; 53:12a; 55:4; 66:18; Jer. 23:4; Ezek. 37:26b-28; Hab. 2:14; Zech. 8:20-23. This question of criteria is discussed in the 150-page introduction, which in a sense is both the strength and the weakness of the volume. It is its strength because, as is widely recognized, the key to the correct interpretation of prophecy is a sound hermeneutic, i.e., the establishment and application of valid interpretative principles. The introduction carefully sets forth twenty-two different interpretative principles, all of which are presented in chart form (p. 143). This constitutes an important plus for the volume. The weakness, so far as the reviewer is concerned, manifests itself at the point of developing and applying some of these principles.

For instance, in the section entitled "Criteria for relating predictions to their proper periods of fulfillment" (p. 11), the following are offered as indications of millennial times (i.e., post advent, earthly millennial times):

"Attributes of glory will distinguish His second coming" (Isa. 49:7; 53:12a). The problem with this criterion is the apparent failure to see that "attributes of glory" accompany Christ's *present* mediatorial reign (Luke 24:26), during which kings and princes have risen to worship the living Lord. So rather than assigning all verses that speak of a glorious, expansive, ruling and governing to a post-millennial period, why not refer them to this present Messianic age?

"Geographical allusions, indicating the localized presence of Jesus Christ,

form a basic key to the identification of millennial times" (Zech. 8:22; Micah 2:13). It is most difficult to see how the localized presence of Christ has any millennial significance whatever. Surely this principle wasn't deduced from the New Testament which emphasizes the Lord's spiritual presence with his people *throughout* this age and then promises his localized presence in the eternal state (Rev. 21:22). The spectacle of many people seeking the Lord in Jerusalem says virtually nothing about the state of his presence, whether it is spiritual or physical.

A series of distinctive millennial characteristics is said to revolve about the city of Jerusalem and Mount Zion in particular (Joel 3:16, 17; cf. Rom. 11:26; Zech. 8:3). On the contrary, the New Testament silence respecting physical Jerusalem as the city of God along with its accent upon the New Testament church of the Spirit and the Jerusalem that is above (Heb. 12:22) would suggest that Joel, Paul, and Zechariah have in mind either the heavenly abode of God or the New Covenant people of God in their New Covenant or heavenly worship.

Basic shortcoming

It is the reviewer's feeling that Dr. Payne's chief hermeneutical weakness is a failure to abide by one of his own rules of interpretation: "Above all . . . to interpret in terms of the New Testament and its clarification about fulfillments" (p. 73); "the analogy of Scripture and especially the New Testament may decide for a figurative interpretation" (p. 83).

With this failure, it is not surprising that the author rejects a hermeneutical dictum set forth by A. B. Davidson: "If Old Testament predictions refer to New Testament times, then 'we shall probably have to strip off their Old Testament form, which arose from the dispensation and time when the prophet lived, and look for their fulfillment in a way corresponding to the spirit of the New Testament dispensation and the altered condition of the world'" (p. 84). These words, unacceptable to Dr. Payne, should be kept in mind with reference to the next alleged millennial indicator:

"Reference to a future temple and its accompanying memorial sacrifices show that their fulfillment must be millennial." Once again, inasmuch as the New Testament temple theology

culminates in the New Jerusalem where there is no physical temple (Rev. 21:22), it can be better argued that the Old Testament prophets when depicting either the ideal state of heaven or the coming Messianic (New Testament) age, use the lines and hues at their disposal, i.e., temple, altar, priesthood, and sacrifices elevated to their highest and purest state—these Old Testament kernels to be stripped off in their New Testament or heavenly fulfillment.

Similarly, the author's insistence on the "privileged status and future world dominance of Israel in the Messianic [post-second advent millennial] Kingdom." Against this stands the New Testament which is not only ignorant of any such Israelite hegemony, but away and beyond holds forth a radical reinterpretation of all such Old Testament verses. Such is the "mystery" of Ephesians 3: not that the Gentiles were to be saved, for this was prophesied in the Old Testament. Rather, that in this New Testament age believing Gentiles would be placed on the *same* spiritual footing as believing Jews. This was a truth unknown and not anticipated in former ages.

The earthly millennium

Another curious factor relative to criteria is the apparent paucity of biblical data that lies behind the establishment of category 16 (the millennium as a post-advent earthly Kingdom). As has been repeatedly pointed out by non-millennial writers, the only place in the entire Bible where a millennium is even mentioned is in the book of Revelation. Because of this book's frequent recapitulations, or the probability of such, it is not clear whether chapter 20 is chronological or recapitulative. Compounding the interpretative problem is the nature and time of Christ's coming depicted in chapter 19. If in fact the second coming is in view, then of course it is a visible and physical coming.

However, it is entirely possible that what John is prophesying is the fall of the Roman empire by means of a spiritual coming of Christ. That the Bible presents such comings—nonphysical but nevertheless regnant with tangible consequences for the recipients—is acknowledged by the author himself (cf. Matthew 10 comments, p. 485. Refer to Zech. 14:3 where the Lord's coming is on the analogy of his coming at the Red Sea or during the battles in

Canaan, Josh. 10:42).

It is this reviewer's belief that with the optimistic notes of the New Covenant sounding triumphantly, "Jesus is Lord," a better case can be made for equating the thousand years of Revelation 20 either with the whole of this New Testament age (the "a-mil" view) or with the climactic period of this age when the gospel will have achieved unprecedented success (including possibly the conversion of the Jews in response to a mighty but non-physical coming of the Redeemer) before the Lord's visible return (the "post-mil" view).

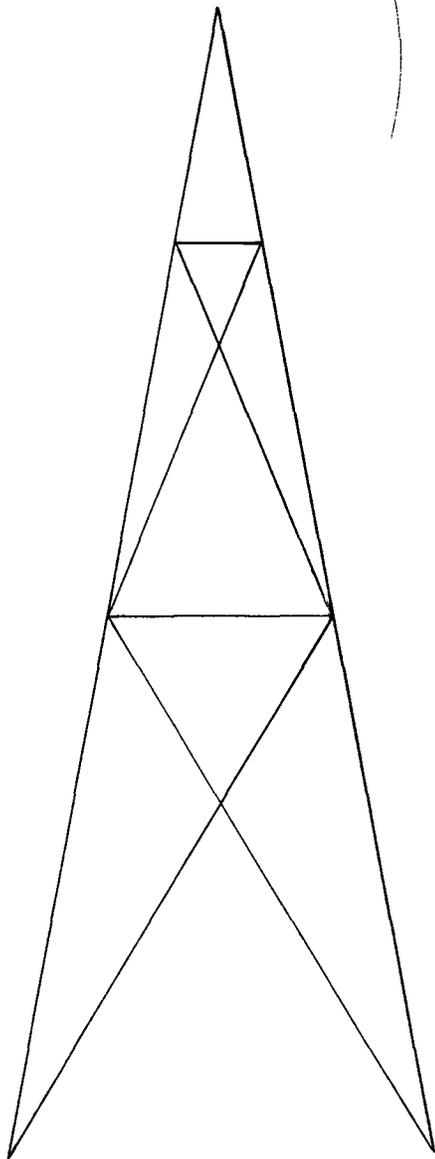
To dismiss this dominant 18th and 19th century eschatological position as no longer a viable option is unfair, to say the least. Dr. Payne's only reference to postmillennialism (a brief footnote on p. 596) states that "two world wars have killed this optimism." To settle a question of Bible teaching on historical grounds—two world wars—is like someone's announcing prior to 1948 that two thousand years of Jewish persecution have killed any hope of a restoration of Israel.

The *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* does represent a serious attempt to synthesize the whole field of prophecy. The author is to be commended for his painstaking labor in bringing together in so many different ways a gigantic mass of biblical data; and while there is much in the volume that will prove helpful, in the final analysis, because of the continuing "hermeneutical problems" (articulation of principles and their application), this reviewer would have to judge the work as basically unsuccessful in its attempt.

As Dr. Payne states so well, "Scholars of every persuasion grant that the root of their differences lies in the method of biblical interpretation. By holding to literal meanings the present writer feels compelled to accept the validity of [pre-]millennialism, as opposed to what he can only designate as the allegorized conclusions of a-millennialism" (p. 46). A few lines earlier, he states that "the [fundamental] question in today's millennial controversy is whether to allow another dispensation to revoke the meaning of the prophetic message."

It is clear, to this reviewer at least, that Dr. Payne is unwilling at several critical points to allow the New Testament to reshape and reinterpret (not revoke) the meaning of the Old Testament prophetic message!

HERESY via radio



LESTER E. KILPATRICK

"Religious radio" presents an amazing smorgasbord of religious fare, and all free for the simple act of tuning in one of the purveyors, and settling back to listen.

For this reason—as well as others—God's people have felt that a marvelous door has been opened for the proclamation of the Gospel. And so there are literally hundreds of weekly—many even daily—programs, some primarily evangelistic, some Bible exposition, some with a patriotic or anti-communist thrust, some missionary, some geared toward youth, some primarily pushing an organization, some, it would seem,

primarily seeking money, and so on. Some are local one-station efforts, some are duplicated by tape and aired over many stations.

Religious radio is well established, though the strong arm of government is always a threat and right now is restrictive of freedom in several areas; for instance, in hiring policies and in criticism of the government.

The smorgasbord

Religious programs have to be dressed up to meet station technical and artistic requirements, and with popular appeal to engage the listeners' attention. Trouble is, the smorgasbord has not only solid, nourishing spiritual food, but a whole array of cheaper stuff, spiced up to get interest or iced up to make it palatable.

There are plenty of scattered offerings that hallucinate, intoxicate and poison. Some programs, too, are little more than harangue, appeals for letters, which, it soon appears, mean contributions. These may be not only for the "radio ministry," but may be tied in with a "good cause," support for the needy, the orphan, the leper, the blind, the hungry.

Right now programs specializing in "prophetic themes" are having a field day. Some may fairly be charged with bibliolatry, quoting Scripture with lavish praise as "the very infallible Word of God," but using it to support an idea of the speaker regardless of the context of the Scripture quoted, or even contrary to it.

Particularly now in the light of Mid-east conflicts and Arab, Israeli and big power maneuvers, together with the ease with which one may satisfy his sense of religious duty, religious broadcasts enjoy a numerous listening audience. The shut-in, the lonely, the troubled, the heartsick, the guilt-ridden, as well as the religious dilettante, the bitter, the despairing — and that includes most of us at some point—visit and

support the smorgasbord. Multitudes have testified that they have found salvation through the radio; others have found comfort, have been deterred from crime, a divorce action, or even suicide. Many have broadcasts to which they listen regularly and from which they are edified and built up.

Eat what is good

But how does one manage to "eat (only) that which is good" and refuse the rest? There is no easy answer, but there are some considerations that should be helpful.

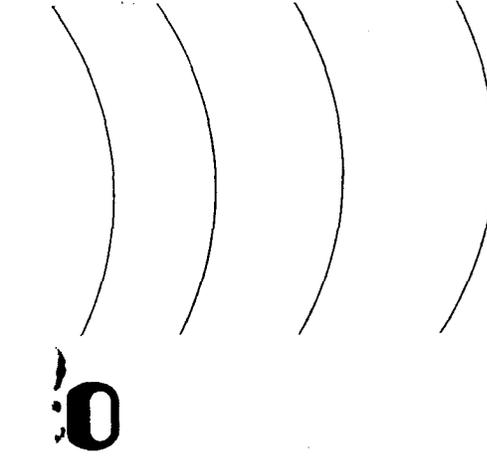
1. *Note the sponsor.* Listen for some kind of endorsement by an individual or organization that you have reason to believe is sound in the faith.

This may not always be possible; but negatively, if you hear that it is Garner Ted Armstrong ("The World Tomorrow"), for instance, you know you have the program of a noxious cult. Others of what have been called the "Big Six" cults—Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Christian Science, School of Unity, Seventh Day Adventists, and Churches of Christ—are on the air also. The last two named, in some of their sectors, fully deserve this classification. But these two groups are so heterogenous, some fading into the area of "evangelical Christianity," that to dismiss the group as cultic is probably unfair.

The distinctive marks of the cults will emerge from time to time in their broadcasts, though the speakers know that their distinctives will turn some listeners off and so they camouflage and obscure them as much as possible. Denominational broadcasts are usually identified specifically. Many programs employ publishing efforts, from which endorsers can be learned.

2. *Is Christ's atonement central?*

The word "atonement" may not be used, but there are other doctrines that are part and parcel of it—the helpless and lost condition of all men by nature,



so that only an atonement of infinite value could save. Look for clear views on Christ's death, virgin birth, miracles, resurrection, and coming again in glory. Always check to see that there is commitment to the inerrancy of Scripture.

Some would say that they assume these things. But neither a religious broadcaster nor anyone else bearing witness to the gospel may assume these doctrines. They are distinctive of the Christian faith. They are repugnant to the natural man. They are utterly contrary to his "wisdom." These truths are absolutely essential to a dependable religious broadcast.

3. *Does the message call to holy living?*

The Ten Commandments were written on stone to indicate their permanence. Not "a jot or tittle" of them will change till all be fulfilled. A downgrading of God's standard for the kind of life that pleases him, whether it be by the "New Morality" or by saying that the Commandments were for "another dispensation," is a danger sign. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

4. *Do money appeals take a prominent place?*

One could conclude after listening to some "religious broadcasts" that the speaker has no trust in God, but depends entirely on the urgency of his appeal and the financial response he is able to extract from the listeners.

Some dangerous food

5. *Dispensationalism* Modernism and liberalism are a substantial part of the religious smorgasbord. However, in broadcasts that I have heard, they do not constitute so widespread a threat to soundness of the faith as does the strait-jacket of dispensationalism.

This dispensational framework of theology, around which the message of many programs is built, tends to be characteristic of many otherwise ap-

pealing and evangelical broadcasts. The speaker is very likely to disclaim holding to any particular theology, may even insist that his message is the "straight and simple teaching of the Bible," and yet be a rigid, down-the-line dispenser of Scofield dispensationalism or one of its several variations. This dispensational aspect, while it figures prominently in many programs, in others may surface only occasionally.

Dispensational theology is directly in conflict with Scripture and with the Westminster Standards at certain points. Were the conflicting concept to be plainly stated—as, "the church is a body separate and distinct from the company of Old Testament believers"—the informed listener who professes a belief in the Westminster Confession would reject it. But this contrary concept may be woven so smoothly, warp and woof, into an exposition of Scripture, that it is not recognized. And since the preacher is obviously "sincere, earnest, and doing a good work," the message is embraced and acquiesced in, and the pocketbook generously opened to him.

6. *Arminianism.* This error mars a great majority of the Christian radio programs, many of which would be otherwise acceptable.

The only program with which I am familiar, that is circulated on a worldwide scope, that consistently presents the gospel of God in Christ, completely sovereign in the salvation of sinners and in his providential rule of the world, is the "Back-to-God Hour" broadcast of the Christian Reformed Church. Of course, there are others of less pretentious proportions, usually over a single local station, by individual preachers of soundly Reformed conviction.

Then there are broadcasts where the doctrine would be called "one-, two-, or three-point Calvinism" (a designation fairly new to me). That is, the speaker would hold to one, two, or three, possibly even four of the "Five Points of Calvinism."

Where it is "one-point" it is apt to be the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints—though more likely stated as "the eternal security of believers." In this case, the doctrine of man's total depravity by nature would be a note missing from the preaching, as also would be God's unconditional election of the saved, our Savior's death for believers as opposed to its being an

indiscriminate sacrifice for all men, and the doctrine of God's efficacious grace.

But when one or more of these doctrines is omitted from the framework of a broadcast (not that all broadcasts of the program would declare all these doctrines in every message), the program is to that extent faulty. The full-orbed gospel is marred.

7. *The "full gospel" broadcasts.* This is a grossly misleading term, for its current popular significance is that the "second blessing" of "Spirit baptism," resulting in "speaking in tongues" and perhaps other supernatural gifts such as a miraculous healing ministry, should be experienced by earnest Christians.

This is a divisive note in the Christian community, but it is making widespread impact. This "full gospel" always emphasizes this message, while it is apt to neglect altogether the total present claims of Christ, in political life, in business, in entertainment, in education.

The appeal of this "full gospel" message is to a legitimate need of human beings, to feel joyful and close to God in our faith. But when feeling is made primary, and often to the sad neglect of basic Christian truth and hard Christian duty, it is a perversion.

The Bread of Life

I believe that if the time, attention, and effort spent on unsound radio programs by listeners were devoted to a study of the Word itself, the church's testimony to the truth would be purified and strengthened. We would be more bold and confident in living holy, separated lives in this crooked and perverse generation. Furthermore, if the money being sent to support radio ministries that conflict at some basic point with Scripture's message of salvation by sovereign grace, were sent instead to support the work of churches that fully proclaim the Reformed faith, our church budgets would be over-subscribed.

The Rev. Lester E. Kilpatrick is pastor of the First Reformed Presbyterian Church ("Covenanter") of Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. This article is reprinted by the kind permission of the editor of the Covenanter Witness. Mr. Kilpatrick is the religious news editor for that publication, the official organ of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.

French liberals taking notice of new Reformed seminary

In the August/September issue of the *Guardian*, readers were informed of the exciting and encouraging development of a truly Reformed seminary at Aix-en-Provence, France. Though a small beginning, the new Faculty at Aix has already brought forth reaction from the liberal Protestant camp.

Paul Wells, member of the Faculty, and author of the *Guardian* report, also had an article in a recent issue of *Réforme*, a 15,000 circulation weekly of the liberal Protestants. This article presented a justification for the new project based on the need for correct ministry and teaching in the church.

Then came the reaction. Liberal theologians have called the Faculty at Aix everything from servants of the devil and schismatics to haughty separatists. Michel Bouttier, president of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Montpellier, replied to the article by Mr. Wells with a letter twice as long as the article. No doubt all the attention is giving the seminary at Aix plenty of publicity, even though the intent of the liberals is to ridicule.

It was certainly remarkable that *Réforme* then followed up the previous interchange with a lengthy interview of Pierre Courthial when he accepted a post with the new Faculty at Aix. M. Courthial has been the pastor of the Reformed Church of the Annunciation in Paris. What follows is a translation of excerpts from the interview in *Réforme*, furnished by Paul Wells.

Question: You have decided to leave your church to become a professor at the new faculty at Aix. Does this indicate an evolution in your thinking?

Answer: No. I will still be exercising the same ministry; for me it has always been a matter of going where I was called rather than taking the initiative. I have no doctorate in theology, and had thought I would stay in my parish until my retirement. However, I prayerfully considered the invitation and concluded I had to accept.

Question: Why this Faculty?

Answer: The idea is to create a faculty that is specifically Reformed in the regular, historical meaning of the word. The members of the faculty are to form a united team in respect to their

faith. The teaching of the various disciplines will tend to the same goal—the formation of Reformed pastors and the encouragement of Reformed faith, thought, and action.

Question: Do you think it necessary that this Faculty be opened at this particular time?

Answer: Yes, especially now.

First of all, because there are many of us who think that the church in general and the Reformed Churches in France in particular are in a distressing situation. The ideologies (or rather, the ideologies) of the world have infiltrated the church to the point that her message has been radicalized and her people discouraged from the mission given by the Lord. Under the fashionable guise of pluralism, theologians teach, pastors preach, and laymen believe the most contradictory notions. The Churches are becoming increasingly “confessional,” and their lifeblood is being sapped.

Next, because the Institute of Protestant Theology of Paris-Montpellier, which has just been restructured, is governed by the same theological pluralism. For this reason it can be neither a solution nor even a help. In neither the basic disciplines, nor in the central discipline of systematics, nor in ethics and practical theology, do I know of a single professor in this Institute who is “Reformed” in the confessional sense of the word.

Finally, because by God’s grace times of trouble become times of lively hope for us in spite of discouragement. Therefore it is time for the establishment of a Reformed Faculty in France, to stand as the firstfruits of a Reformed reawakening in the various churches and denominations.

Question: Where do you stand in re-

Note: Among other appointments by the National Presbyterians’ Mission to the World is that of Dr. Peter R. Jones to service in the field of New Testament on the faculty at Aix. Dr. and Mrs. Jones (the former Rebecca Clowney) are expecting the arrival of their second child any day. Peter is already in France; Becky is staying with friends in Liverpool—and enduring Britain’s current fuel crisis!



Pierre Courthial

gard to the Reformed Church of France at the moment?

Answer: It is my church, the church I love and to whose ministry I was ordained. It is above all for the future of this church that I go along with the project at Aix. I wish to see her faithful to the Word of God and to her Confession, many more confessing parishes added, and France evangelized.

I am very glad that the National Council of the Reformed Church has decided to keep me on its pastoral roll while I am at Aix, even though it disapproves of the founding of an independent Reformed faculty.

Question: Where will your students come from?

Answer: From a variety of denominations. The opening of the Faculty has only just been announced, but several students have already applied. Five are already there.

We believe that Scripture tells us that ministry is necessary for the church, and therefore we do not doubt that we will have as many students as are needed; the Lord will send as he sees fit. Aix will also open to pastors, elders and laymen for refresher courses.

Question: You think this Faculty is needed; does it mean then that for you Reformed theology is the only true understanding of Scripture?

Answer: To our way of thinking, Reformed theology is normal Christian theology. The elements of truth present in other theologies find their true context and true meaning in Reformed theology. It is Christianity expressed in its totality and its diversity. Completely governed by Holy Scripture and subject to its correction, Reformed theology

tolerates no other norm as sovereign.
Question: Churches born of the Reformation hold Scripture to be normative. The problem is more one of exegesis.

Answer: We take Scripture to be normative in the full meaning of the word. Coming entirely from God, it is infallible and without error, has no real contradictions and is harmonious in its teaching. "What Scripture says, God says." God so inspired the various authors of his Word that their words are his Word; the internal witness of the Holy Spirit convinces us of this.

Question: The Confession of Faith of the French Reformed Churches (1559) maintains that "all things are to be examined, governed and reformed according to Holy Scripture." Do you think that this also applies to science?
Answer: By what right, what so-called autonomy, can scientific research *not* be subject to the sovereign and normative authority of God's Word?

A fact of considerable importance for Christian thought in this second half of the twentieth century is the birth and development of Reformed philosophy, developed by, among others, Corneilus Van Til in the U.S.A., Herman Dooyeweerd in Holland, and Hendrik Stoker in South Africa. [Courthial's explanation of this followed.]

Question: Do you think, then, that Reformed theology has a real scientific concern?

Answer: Since the facts of creation with which we deal are God-given, Reformed Christians should follow their callings with ever-renewed zeal. The spiritual concern which has led to the establishment of the Faculty at Aix is definitely not devoid of scientific concern.

Question: Your decision amounts to a refusal of pluralism. Don't you see a danger of schism here? This danger is always present when someone claims to possess the truth.

Answer: There are dangers in every enterprise. I think we are fully aware of the risks that arise from the decision.

From the pluralist standpoint, the greatest danger, and maybe the only danger, is the one that threatens unity (unity of whom with whom? unity on what basis?). From our Reformed standpoint priority is given to *truth*, which alone can create true unity (John 17). Even though we refuse to accept a pluralism that tolerates contradictory ideas in a disorganized system, we do

admit that there is such a thing as a pluralism of complementary ideas that form a united system.

We don't *possess* truth; we are fallible sinners. However we do seek to *keep* and *maintain* the truth. These two verbs can have a negative connotation. Paul wrote in Romans that men do keep the truth captive in injustice, and in exchange propagate untruths. They also have a positive meaning, that of faithfulness. In Luke 8:15 Christ says that men hear the Word, keep it, and thus bear fruit. Paul exhorts us to "keep in memory what I preached to you." The Lord has given us his Word; when we keep and guard it, it is really the Word that keeps and guards us (John 17:6-19). . . .

Our theological knowledge is not and will never be more than incomplete (1 Corinthians 13:9-12) and therefore subject to reformation. Its being incomplete, however, in no way prevents it from being true. The revelation of Christ and of Scripture is sufficiently clear, and the Spirit working in us is sufficiently powerful to ensure that our theological knowledge, while still dependent on the Word and on the Spirit for its growth, is sufficiently

certain in respect to its content.

The Reformed stance on biblical inerrancy and thus on the trustworthiness of Confessions of Faith based on Scripture, far from providing facile solutions in respect to exegesis, obliges us to be exacting in looking for the meaning of the contents of the Bible in all its details and with all its difficulties, without manipulating the facts or ignoring the inspiration of the text.

Finally, I would like to add that our refusal of pluralism will never prevent us from listening to the pluralists or from receiving anything they have to teach us; we hope in return they may receive something from us.

To God be the glory!

Members of this Faculty at Aix desire the prayer-support of Reformed Christians everywhere, that they may know how to stand for the truth of the Word both firmly and graciously. Readers interested in knowing more about the seminary may write:

Paul Wells
Faculté Libre de Théologie Protestante
33, Avenue Jules-Ferry
13—Aix-en-Provence, France

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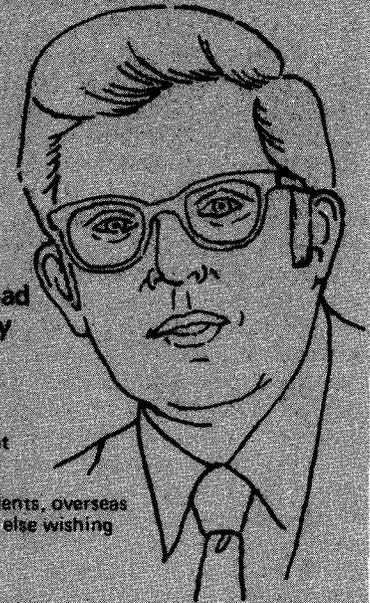
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The Changing Scene

HENRY W. CORAY

Flashing comet and the "Morning Star"

Soon after the Christmas season a spectacular drama was supposed to unfold in the evening skies. The Comet Kohoutek, having rounded the sun, would slash across the heavens, startling our world with its stream of light, hurtling onward to its dark oblivion in outer space. But, contrary to the expectations of scientists and some prophets of doom, Kohoutek has not lived up to its advance billing.

For the few of us who can remember 1910, it will be reminiscent of the famed Halley's Comet that appeared on Christmas Day in 1658 and since then, with exact regularity, has appeared every seventy-six years. Halley's will be seen again in 1986.

One is reminded also of the strange incident in Matthew 2:9. "When [the wise men] heard the king they departed; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was." The word "star" might also be translated "comet." The lexicographer Thayer, for instance, says that the "wandering stars" of Jude 13 were in fact comets. The term could mean meteors or planets as well.

Since the days of Kepler, astronomers have stated that for ten months in 7 B.C. the planets Jupiter and Saturn were conjoined by Mars to form a combination of stellar travelers. Edersheim, in *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, reports that seven years before Christ such a conjunction occurred (vol. I, p. 212). (Incidentally, it is well established that our calendar is inaccurate and that, ironically, Jesus was born some years before the end of what we term B.C.).

In 1910, when Halley's Comet traversed the sky, it traveled from east to west, rising and becoming diffused in the east, then resurfacing brightly in the west, according to the astronomers of Jerusalem. Chinese astronomers record a comet that appeared for some sixty days in March and April of 5 B.C. Since Herod ordered the slaughter of Bethlehem's infants "from two years old and under," it would seem that two years had passed since Jesus was born. Thus the time from 7 B.C. when the "star" first sparkled, until 5 B.C. when its final appearance concluded its mission, would appear to confirm with remarkable accuracy the narrative of Matthew's Gospel.

In the data from astronomy there are details that do not satisfy our curiosity, and difficulties that remain to be resolved. But after all, such scientific evidence is merely confirmatory. We do not need it to produce confidence in the inspired accounts of Scripture. It does, nevertheless, lend support to special revelation, and for this we are grateful.

But these thoughts of brilliant stars and flashing comets should focus our attention on that "bright and morning Star" of the Apocalypse. He who was born in a manger will some wonderful day reappear to fill all heaven and earth with

his flashing glory. We shall see him with our eyes in all his radiant beauty and majesty and power.

"Necessities" in the changing scene

A leading sociologist has released some interesting statistics on the needs and tastes of American citizens. Fifty years ago, he states, people claimed they had twenty-four basic needs to sustain themselves, but desired ninety-four commodities to make their existence more pleasant. In 1973, Americans said they had ninety-six basic needs, but they would like to have *four hundred and ninety-two items* over and above essentials.

In a generation, the acceleration of our living doubtless offers a natural explanation for this surprising upcurve. Modern scientific discoveries, the increase of knowledge, the accent on speed, space exploration and other factors may account for the stepping up of "necessities." Still, the admission that we would like to have almost five hundred luxury articles, things we could do without but that we want anyway, seems to be a commentary on the materialistic character of our society.

It is true, of course, that some of the "good old days" were in reality "bad old days." Nevertheless you cannot but wonder where the rapid rise of demands, both for the necessary and the unnecessary, is going to stop. When in the Changing Scene will Americans learn the affirmation of our Lord, that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he hath"?

Let me—Let us pray

One shrinks from making observations on the matter of community or corporate prayer. It is a delicate subject, and nobody wants to hurt sensitive souls. Perhaps, however, a word of exhortation is in order.

A practice that seems to be gaining impetus in Christian circles is for the supplicant to substitute the first person singular pronoun for the unobtrusive "we." "Lord, I ask . . . , I pray for . . . , I confess. . . ." Certainly the use of "I" is in order in private devotions. Personal petition and confession of sin should be voiced individually. But when this is done in the prayer meeting, have you noticed how you stop thinking about God and start thinking about the intercessor?

Lest this seem an unfair generalization, a look at two community prayers in the New Testament may help. Take what is known as the Lord's Prayer, the perfect pattern for corporate praying. Nine times the first person plural is employed; the singular not once.

Then in Acts 4, we read of the company of disciples coming together to ask God for a specific answer to prayer. And what is the key phrase there? "Grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word."

I CAN DO IT JUST AS WELL AT HOME

Public libraries are fine for some people,
But I have no very high view of them.
For one thing, the chairs are very hard;
After an hour, my back feels like a pretzel.
And that music drifting over the stacks—
Well, I'm not familiar with it.
The people there—sleeping, or holding hands—
They're not what they profess.
The atmosphere is downright unfriendly,
And nobody ever speaks to me.
The librarian, even after many visits from me,
Has never yet come to call on me.
So, you can see why I don't like the library;
I'll not go there any more.
Besides, I can always buy myself a book
And read it at home in comfort.

The Old Chinese Philosopher

Again, it is the plural, the uniting plural, that is used.
The question is, which of the two forms, the singular or the plural, makes for edification? Let all who gather for prayer in our Savior's name decide.

Where did the "King's English" go?

"Of making many books there is no end," wrote the Preacher in Ecclesiastes. Verily! The multiplicity of new versions of the Bible bears him out.

Some of these probably help new Christians in their understanding of biblical content. But it would seem that many of our modern translators, in their desire to make Scripture understandable, have reduced the diction to the language of the street.

This poses a question: Have we really gained in the translations? The beauty, rhythm, stateliness, what the architects of the Westminster Confession called "the majesty of style," which was prominent in the older versions, has been replaced by what amounts to newspaper jargon.

The late Dr. Edward J. Young detected the change coming. It prompted this comment from him: "I don't doubt that certain scholars who have turned out new translations of the Bible are well acquainted with the original Hebrew and Greek. Their trouble is they don't know the English language."

Symbols of truth, or cymbals of noise

Sometimes earnest but overly zealous Bible students, in their enthusiasm to wring all sorts of types and symbols from Scripture, carry the application much too far.

I once heard a well-known teacher of Scripture tell his listeners that the ark built by Noah represented salvation, the gopher wood stood for the deity of Christ, the pitch was a type of our Lord's human nature, the window symbolized the Holy Spirit, etc., etc., ad infinitum. It was exegesis fearfully and wonderfully made.

That there is a healthy symbolism that devout disciples of Christ may embrace and endorse is beyond cavil. What is needed is that we do not force the Bible to sound forth what its divine Author did not intend it to say. A classic example is Calvin's quotation of Bernard:

"... that the name of Jesus is not only light, but also food; that it is likewise oil, without which all the food

read the OUTLOOK

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- Giving sharpened expression to the Reformed Faith and to stimulate the doctrinal sensitivities of those who profess this faith;
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of the soul is dry; that it is salt, unseasoned by which, whatever is presented to us is insipid; finally, it is honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, joy in the heart, and medicine to the soul; and there are no charms in any discourse where his name is not heard."

How much clearer and purer the Scripture's perfect tone: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."

Here & There

Artesia, Calif. — The Cerritos Chapel, meeting for the last two and a half years in a mortuary, has been given an opportunity to purchase a combination office and home in Artesia. The property has adequate parking and could be used immediately. The chapel needs to raise \$30,000 for purchase, and is being offered a \$50,000 mortgage. Short term and long term notes are being offered (at the rates given by the Committee on Home Missions). Those interested in helping contact: Kenneth Kitts, 645 Camellia, Anaheim, CA 92804. or telephone: 714-772-8988.

Rockford, Ill. — *The Community (Orthodox) Presbyterian Church is seeking to contact anyone interested in a Reformed testimony in the Rockford-Belvidere area (north and west of Chicago just below the Wisconsin state line). The Rev. Eugene Grilli has recently arrived to work with this beginning group. His address: 5270 Crest Dale Dr., Rockford, IL 61111.*

Versailles, Ky. — Persons anywhere in the state of Kentucky interested in the possibility of a National Presbyterian witness in their area are urged to contact: James F. Miller, Wyndehurst, Rt. 2, Versailles, KY 40383.

BOOK TO HONOR DR. ALLIS

A volume honoring the late Old Testament scholar, Oswald T. Allis, is expected off the press early this year. Entitled **The Law and the Prophets**, the 500-page book contains articles by over forty contributors. Editors are Milton C. Fisher and Leslie W. Sloat, with Dr. John F. Skilton as general editor. Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co. is issuing the volume.

INTER-VARSITY'S URBANA 73

Urbana, Ill. — *Over 15,000 young people gathered over the year-end holidays to hear the claims of Christ, 'Lord of the Universe and Hope of the World.' The triennial conferences of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship have always pressed the call to missionary service and Urbana 73 saw more young Christians than ever respond to the Great Commission.*

Westminster Seminary was present, offering the training needed to proclaim the gospel to today's lost world. Manning the booth in the accompanying picture are Dr. Palmer Robertson, professor of Old Testament, on the left, and Mr. Robert G. den Dulk, Director of Administration. Dr. Edmund P. Clowney, president of the Seminary, addressed the gathering on opening night, pointing to Christ's death on the cross as the proof that man is truly lost apart from the Savior.

Oxford, Pa. — Mr. Jonathan Peters was ordained to the gospel ministry and installed as pastor of Bethany Orthodox Presbyterian Church on January 26. He had served as an assistant to the pastor of Grace Church in Westfield, N. J., before coming to Bethany. The Peters' address: R.D. 2, Box 117, Oxford, PA 19363.

Tuscaloosa, Ala. — *The home missions agency of the National Presbyterian Church is seeking names of persons in the Tuscaloosa area interested in establishing a genuinely Presbyterian congregation. Contact: Rev. Cecil Williamson, Jr., P. O. Box 803, Selma, AL 36701.*

Chicago, Ill. — The Chicago Bible Class, conducted by missionary-pastor Francis Mahaffy, had a unique experience. Mr. Matsuda, faithful Japanese Christian in whose home the class meets, suggested having a "Korean night." Missionary Bruce F. Hunt came and spoke in Korean to over twenty-five persons, and then in English to the rest of the group. Announcements in a local Korean-language paper and through a Korean member of the class resulted in the good turnout.

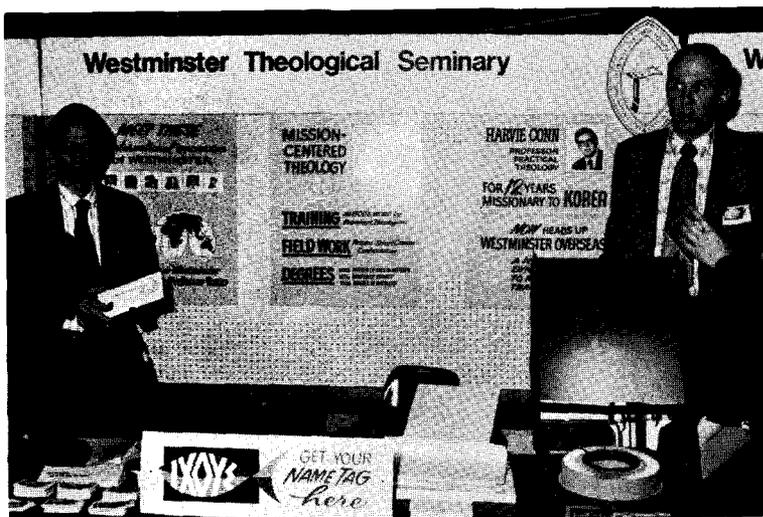
Sonora, Calif. — *On November 17, Mr. Rober Wagner was ordained to the gospel ministry and installed as pastor of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Rev. Messrs. Carl E. Erickson, Thomas S. Champness, and John W. Betzold took part in the service. Rev. and Mrs. Wagner's address: Box 446, Sonora, CA 93370.*

Rev. Richard J. Wirth (pastor of Lisbon Orthodox Presbyterian Church), R.F.D. 2, Box 243 A, Lisbon, NY 13658.

Rev. Lionel F. S. Brown (back from a year in Taiwan) c/o John Gallice, 2704 Lomita, Oceanside, CA 92054.

Rev. James L. Bosgraf (pastor of Park Hill church), 2374 Dahlia, Denver, CO 80222.

Rev. Charles F. Stanton (home missionary in northern Maine), R.D. 1, Fort Fairfield, ME 04742.



IN MEMORIAM:

RALPH E. CLOUGH

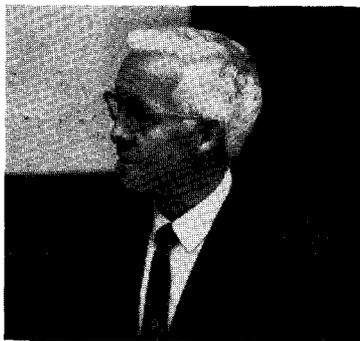
To remember Ralph Clough is to taste the warmth of gladness even in the shadow of his loss. His life was given in humble readiness to Jesus Christ his Saviour. He had many rich gifts but he used them for one purpose: to serve his Master. With what joy does Christ welcome his good and faithful servant!

See him as a young man playing the violin in a Christmas Eve service in a tiny New England Church. Hear him speaking of the reality of Christ's incarnation. Watch him in a Bible study group as he searches the faces of his hearers, eager to plant and water the seed of the gospel in men's hearts. One whom he grounded in the faith later became his wife and fellow-servant.

God blessed his unassuming ministry; he became a leader in his denomination. His preaching came with power; he ministered to youth from the beach and to the elderly in the sun. He sought like the apostle to be a servant of all that he might win more to Christ.

He was honest about his own failures, always ready to acknowledge weakness and sin. His genuineness unconsciously rebuked pride in others and gave great authority to his witness to God's grace. Jesus once put off his garments, took up a towel, and then washed his disciples' feet. Ralph Clough remembered the grace that offered such an example. While others sought the chief seats at the feast, Ralph looked for a towel. Ralph preached from Scripture that Christ saves sinners. Grace was the theme of his message, and to the multitude touched by his ministry, grace was the theme of his life. That witness still speaks. It makes his memory a tribute to the Saviour who has called him home.

-E. P. Clowney



DOWN . . . to Save Sinners

This brief meditation from the heart of Ralph Clough appeared in the Guardian of December 1962.

"Christ Jesus . . . was made in the likeness of men . . . He humbled himself . . ." (Phil. 2:7, 8).

The believer cannot cease to wonder at the marvelous condescension of the Lord of Glory as he took upon himself human flesh. He who from eternity was one with the Father in heaven became one with the creatures of earth. He who possesses as an eternal right the glories that belong to God himself, was clothed upon with the limitations of humanity. He who was the Creator became as the creature. The King became as one of his subjects. God became man. We cannot fathom this truth. Our hearts are unable to comprehend this mystery fully. But by the grace of God we do believe it.

Bound up in this measureless downward step is matchless love. This is incomparable grace that the Word should become flesh. Here is the

The Rev. Ralph E. Clough, pastor of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Manhattan Beach, Calif., died on January 19, 1974 of a heart attack. Graduating from Westminster Seminary in 1945, he had served pastorates in Hamden, Conn., and Bridgeton, N. J., before coming to Manhattan Beach. The picture was taken in 1970 at Portland, Ore., as he completed his duties as moderator of the 36th General Assembly.

answer to the "why" of the incarnation and what an answer it is for a lost sinful world!

Now we understand that Jesus' birth is far more than an event intended merely to inspire poets. It is the first step in his grand work of redemption. The story of the cradle will have its climax in the cross. The Babe of Bethlehem will become the Christ of Calvary. The only begotten of the Father descends from the heights, praise God, that we might ascend from the depths. This is good reason for great joy indeed. Believers, the Lord Jesus Christ was eternally rich, glorious and exalted, but "though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor" (II Cor. 8:9). He left his throne and his kingly crown and came to earth to save sinners.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

PENSACOLA THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

The eighteenth annual Pensacola Theological Institute will be held at the McIlwain Memorial Presbyterian Church of Pensacola, Florida, the week of August 4-11.

Featured speaker this year will be Dr. Mariano Di Gangi, a director of the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship, and formerly pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pa.

Dr. O. Palmer Robertson, professor in Old Testament at Westminster Seminary, will teach a course on 'The Night Visions of Zechariah.'

Conducting a course on the Christian Philosophy of Education will be Dr. Norman E. Harper, professor of Christian education at Reformed Seminary.

Mr. Terry Gyger will teach a course in Missions and Church Growth. Mr. Gyger is president of Men in Action, which seeks to win business and professional leaders to Christ.

Further information may be obtained from:

Rev. Donald A. Dunkerley
1220 E. Blount Street
Pensacola, FL 32503

How in the world do I work and eat to the glory of God?

JOSEPH A. PIPA

Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever. One of the most frequently quoted statements from the Westminster Standards is this answer to the first catechism question.

Motto: "Glorify God"?

But I am afraid this watchword of Reformed piety suffers from sloganizing. It's become a motto we use without really thinking about what it means.

What *does* it mean to "glorify God"? It means praising God, for "whoso offereth praise glorifieth me" (Psalm 50:23). It means keeping his commandments, for "if ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). It means doing good works: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

"Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Corinthians 10:31). That sounds good. But how can I glorify God eating a sandwich or mopping a floor? How do I go through a day as a businessman, housewife, student, or retired oldster, all to God's glory?

Glorify—according to the Word

God's commands cover every area of life. Whatever I do, if it's to be to God's glory, must be done within the framework of God's commands.

So I eat in moderation and thankfulness. I do my housework remembering that God and my family come first. At school I am careful not to cheat, or allow others to cheat from me, but do my work to the limit of my ability.

These things are easy enough to find in God's Word. What we need to do is learn God's law and obey it in all areas of life.

Glorify—with a Godward motivation

Why do I do what I do? Is it to be seen by others, or to be seen by God? "Slaves [or, workers, students, children] be obedient to those who are your masters [or, bosses, teachers, parents] . . . with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ" (Ephesians 6:5).

Whatever we do, we do for God so as to please him, not men. The Christian works hard at his job, not to get compliments or a raise, but to please God. The Christian may compete in football or tennis, not to prove to the world that he's best, but to subdue part of creation so as to please God.

Glorify—in dependence on God

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever" (Romans 11:36). We are not glorifying God all on our own. We do all things through our God, for he is the source and strength for every task.

So, we give thanks at mealtime, acknowledging that the food is on our table solely by God's grace. The Christian mechanic does his work, seeking God's help in every job. The Christian housewife looks for strength and aid from God. The Christian musician seeks God's blessing on every note played. To depend on God for strength and wisdom in our tasks is to do them to his glory.

Glorify—with thanksgiving to God

We are commanded to give thanks to God for all things. So we glorify God by thanking him for letting us do a job well, for time to go fishing, for music to enjoy, for all we have or do.

To thank God for all things, even for the privilege of doing our tasks, is to glorify God in all these areas of our lives.

Glorify—with whole-heartedness

"Whatever ye do, do it heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men" (Colossians 3:23). The Christian does not work or play with half-hearted effort, but with gusto.

"The Lord takes pleasure in his people" (Psalm 149:4). He takes pleasure not just in our formal religious exercises, but in all things of life that we do to his glory. What a joy there is to life to know that God is pleased with our work and play!

The Rev. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. is pastor of the Tchula (Mississippi) Presbyterian Church, and is a minister in the newly formed National Presbyterian Church.