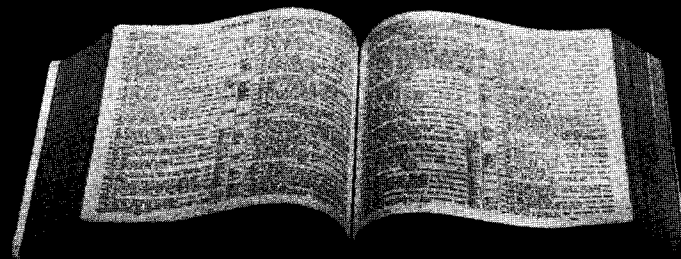


The Presbyterian Guardian

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The Chicago Statement
Inerrancy Defined for Today
No Scripture, No Christ



Letters

Letter from Taiwan

Missionaries and members of mission boards have expressed concern over President Carter's recent decision to recognize the government of Red China and thereby to cut off diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Reactions have varied from anxiety about the future of the church in Taiwan to optimism with regard to the possibility of Red China's being opened up to the gospel once more. Meanwhile, those within Taiwan itself have to face the immediate situation resulting from the shock of President Carter's announcement. The following is a slightly abridged letter from Steve and Fay Hake, Orthodox Presbyterian missionaries to Taiwan. It expresses very clearly the emotions of the Taiwanese people. It was written at the end of December immediately after the announcement had been made.

Although President Carter and his administration have made no secret of their goal to normalize relations with the Red Chinese government, and indeed have been obviously and speedily headed in this direction, the actual statement, the finality of it, and the form in which it came has hit us here in Taiwan with a heavy blow.

When the news of Carter's announcement hit the press in Taiwan, (Even before it hit the press, it spread like fire across the island. Many of our neighbors and friends knew before we did.) people, young and old, across the whole island entered into a state of anger and of fear.

They are angry because Americans, particularly, Jimmy Carter, have betrayed them, going back on a promise to help defend them against the communists for selfish reasons. America is not trustworthy. This anger and disdain for Carter and the United States has been demonstrated in speeches given by President Chiang Ching-kuo and others, by riots in Taipei aimed against the American embassy and other Americans there, and by the common people, many of whom cannot help but feel like the woman who said, "When I see an American I think of Jimmy Carter. When I think of Jimmy Carter

I become very angry."

But more prevalent than the emotion of anger is that of fear and uncertainty. People have all been sobered. Television programs were all taken off the air for the past few days and replaced by government speeches and pleas for unity and self-reliance, and patriotic programs and music. The nation-wide elections for parliamentarians were indefinitely postponed and campaign activities for them suspended. This was in an effort to minimize the differences among candidates and their followers at this crucial time for Taiwan, when unity and cooperation with government seems to be so necessary for Taiwan's survival. By postponing the elections, criticism of the present government is cut off and a unified nation made more possible. Schools have been having patriotic programs and broadcasting loud and clear the national anthem several times a day. President Chiang Ching-kuo has ordered combat readiness. He has called for people to remain calm and determined. He has reiterated again and again that he will never negotiate with Peking or other communist nations. Preparations for war are being made. The newspapers are full of articles concerning these things almost to the exclusion of all else. The earnest quest for permission to emigrate has increased. People have been buying gold in the hopes that with gold they can buy their way out if need be. Many friends have shared with us the sober thoughts they have of what their lives would be like under communism. Prayers in church are earnestly offered concerning Taiwan's future and the well being of the people.

In addition to sharing these things I'd like to share, for prayer, some of the impact that this announcement has had on Americans living here in Taiwan. We have experienced some fear, particularly those in Taipei where violence is more quickly resorted to. American schools have been closed because of threats. Some previously very friendly businessmen no longer speak to us and have charged us higher prices. The police have called sev-

eral groups of Americans and requested them to stay inside here in Taichung in the evenings and in Taipei all day for the time being.

In addition to the present wave of disdain for Americans and the various complications that will come in not having an embassy, the situation also poses to us many questions and serious considerations for the future. Are we preparing for a ministry and learning a language that we will never be able to use here in Taiwan? If the mainland does invade should we leave? And at what point? How do you prepare Christians to suffer (really suffer) for their faith? Can you fruitfully talk about this when you have a way out and they don't? What will the lives of the people we have come to know and love be like in the coming months and years? What can we do about it?

These and other thoughts lie heavily on our minds at this time. Please pray with us. Please pray for safety, patience, and wisdom for the American missionaries here at this time; and pray for the people of Taiwan and in particular for the Christians here. May God be merciful.

Steve and Faye Hake

On Tithing

In the interest of accuracy, should not both of the articles on the tithe (October, 1978) have been titled "Tithing—No" since that view is expressed in both? And in the interest of fair representation, should there not have been an article articulating the view that the "tithe" does mean ten percent and is still the required portion?

With all due respect to the Rev. Mitchell, the exegesis and the scriptural examples stopped immediately before the article begins to suggest that a tithe is not a tithe, and that God really meant that you were commanded to give that percentage only if you thought you could afford it. I find it hard to reconcile that view with Malachi's comment that giving less than "the whole tithe" is robbing God!

Rodney T. King
Marion, NC

From the Editor

As we enter a new year we do it with enthusiasm. A new year means a fresh start, an opportunity to make a new beginning. Yet, is there perhaps a nagging suspicion that as the year unfolds our resolutions will remain as *resolutions*, that we will be no better than we were last year?

What is it that fills the Christian with hope as he begins another year of life? What gives him the assurance that, whatever the outcome in terms of physical and material well being, 1979 will be a good year? He is conscious of the fleeting nature of time and all things earthly. "The grass withers, the flower fades," says the Prophet Isaiah. Yes, but in the next breath, "the Word of our God shall stand forever." (Isaiah 40:6). *This* is the confidence of the Christian. He knows that amidst the change and decay around him his God does not change neither does his Word which, for us who live in 1979, he has given to us in the Bible.

The people of God have always been a people of the Book. Because the devil has known this, the Bible has ever been the object of his ceaseless and venomous attacks. From the early Greek heresies against which much of the New Testament itself was directed to the inroads of modern evolutionary science, he has employed all of his ingenuity in an attempt to undermine the authority of Scripture. Yet, throughout it all, the Bible has remained its own best defense as it has been the means of delivering men from the kingdom of darkness and of translating them into the kingdom of God's dear Son. As Spurgeon said, "Defend the Bible? I'd sooner defend a lion!" A lion does not need to be defended; it requires only the opportunity to use its own massive strength.

Until fairly recently the professing church was more or less united in its adherence to an inspired inerrant Bible. It was the unbelieving world which launched the offensive against the Word of God. However, within the last century or so, under the influence of rationalistic philosophies whose roots are in the eighteenth century Enlightenment, there have

been those who, in the name of biblical scholarship, have sought to undermine the integrity of the biblical texts. Large tracks of Bible history have been relegated to the regions of myth and allegory. The accuracy of the gospel records has been questioned. And along with this, has gone a denial of our Lord's deity.

The results of such teaching are evident in the church today. Unable to say, "thus saith the Lord," much of contemporary Christendom consists of a babble of conflicting human voices.

The founding of *The Presbyterian Guardian* by Dr. J. Gresham Machen in 1935 was a direct result of Dr. Machen's attempt to raise up a banner on the side of biblical truth. He was surely right when he said that the so-called liberalism of modern theology is not any kind of Christianity at all, but an entirely different religion.

Just as the Bible has withstood attacks from outside the church, so it has more than survived attacks from within. The Lord raised up men like Dr. Machen and the late Dr. E. J. Young of Westminster Seminary who exposed the inconsistencies of modern biblical criticism.

But the battle is not over yet. As John J. Mitchell explains in his article, "Inerrancy Defined for Today," cracks have begun to appear even among those who continue to hold to foundational biblical truths. There are those within the evangelical community who no longer wish to speak of an inerrant Bible. The Bible, they tell us, is no longer to be thought of as "the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice." Rather it is "the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice." The difference is subtle, but real. By eliminating the word "inerrant" from their description of the Bible, such men are leaving open the possibility that the biblical writers, although under the influence of the Holy Spirit, were also left to express matters of scientific and historical detail in terms of their own (often faulty) cultural perceptions. Such discrepancies, it is alleged, do not significantly affect the spiritual truths which it is the purpose of

the Bible to convey. The resulting situation in the church is such that Francis Shaeffer, in now famous words, has called inerrancy the "watershed" of evangelical theology.

From October 26-28, 1978 an international group of evangelical scholars met at Chicago to reaffirm their commitment to the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. The result of their deliberations was an 11 page statement called "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy." As John Mitchell says, it defines inerrancy for today.

In the December, 1978 issue of the *Guardian* we printed a brief five paragraph statement taken from the fuller "Statement." In this issue we are printing the entire statement. Also, the Rev. John J. Mitchell, who was a participant in the conference, is providing a comment on the conference's significance, together with an analysis of the historical situation which has necessitated the calling of such a conference and the formation of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy which hosted the conference. Mr. Mitchell's article takes the form of an introduction to the "Chicago Statement" itself.

We wish to give this Statement as wide a circulation as possible. Accordingly anyone wishing extra copies of this *Guardian* issue may obtain them at the reduced cost of 35 cents by writing to: The Managing Editor, The Presbyterian Guardian, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia, Pa. 19126.

In addition to the above, we are printing an article by the Rev. John M. Frame in which he explores the relationship between Scripture and Christ. So close is that relationship, says Frame, that it is a case of "No Scripture, No Christ."

In closing, let me return to my initial remarks. It is the Bible and the God of the Bible that is the basis of Christian confidence in a new year. There could be no better way, then, of beginning this new year than to affirm anew our faith in Scripture. And if these pages should be read by any who do not have that faith, my prayer is that you will come to have it in this year. J. Cameron Fraser

Inerrancy Defined for Today

John J. Mitchell

Christians throughout the centuries of the church's existence have believed—usually without questioning the belief—that the Bible is God's own Word and as such is incapable of expressing error. Put that way, a great majority of Christians today still revere the Scriptures as inerrant, believing that God the Author is simply incapable by his very nature of expressing errors of fact in what is his own Word.

To be sure, most Christians today realize their own Bibles are translations, and as such may be something less than purely inerrant. And most knowledgeable believers are aware that their translations are based on copies of copies of the original writings, and that some errors have crept into the copies on which our modern Bibles depend.

In that case, is there any point to talking about Scripture's inerrancy? Yes there is, for two basic reasons. The first has to do with God's ability to get his Word recorded in the first place. The second has to do with God's ability to preserve it, to the degree he himself chooses to preserve it, throughout the centuries. And for the second point, all those who have given the subject careful study are persuaded that the copies of the originals that we have today, even the worst examples of copyists' carelessness, are remarkably free of serious problems, so much so that no basic doctrine has ever

hinged on any argument about the original text.

But as to the first point, God's ability to get his Word in human words, the debate has been more serious. For over a hundred years there have been those calling themselves Christians who have denied that God could, or at least that he did, get his own Word through human authors without there also being human error in the result. After all, the prophets and apostles were human beings fully capable of error, as Paul's blunt correction of Peter's "dissimulation" in separating himself from Gentile believers fully proves. In other words, Scripture's inerrancy did not depend on inerrant human writers.

So, the argument goes, Scripture, however you understand God's "inspiration" of it, cannot help but be tainted with the humanness, the errancy, of its human writers. That was the position of the Modernists in the 1920's and 1930's. That is still the view to be found in most seminaries of the larger, "mainline" denominations today. It is a view that denies that God is capable of overcoming the error-prone humanity of the Bible's human writers.

Evangelicals versus Modernists

Those who opposed the Modernists a generation ago came to be known as Evangelicals. They believed the gospel, the "evangel" as it is set forth in Scripture. They believed in the virgin birth of Christ, the actuality of the miracles recorded in Scripture, the resurrection of Christ's physical body, and his death as

a substitutionary atonement. Those were the "fundamentals" of the faith.

And they also believed the fifth "fundamental," that Scripture was infallible, incapable of error. (Actually, "infallible" is a stronger word, as any dictionary will attest, than is "inerrant." A telephone directory may turn out to be inerrant. But only the Word of the Lord God could truly be infallible, incapable of containing error, since only God is incapable of erring.) But over the years, there have been those who wanted to speak of Scripture as "infallible," but also wanted to allow for errors in it. And the term "infallible" has increasingly come to be largely meaningless.

Among those who wanted to say the Bible is infallible, but who also insisted it contained errors of fact here and there were a number of those who otherwise were considered to be Evangelicals, believing the other "fundamentals" of the faith. Though not limited to that institution, this approach has been very strong at Fuller Theological Seminary, and several of its professors have been leading spokesmen of the view.

Evangelicals versus Evangelicals

What we have today is a sharp cleavage among the Evangelicals. There are those who believe the gospel as revealed in Scripture, believe the historical facts of Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection on which the Christian faith depends. But some of them are no longer prepared to say that Scripture, even in the original manuscripts, was or is free of error.

Basically such "Evangelicals" have been influenced by modern thought and find it difficult to reconcile the views of science with those of the Scriptures. The Modernists of a generation ago blatantly denied any real activity of God in producing Scripture, holding that certain men wrote as they were "inspired" by noble thoughts. The Evangelicals who find an error-prone Scripture don't deny God's direct involvement, but insist that God used men as they were, fallible and faulty, warts and all.

The Rev. John J. Mitchell is General Secretary of the Committee on Stewardship in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Most of these Evangelicals insist that the gospel message, the heart of Scripture, is fully trustworthy and true. But whether the sun really stood still for Joshua is hardly all that important and one may deny this without denying the other "fundamentals" of the faith.

This split among Evangelicals has become increasingly sharp in recent years. Books have been written on both sides. Those who cannot affirm an inerrant Bible have insisted that they are still truly Evangelicals, believing the basic "fundamentals" of the Christian faith—and to a large extent, that seems to be true for many of them.

The Chicago Definition

Late in October, nearly 300 Evangelicals met in Chicago to set forth a definition of Scripture's inerrancy for today. They had no wish to deny the Christian faith of those who might not be able to make such an affirmation, but they felt that it was urgent to set forth the doctrine again for today.

Those participating in the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy had been invited to attend by a group of concerned Evangelical leaders. The participants were confronted, not only with a series of study papers by leading scholars, but with a preliminary draft of a definition of biblical inerrancy. Though there was some opportunity to propose changes in the definition, the conference did not have the luxury of time to argue out the details at any length.

The resulting definition, "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," was intended, negatively, not to shut out any who truly believed in that doctrine. For example, some wording in the original draft was modified so as not to exclude those holding neo-pentecostal views.

More positively, the statement was set forth as the basis for an effort to educate Christians as to the true doctrine of Scripture. Plans to make materials available on the subject, to plan regional gatherings, and otherwise to promote the doctrine, are already underway.

The statement itself, while probably not entirely satisfactory to any one participant's own views on the subject, is nevertheless a carefully drawn up definition. It sets forth a series of positive statements about Scripture and its Author along with denials of corresponding erroneous views.

Some Further Reflections

At the Chicago meeting were participants from a wide variety of backgrounds. There were Lutherans, Christian Reformed, Dispensationalists, Presbyterians (the largest single confessional tradition represented), both denominational leaders and those involved in para-church organizations. (For its size, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church probably had more representatives than any other group, and a large part of the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary was present.)

For the situation as it exists today, the "Statement" seems to set forth the historic Christian view of Scripture's character in a useful form.

But by no means were the participants limited to the conservative or "separatist" denominations. Dr. James M. Boice, of the Tenth (United) Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, presided; and several other United Presbyterians were involved. The two men who clearly were most involved in the drawing up of the "Statement" were Dr. Edmund P. Clowney of Westminster Seminary and Dr. James I. Packer, presently on his way to taking up new duties in western Canada. Though unable to be present due to his undergoing cancer treatment, Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer was plainly one of the sources from which the whole endeavor had arisen.

What becomes of the "Statement"? Though the participants claimed to be far from setting up a new "Shibboleth," it is hard to escape the conclusion that it will become just that. (A "shibboleth"

is a "test word" or "touchstone" identifying a particular group. See Judges 12: 4-6 for its original usage—*ed.*) To be sure, the convocation made plans to engage in a strong educational effort, to tell the Christian world just what Scripture teaches about its own character. At the same time, there is an expectation that others, besides those present in Chicago, will want to sign the "Statement" as an expression of their own belief in Scripture's inerrancy.

To this observer, there is nothing wrong with having "Shibboleths." Once there, whatever their other doctrinal differences, there is at least a foundation for study and discussion and seeking the mind of God. But it is only there that we can expect to find oneness of faith and practice.

Though there were times in Chicago when the desire to be inclusive seemed likely to result in a wishy-washy document, that does not seem to have been the result.

And it may seem strange that neo-pentecostals and responsible leaders in the United Presbyterian Church, for some extreme examples, could sign it. Yet they did, and did so in good conscience. One can only hope that agreement on the doctrine of Scripture will lead to greater agreement on other doctrines taught in those Scriptures.

It is also to be hoped that the Council's plans to mount an educational campaign will bear fruit. It could only be a blessing to Christ's church to have his people more knowledgeable in their understanding of Scripture's own doctrine of its inerrant, infallible character.

Whether it becomes a "Shibboleth" or not, the "Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy" does set forth an understanding of the nature of God's Word that has been under insidious and persistent attack even within the "Evangelical" world. Simply making such a "Statement" may do much to assure many believers of what they had really believed all along—that God cannot lie, and his Word is without error at any point.

The Chicago Statement on

Biblical Inerrancy

Preface

The authority of Scripture is a key issue for the Christian Church in this and every age. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are called to show the reality of their discipleship by humbly and faithfully obeying God's written Word. To stray from Scripture in faith or conduct is disloyalty to our Master. Recognition of the total truth and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture is essential to a full grasp and adequate confession of its authority.

The following Statement affirms this inerrancy of Scripture afresh, making clear our understanding of it and warning against its denial. We are persuaded that to deny it is to set aside the witness of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit and to refuse that submission to the claims of God's own Word which marks true Christian faith. We see it as our timely duty to make this affirmation in the face of current lapses from the truth of inerrancy among our fellow Christians and misunderstanding of this doctrine in the world at large.

This Statement consists of three parts: a Summary Statement, Articles of Affirmation and Denial, and an accompanying Exposition. It has been prepared in the course of a three-day consultation in Chicago. Those who have signed the Summary Statement and the Articles wish to affirm their own conviction as to the inerrancy of Scripture and to encourage and challenge one another and all Christians to growing appreciation and understanding of this doctrine. We acknowledge the limitations of a document prepared in a brief,

intensive conference and do not propose that this Statement be given creedal weight. Yet we rejoice in the deepening of our own convictions through our discussions together, and we pray that the Statement we have signed may be used to the glory of our God toward a new reformation of the Church in its faith, life, and mission.

We offer this Statement in a spirit, not of contention, but of humility and love, which we purpose by God's grace to maintain in any future dialogue arising out of what we have said. We gladly acknowledge that many who deny the inerrancy of Scripture do not display the consequences of this denial in the rest of their belief and behavior, and we are conscious that we who confess this doctrine often deny it in life by failing to bring our thoughts and deeds, our traditions and habits, into true subjection to the divine Word.

We invite response to this statement from any who see reason to amend its affirmations about Scripture by the light of Scripture itself, under whose infallible authority we stand as we speak. We claim no personal infallibility for the witness we bear, and for any help which enables us to strengthen this testimony to God's Word we shall be grateful.

A Short Statement

1. God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.

2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and su-

perintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.

3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.

4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.

5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.

Articles of Affirmation and Denial

Article I.

We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God.

We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human source.

Article II.

We affirm that the Scriptures are the supreme written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture.

We deny that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.

Article III.

We affirm that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.

We deny that the Bible is merely a witness to revelation, or only becomes revelation in encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.

Article IV.

We affirm that God who made mankind in His image has used language as a means of revelation.

We deny that human language is so limited by our creatureliness that it is rendered inadequate as a vehicle for divine revelation. We further deny that the corruption of human culture and language through sin has thwarted God's work of inspiration.

Article V.

We affirm that God's revelation within the Holy Scriptures was progressive.

We deny that later revelation, which may fulfill earlier revelation, ever corrects or contradicts it. We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.

Article VI.

We affirm that the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration.

We deny that the inspiration of Scripture can rightly be affirmed of the whole without the parts, or of some parts but not the whole.

Article VII.

We affirm that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.

We deny that inspiration can be reduced to human insight, or to heightened states of consciousness of any kind.

Article VIII.

We affirm that God in His work of inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared.

We deny that God, in causing these writers to use the very words that He chose, overrode their personalities.

Article IX.

We affirm that inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to speak and write.

We deny that the finitude or fallenness of these writers, by necessity or otherwise, introduced distortion or falsehood into God's Word.

Article X.

We affirm that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.

We deny that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertion of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.

Article XI.

We affirm that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.

We deny that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.

Article XII.

We affirm that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit.

We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood.

Article XIII.

We affirm the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.

We deny that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.

Article XIV.

We affirm the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.

We deny that alleged errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved vitiate the truth claims of the Bible.

Article XV.

We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.

We deny that Jesus' teaching about Scripture may be dismissed by appeals to accommodation or to any natural limitation of His humanity.

Article XVI.

We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church's faith throughout its history.

We deny that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism.

Article XVII.

We affirm that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word.

We deny that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation from or against Scripture.

Article XVIII.

We affirm that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.

We deny the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship.

Article XIX.

We affirm that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

We deny that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, we further deny that inerrancy can be rejected with-

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Exposition

Our understanding of the doctrine of inerrancy must be set in the context of the broader teachings of the Scripture concerning itself. This exposition gives an account of the outline of doctrine from which our summary statement and articles are drawn.

Creation, Revelation and Inspiration

The Triune God, who formed all things by his creative utterances and governs all things by His Word of decree, made mankind in His own image for a life of communion with Himself, on the model of the eternal fellowship of loving communication within the Godhead. As God's image-bearer, man was to hear God's Word addressed to him and to respond in the joy of adoring obedience. Over and above God's self-disclosure in the created order and the sequence of events within it, human beings from Adam on have received verbal messages from Him, either directly, as stated in Scripture, or indirectly in the form of part or all of Scripture itself.

When Adam fell, the Creator did not abandon mankind to final judgment but promised salvation and began to reveal Himself as Redeemer in a sequence of historical events centering on Abraham's family and culminating in the life, death, resurrection, present heavenly ministry, and promised return of Jesus Christ. Within this frame God has from time to time spoken specific words of judgment and mercy, promise and command, to sinful human beings so drawing them into a covenant relation of mutual commitment between Him and them in which He blesses them with gifts of grace and they bless Him in responsive adoration. Moses, whom God used as mediator to carry His words to His people at the time of the Exodus, stands at the head of a long line of prophets in whose mouths and writings God put His words for delivery to Israel. God's purpose in this succession of messages was to maintain His covenant by causing His people to know His Name—that is, His nature—and His will both of precept and purpose in the present and

for the future. This line of prophetic spokesmen from God came to completion in Jesus Christ, God's incarnate Word, who was Himself a prophet—more than a prophet, but not less—and in the apostles and prophets of the first Christian generation. When God's final and climactic message, His word to the world concerning Jesus Christ, had been spoken and elucidated by those in the apostolic circle, the sequence of revealed messages ceased. Henceforth the Church was to live and know God by what He had already said, and said for all time.

At Sinai God wrote the terms of His covenant on tables of stone, as His enduring witness and for lasting accessibility, and throughout the period of prophetic and apostolic revelation He prompted men to write the messages given to and through them, along with celebratory records of His dealings with His people, plus moral reflections on covenant life and forms of praise and prayer for covenant mercy. The theological reality of inspiration in the producing of Biblical documents corresponds to that of spoken prophecies although the human writers' personalities were expressed in what they wrote, the words were divinely constituted. Thus, what Scripture says, God says; its authority is His authority, for He is its ultimate Author, having given it through the minds and words of chosen and prepared men who in freedom and faithfulness "spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (1 Pet. 1:21). Holy Scripture must be acknowledged as the Word of God by virtue of its divine origin.

Authority: Christ and the Bible

Jesus Christ, the Son of God who is the Word made flesh, our Prophet, Priest, and King, is the ultimate Mediator of God's communication to man, as He is of all God's gifts of grace. The revelation He gave was more than verbal; He revealed the Father by His presence and His deeds as well. Yet His words were crucially important; for He was God, He spoke from the Father, and His words will judge all men at the last day.

As the prophesied Messiah, Jesus Christ is the central theme of Scripture. The Old Testament looked ahead to Him; the New

Testament looks back to His first coming and on to His second. Canonical Scripture is the divinely inspired and therefore normative witness to Christ. No hermeneutic, therefore, of which the historical Christ is not the focal point is acceptable. Holy Scripture must be treated as what it essentially is—the witness of the Father to the incarnate Son.

It appears that the Old Testament canon had been fixed by the time of Jesus. The New Testament canon is likewise now closed inasmuch as no new apostolic witness to the historical Christ can now be borne. No new revelation (as distinct from Spirit-given understanding of existing revelation) will be given until Christ comes again. The canon was created in principle by divine inspiration. The Church's part was to discern the canon which God had created, not to devise one of its own.

The word *canon*, signifying a rule or standard, is a pointer to authority, which means the right to rule and control. Authority in Christianity belongs to God in His revelation, which means, on the one hand, Jesus Christ, the living Word, and, on the other hand, Holy Scripture, the written Word. But the authority of Christ and that of Scripture are one. As our Prophet, Christ testified that Scripture cannot be broken. As our Priest and King, He devoted His earthly life to fulfilling the law and the prophets, even dying in obedience to the words of Messianic prophecy. Thus, as He saw Scripture attesting Him and His authority, so by His own submission to Scripture He attested its authority. As He bowed to His Father's instruction given in His Bible (our Old Testament), so He requires His disciples to do—not, however, in isolation but in conjunction with the apostolic witness to Himself which He undertook to inspire by His gift of the Holy Spirit. So Christians show themselves faithful servants of their Lord by bowing to the divine instruction given in the prophetic and apostolic writings which together make up our Bible.

By authenticating each other's authority, Christ and Scripture coalesce into a single fount of authority. The Biblically-interpreted Christ and the Christ-centered, Christ-proclaiming Bible are from this standpoint one. As from the fact of in-

spiration we infer that what Scripture says, God says, so from the revealed relation between Jesus Christ and Scripture we may equally declare that what Scripture says, Christ says.

Infallibility, Inerrancy, Interpretation

Holy Scripture, as the inspired Word of God witnessing authoritatively to Jesus Christ, may properly be called *infallible* and *inerrant*. These negative terms have a special value, for they explicitly safeguard crucial positive truths.

Infallible signifies the quality of neither misleading nor being misled and so safeguards in categorical terms the truth that Holy Scripture is a sure, safe, and reliable rule and guide in all matters.

Similarly, *inerrant* signifies the quality of being free from all falsehood or mistake and so safeguards the truth that Holy Scripture is entirely true and trustworthy in all its assertions.

We affirm that canonical Scripture should always be interpreted on the basis that it is infallible and inerrant. However, in determining what the God-taught writer is asserting in each passage, we must pay the most careful attention to its claims and character as a human production. In inspiration, God utilized the culture and conventions of his penman's milieu, a milieu that God controls in His sovereign providence; it is misinterpretation to imagine otherwise.

So history must be treated as history, poetry as poetry, hyperbole and metaphor as hyperbole and metaphor, generalization and approximation as what they are, and so forth. Differences between literary conventions in Bible times and in ours must also be observed: since, for instance, non-chronological narration and imprecise citation were conventional and acceptable and violated no expectations in those days, we must not regard these things as faults when we find them in Bible writers. When total precision of a particular kind was not expected nor aimed at, it is no error not to have achieved it. Scripture is inerrant, not in the sense of being absolutely precise by modern standards, but in the sense of making good its claims and achieving that measure of focused truth at which its authors aimed.

The truthfulness of Scripture is not negated by the appearance in it of irregularities of grammar or spelling, phenomenal descriptions of nature, reports of false statements (e.g., the lies of Satan), or seeming discrepancies between one passage and another. It is not right to set the so-called "phenomena" of Scripture against the teaching of Scripture about itself. Apparent inconsistencies should not be ignored. Solution of them, where this can be convincingly achieved, will encourage our faith, and where for the present no convincing solution is at hand we shall significantly honor God by trusting His assurance that His Word is true, despite these appearances, and by maintaining our confidence that one day they will be seen to have been illusions.

Inasmuch as all Scripture is the product of a single divine mind, interpretation must stay within the bounds of the analogy of Scripture and eschew hypotheses that would correct one Biblical passage by another, whether in the name of progressive revelation or of the imperfect enlightenment of the inspired writer's mind.

Although Holy Scripture is nowhere culture-bound in the sense that its teaching lacks universal validity, it is sometimes culturally conditioned by the customs and conventional views of a particular period, so that the application of its principles today calls for a different sort of action.

Skepticism and Criticism

Since the Renaissance, and more particularly since the Enlightenment, world-views have been developed which involve skepticism about basic Christian tenets. Such are the agnosticism which denies that God is knowable, the rationalism which denies that He is incomprehensible, the idealism which denies that He is transcendent, and the existentialism which denies rationality in His relationships with us. When these un- and anti-biblical principles seep into men's theologies at presuppositional level, as today they frequently do, faithful interpretation of Holy Scripture becomes impossible.

Transmission and Translation

Since God has nowhere promised an inerrant transmission of Scripture, it is necessary to affirm that only the autographic

text of the original documents was inspired and to maintain the need of textual criticism as a means of detecting any slips that may have crept into the text in the course of its transmission. The verdict of this science, however, is that the Hebrew and Greek text appear to be amazingly well preserved, so that we are amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession, a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free.

Similarly, no translation is or can be perfect, and all translations are an additional step away from the *autographa*. Yet the verdict of linguistic science is that English-speaking Christians, at least, are exceedingly well served in these days with a host of excellent translations and have no cause for hesitating to conclude that the true Word of God is within their reach. Indeed, in view of the frequent repetition in Scripture of the main matters with which it deals and also of the Holy Spirit's constant witness to and through the Word, no serious translation of Holy Scripture will so destroy its meaning as to render it unable to make its reader "wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15).

Inerrancy and Authority

In our affirmation of the authority of Scripture as involving its total truth, we are consciously standing with Christ and His apostles, indeed with the whole Bible and with the main stream of Church history from the first days until very recently. We are concerned at the casual, inadvertent, and seemingly thoughtless way in which a belief of such far-reaching importance has been given up by so many in our day.

We are conscious too that great and grave confusion results from ceasing to maintain the total truth of the Bible whose authority one professes to acknowledge. The result of taking this step is that the Bible which God gave loses its authority, and what has authority instead is a Bible reduced in content according to the demands of one's critical reasonings and in principle reducible still further once one has started. This means that at bot-

(continued on page 16)

No Scripture No Christ

John M. Frame

Why is it so important to believe in an inspired, infallible, inerrant Bible? Because of Jesus Christ.

We are not here making the usual point about the relation between Christ and Scripture. The usual point is that Christ endorsed the authority of the Old Testament and endorsed in advance the authority of the New. That point is perfectly valid (cf. Matt. 5:17-19, John 5:45-47, 10:33-36, 14:26, 15: 26f, 16:13); but we are now making a different one, namely that unless we have a fully authoritative Scripture, it is meaningless for us to confess Christ as Lord and Savior.

I. Christ the Lord

What does it mean to confess Christ as Lord? Among other things, it means confessing ourselves to be servants. In the Bible, the servant is one who has no claim upon the Lord God. He knows that his Lord owns (Ps. 24:1) and controls (Eph. 1:11) all things, and therefore owes no goods or services to anyone (Deut. 10:14-17). He owes nothing—and has a right to demand everything. The servant has no claim upon God, but God has an absolute claim upon him. Absolute, that is, in three senses: (1) It is a claim that cannot be questioned. The Lord God has a right to demand unwavering, unflinching obedience. God blesses Abraham because he "obeyed my voice, and kept my charge,

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my commandments, my statutes, and my laws". (Gen. 26:5). He did not waver (Rom. 4:20), even when God commanded the sacrifice of Abraham's son Isaac (Gen. 22:18). To waver would have been sin.

(2) The claim of the Lord is absolute also in the sense that it transcends all other claims, all other loyalties. The Lord God will not tolerate competition; he demands exclusive loyalty. The servant must love the Lord with all his heart, soul and strength (Deut. 6:4; cf. Matt. 22:37). One cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:22ff). In the New Testament, Jesus Christ demands—and receives—precisely this kind of loyalty from his followers (Matt. 19:16-30, 10:37, 8:19-22, Phil. 3:8). The Lord demands first place. (3) The claim of God is therefore also absolute in the sense that it governs all areas of life. Whatsoever we do, even eating and drinking, must be done to the glory of God (I Cor. 10:31; cf. Rom. 14:23, II Cor. 10:5, Col. 3:17). There may be no compartments in our lives where the Lord is left out, where he is forbidden to exercise his authority.

II. Christ the Savior

Even if we were not sinners, we would still have a Lord; we are called to be servants of God simply because we are his creatures. But in fact we are not only creatures, but also sinners. We need, not only a Lord, but also a Savior; we need not only authority, but also forgiveness for disobeying that authority (Rom. 3:23, I John 3:4). Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, died on the cross to save his people from their sins (Rom. 5:8). But how can we know that this is

enough? We know because God has told us. Who else could pronounce our sins to be forgiven? Who else could promise salvation to those who believe in Christ? The Lord, who speaks to demand obedience, also speaks to promise salvation. He who speaks the law speaks also the gospel. As Abraham (Rom. 4:19f), we are called to believe the gospel simply because it is God's own promise. We know that believers are saved because Jesus has told us they are (John 5:24). Only the Lord can speak the word of forgiveness, that word which declares sinners to be righteous, that word which promises eternal life.

III. Christ the Author of Scripture

But where can we find such a word? Where can we find a word which makes an absolute claim upon us and makes an absolute promise of forgiveness? We must have it, or there is no hope. We must have it; else we have no knowledge of our Lord's demand or our Savior's forgiveness. Without such a word, truly we have no Lord, and we have no Savior.

A liberal or neo-orthodox theology can provide no such word. They know of no words in our experience which can demand unquestioning obedience, transcend all other claims, govern all areas of human life. They know of no words which can communicate unambiguously the "sure promise of God". Where, then, can we go? Others suggest that God gives each of us a private, individual revelation; but those who make that suggestion differ widely on what God has in fact said. If they are all right, then God contradicts himself frequently. What test is there to determine when God is in fact speaking and when he is not? How do we distinguish the voice of God from the voices of devils and the imaginations of our hearts?

The God of the Bible directs his people to a book. To be sure, he does speak to some men individually—Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Paul; but he instructs his people as a whole to find his will in a book.

When God first led his people out of bondage in Egypt, he gave them a book (Ex. 24:12). It was a book which he had written himself; the words of the book were his own words (Ex. 31:18, 32:16). Indeed, he permitted Moses to help with

the writing (34:27); but the authority of those written words was a divine authority, not a mere human authority (Deut. 4:1-8, 5:29-33, 6:4-25, Psm. 19, 119, Matt. 5:17-20, John 5:45-47). Later, others wrote books at God's behest, completing what we know as the Old Testament; books which Jesus endorsed both in word (above, first paragraph) and in deed (for Jesus submitted himself entirely to Scripture, living in such a way "that the Scripture may be fulfilled"). The New Testament Church turned to those books as the definitive transcript of God's law and promise. The books of the Old Testament were "God-breathed" (II Tim. 3:16, literal translation)—that is, words actually spoken by God. Also, these early Christians came to recognize further writings, the writings of apostles and others, as having the same sort of divine authority as the Old Testament (II Thess. 3:14, I Cor. 14:37, II Pet. 3:16). It is to such divine writings that the believer must turn to avoid confusion (II Tim. 3, II Pet. 1:12-2:22). It is those writings which pronounce the word of supreme authority and certain forgiveness. It is those writings which utter God's absolute claim and his sure promise, his law and his gospel. It is those writings by which he speaks to us as Lord and Savior.

Without such a word, there can be neither Lordship nor Salvation. Without such a word, we have no basis for confessing Christ as Lord and Savior, Lordship and Saviorhood, without authoritative Scripture, are meaningless expressions. That is why the authority of Scripture is so important. That is why we cannot say we love Christ while disowning the Bible (cf. John 14: 15, 21, 23, 15:10, I John 5:3).

And that is why, when we present the gospel, we must present it as a word of authority and sure promise—a word which demands precedence over all other words, a word which will not be judged by the criteria of modern philosophy and science, but which demands the authority to judge all the thoughts of men (John 12:48-50). To present it as anything less is to detract from the very Lordship of Christ and from the greatness of his salvation. As our Lord and Savior, Christ is the author of Scripture.



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Book Reviews

CHRIST'S CHURCH, THE BIBLE AND ME

by Alexander C. De Jong. Blue Island, Ill.: Paracletos Press, 1978, 48 pp. paper. \$1. Reviewed by J. Cameron Fraser.

This booklet consists of the text of an address given by the author at the request of the consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church, South Holland, Illinois on April 13, 1978. It also includes a review of Harry R. Boer's book *Above the Battle: the Bible and its Critics* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1977). This review together with a subsequent discussion between the author and Dr. Boer is reprinted from *The Banner*, the official publication of the Christian Reformed Church.

The booklet deals with the present crisis within the Christian Reformed Church. That crisis, as Dr. De Jong outlines it, is that the Christian Reformed Church is in a state of official ambiguity concerning the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible. According to De Jong, two mutually incompatible positions are accepted in the church. They are:

A. The Bible is reliably authoritative because God wrote it.

B. The Bible is reliably authoritative because of its intended meaning.

De Jong defends position "A" from the standpoint of Reformed orthodoxy and shows how position "B" has been promulgated by men such as Harry Boer.

Although he deals specifically with the issues facing the Christian Reformed Church, De Jong also quotes from representatives of other Reformed traditions. Such men as B. B. Warfield, J. Gresham Machen, Cornelius Van Til and R. C. Sproul are appealed to as defenders of biblical inerrancy. The booklet therefore is useful, not only for informing readers of the situation within the Christian Reformed Church, but also for providing a digest of Reformed thinking on the subject of biblical inerrancy.

KNOWING SCRIPTURE

by R. C. Sproul. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, paper, \$2.95; cloth

\$5.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley, pastor, MacIlwain Memorial Church (PCA), Pensacola, Florida.

R. C. Sproul, Presbyterian theologian-in-residence at Ligonier Valley Study Center, is an excellent communicator. He has written this book on how to study the Bible which effectively teaches the science of hermeneutics to laymen, yes, even to new Christians.

There are six major sections: "Why Study the Bible;" "Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretations;" "Hermeneutics: the Science of Interpretation;" "Practical Rules for Biblical Interpretation;" "Culture in the Bible;" and "Practical Tools for Bible Study."

One hopes that this volume will be widely distributed and used among the university students to which Inter-Varsity Press is aimed and among many others as well. How wonderful it would be if a generation of believers would arise who would study the Bible with the sound principles and methods advocated so clearly and forcefully here.

MAN OF GENEVA:

the story of John Calvin

by E. M. Johnson. Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 1977, 129pp., illustrated, paper, \$2.50. Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley.

Most Presbyterians know little about John Calvin, except that he is a father of Presbyterianism, and they know they ought to be better acquainted with him than they are. Few, however, have the ambition to sit down with a lengthy Calvin biography. His life had its exciting moments, but it was the life of a scholar and theologian, not the life of a pioneer missionary or adventurer.

A simple, popular, readable, brief biography of Calvin is now available in *Man of Geneva*. Aimed primarily at young people, it will be of interest to Presbyterians of all ages. A vivid book focusing on the conflicts in his life, it gives readers a feeling for the heart of the man. Lavish use of illustrations increases its usefulness.

This book should be kept in our church

libraries and stocked in our bookstores. Pastors should encourage people to read it. It will provide that additional knowledge and insight and appreciation for Calvin which will benefit our people.

THE PIETY OF JOHN CALVIN:

an anthology illustrative of the spirituality of the Reformer

translated and edited by Ford Lewis Battles; music edited by Stanley Tagg. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978, 175pp. \$9.95. Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley,

Beautiful selections from Calvin's writings on the Christian life are presented in a "prose-poetic" form of translation to give the reader a taste of Calvin's style, since, the translator says, "The prose of the 16th century was not the flat, limping prose we so easily fall into in 20th century America." Metrical Psalms translated by Calvin and set to music from the period are among the items to be found in this rich anthology.

After an introduction on "True Piety according to Calvin," we find "The Spiritual Pilgrimage of Calvin," taken from his *Commentary on the Psalms*; "The Kernel of Calvin's Faith," taken from the first few pages of the *Institutes* of 1536; "Calvin on the Christian Life," from chapters 6-10 of Book 3 of the *Institutes* of 1559; "Calvin on Prayer," from chapter 3 of the 1536 *Institutes*; and "Prayers of Calvin," from *The Form of Prayers and Songs of the Church*. These are followed by Metrical Psalms, Prose poems and an epilogue, "Calvin on Christ and the Church," two brief selections from *On Scandals* and the *Institutes* (1559). This volume is the fruit of very thorough scholarship, evidenced by the nature of its contents and also by the detailed annotations. The translations are in flowing, beautiful English.

The Metrical Psalms set to music are available in a separate edition from the same publisher in paperback for \$1.95.

It is hard to conceive of anyone reading this book and continuing to hold to the myth that Calvin and Calvinism are "cold."

The study of this volume will not only deepen a Presbyterian's appreciation of his heritage, but will deepen his spiritual life as well.

CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS

by *Andrew A. Bonar*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Press, 1978, 457pp., \$12.95 Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley.

The title well describes this commentary on the complete Psalter by Bonar, 19th century Free Church of Scotland minister, who is best known for his biography of R. M. M'Cheyne and is also well-known for his commentary on Leviticus.

"It is decidedly erroneous to suppose, that because David, or any other, was the author, that therefore nothing is spoken of, or sung, but matters in which they were mainly or primarily concerned," says Bonar in his preface. "We cannot err far, therefore, if with Amyrauld we keep 'our left eye on David while we have our right eye full on Christ.' In some instances, *the Head exclusively* speaks, or is spoken of, and in a few others *the members alone*; but generally, the strain is such in feeling and matter, that the Head and members together can use the harp and utter the song."

The psalms are interpreted throughout as songs of Christ or his church or both. For example, the 23rd Psalm is interpreted not only of David's experience being guided by Christ, but also of Christ's experience being guided through the time of his incarnation by the Father.

Many Christians have difficulty relating the Psalms to Christ or to their own experiences as members of his church. After reading this book, they will have difficulty seeing them any other way.

The nature of the interpretation makes this commentary especially rich in spiritual insight. Scholarship is evident throughout, but not in such a way as to interfere with the book's devotional value. Hebrew words are frequently quoted in parenthesis, but the reader who knows only English will not feel that he is missing out.

Bonar is from a church that uses the

Psalter exclusively for its hymnbook. The piety of his people was undergirded by the piety of the Psalms. Twentieth century American Presbyterians, on the other hand, although we have the Psalter in our Bibles and read it occasionally, are often characterized by a piety that reflects the sentimentalism of Sankey's songbooks more than it reflects the songs of David. While most of us would not want to turn to exclusive psalmody, yet the woeful neglect of the Psalms in our private and corporate worship is greatly to be lamented.

One very much hopes that the republication of this 1861 classic will help to restore appreciation for the Christ-centeredness of the Psalms, and that Christ's people will come again to see and use them as their own songs.

MEMOIR AND REMAINS OF ROBERT MURRAY McCHEYNE

by *Andrew A. Bonar*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978, 404pp., paper \$3.95.

MEMOIR AND REMAINS OF McCHEYNE

by *Andrew A. Bonar*. Chicago: Moody Press, 448pp., paper, \$7.95 Reviewed by Donald A. Dunkerley.

Shoppers at Christian bookstores are likely to suppose that both of these volumes contain the famous biography of M'Cheyne by Bonar. Many are likely to choose the Moody Press edition, in spite of its greater price, for the larger type face and more readable format. If they do, they will have been misled and will be disappointed.

The Baker edition contains most of the book by Bonar, which is in two sections: the first is his biography or *Memoir* of M'Cheyne, the second is a collection of writings or literary *Remains* by M'Cheyne.

The Moody Press edition, although entitled, *Memoirs*, does not contain a single word of the memoirs! It contains only the *Remains* and not even all of them. It has deleted one letter, one sermon, all of his sermon outlines, two of his papers and

ten of his songs.

The Baker edition has also deleted a good deal of the remains. All of the sermons and sermon outlines are excluded.

Some of the correspondence, most of the papers and one of his songs have been deleted.

It is a mystery to me why Moody Press would publish the remains without the memoir when the latter is the most significant part of the book, and the remains are more meaningful to those who have read the memoir. One can understand why Moody Press might not publish a book entitled, *The Remains of Robert Murray M'Cheyne*. That sounds like something you would find in a funeral home! But surely *Writings of Robert Murray M'Cheyne* is an acceptable title, and it is dishonest to use the title *Memoirs* when the entire biography has been excluded.

I remember once reading in *Christianity Today* a list of the ten greatest Christian classics of all time. They were arranged chronologically from Augustine's *Confessions* to Bonar's *Memoir of M'Cheyne*. I would consider the *Memoir of M'Cheyne* one of the half-dozen most significant books which I have read in my lifetime. I once asked Iain Murray, founder of The Banner of Truth, what he considered the most significant books published by the Banner. He mentioned two titles, and one of them was Bonar's *Memoir and Remains of M'Cheyne*.

Everyone not familiar with this great biography should buy it and read it. One should certainly prefer the Baker edition over the Moody edition, since the latter does not even contain the book that its title announces. But the best choice is an edition that has been around for awhile, the complete unexpurgated *Memoir and Remains of R. M. M'Cheyne*. It is available hardback from The Banner of Truth for only \$8.95, which is only a dollar more than the Moody Press edition. Thrifty persons can buy the *Memoir* alone without the *Remains* in a Banner of Truth paperback for only \$1.95.

News & Views

National Presbyterian and Reformed Congress

VALLEY FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA—A unique gathering and opportunity for members of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches has been announced. The National Presbyterian and Reformed Congress is scheduled for the summer of 1979. Three distinct sections are planned: one at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan (July 9-14); another at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania (July 16-21); a third at Covenant College, Lookout Mountain, Tennessee (July 23-28).

Over forty leaders who share commitment to the historic Reformed faith will explore "The WORD of the Sovereign God" (at Calvin College), "The GOSPEL of the Sovereign God" (at Grove City College) and "The CHURCH of the Sovereign God" (at Covenant College). Included among these representatives of many seminaries, countries, denominations and backgrounds are James I. Packer, Charles S. MacKenzie, G. Aiken Taylor, Andrew A. Jumper, Anthony A. Hoekema, Jay E. Adams, Robert G. Rayburn, James M. Boice, Robert C. Sproul, C. John Miller and J. Christy Wilson, Jr.

The Congress is called, so that Christians of Reformed commitment can explore the benefits of fellowship beyond the horizons of their own denominational or ethnic horizons. The National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship, which is sponsoring the Congress, believes that our age presents great opportunity for Reformed people to bear united testimony in the churches and in the world.

Dr. Edmund P. Clowney, chairman of the committee which planned the Congress, has stated,

"I invite you to three great gatherings in July, 1979. For the first time Presbyterian and Reformed leaders who hold fast to the Bible and the gospel are meeting together in a major National Congress. Outstanding speakers will open discussion of the Bible, the gospel and the church. They will bring more than inspira-



tion; they will challenge us all with the opportunities Christ has set before us in the world and in our churches today. I urge you to join with many others in an experience of fellowship and growth."

The emphasis of the Congress is not to be "academic"; the primary thrust seeks clear, relevant, understandable statements of the revelation of the Sovereign God and of his call to service. In addition to the major presentations relating to the three themes, special seminars are planned for church officers, pastors, church women, Sunday school leaders, youth leaders, church musicians and young people. Recreational facilities (swimming pool, tennis courts) will also be available.

For a descriptive brochure and application form write to The National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship, Box 44, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania 19481.

Retirement of Robert H. Graham

The Rev. Robert H. Graham, one of the founding fathers of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is retiring as from January 1, 1979 after 46 years of labor in the Lord's work. He has served pastorates in Delaware, Pennsylvania and California. He has also been active in home mission work, overseeing the growth of a number of congregations in California. In 1975 he became Missionary at Large for the Presbytery of Southern California. A full report of Mr. Graham's ministry was published in the December 1978 issue of *Outreach*, the home missions and church extension bulletin of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Philadelphia Fall Presbyterial

Those of us who were privileged to attend the Philadelphia Presbyterial at Bethany Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Oxford Pa. on October 26, 1978 were richly rewarded in several special ways. The Bethany ladies made detailed preparations for our convenience and enjoyment, and gave us a very hearty welcome. There were 82 present, a record attendance.

The ladies of Calvary OPC, Glenside, Pa. presented a fine, informative, and challenging program with emphasis on Foreign Missions. (Spring Presbyterial features Home Missions.)

The Rev. John Galbraith brought fresh news from the fields where he and Mrs. Galbraith visited last summer. His message, "Missions Yesterday and Today", based on Psalm 72: 6-11 made us more keenly aware of present-day conditions, needs and problems, and of our privilege and responsibility in helping to meet those needs. The essence of missions is the same today as yesterday, but drastic changes have taken place in world conditions which greatly affect mission programs today. These changes include the growth of populations, communications and transportation.

The church has two goals, Mr. Galbraith said: theological and practical. God's Word is the standard on the basis of which all decisions are to be made. All must be done to God's glory. And if the chief end of all men is to "glorify God and to enjoy him forever", how are people of the world to glorify him as they ought if they do not know him? We are to take the Word, the message to them. When we follow the teachings of Scripture we are being very practical. We cannot ignore the physical needs but we don't go just to feed, treat and educate people. The gospel must have priority.

The main problems of missions or mission work center around Senders, Goers, Travel, Language, Culture and Establishment of churches.

1. Senders: The church must pray, give and send missionaries. Our children should be taught to think "missions" from their early years. Books, maps, pictures, missionary stories and offerings will encourage this habit.

2. Goers: People must go with the gospel. OPC young people ought to be volunteering to go. Our missions get more candidates from other backgrounds and we are very thankful for them. But also pray for young people who have grown up in our church and have been trained in Reformed teaching to go as our missionaries.

3. Travel: Great progress has been made in transportation. We can go anywhere today in less time and to places inaccessible yesterday. "Go ye into all the world" can now be accomplished with relative ease. True, travel is expensive, but this should not deter us. There is no excuse if our hearts are really concerned for the lost.

4. Language: Missionaries must learn to speak the language of the countries to which they go. They must not rely on interpreters. Every language has its own connotations. It is necessary to know the language to learn how the people think and what their customs mean. This requires long, tedious study.

5. Culture: Culture differs widely in different countries. The gospel is to be applied to culture. Our missionaries are to strive to apply it to the culture of the countries in which they labor, seeking to exert a positive Christian influence. (For example, in countries where ancestor-worship is ingrained in the people and affects so much of their lives, the biblical command, "Honor thy father and thy mother", the teaching of the solidarity of the Christian family and the blessed hope of being reunited with our Christian loved ones because of our union with the resurrected Lord should be clearly made known. Such teachings should aid in transforming culture.)

6. Establishment of the church: The church planted and nourished according

to the Scriptures will grow. That is to be our pattern. We are ever to keep in mind that our field is the world, not just the five countries in which we now work. Wherever we are, we should be going further.

One means of having wide coverage for the gospel is the radio. The radio knows no iron or bamboo curtain. Pray that OPC Radio World Network may become a reality.

In conclusion Mr. Galbraith stressed personal involvement for us.

1. See that our church ever stands on the Word of God.

2. Provide and train our children to go with the gospel into all the world. Keep books, pictures, letters and maps easily available to encourage their interest. Help them to think "missions" from their early years. Some of our OPC missionaries had "becoming a missionary" their goal from grade school years.

3. Pray and give: Specific, earnest, persevering prayer is needed. If we pray thus, we will get involved. We should give proportionately, percentage-wise of our substances. Begin early to train our children to give from their allowance to church missions.

In the afternoon the Rev. Lendall Smith, on furlough with his family from Taiwan, graphically told of the problem of ancestor-worship in that land. Chinese ancestor-worship goes back in history to the time of Abraham. Confucius encouraged rites of ancestor-worship, though not admitting life after death himself.

To the Chinese, which include the Taiwanese, the spirits of departed loved ones continue to live. They have needs in the other world. The living help the departed and they in turn will help the family in their activities in this world. If the spirits of the departed ones are not properly cared for, they can bring on calamities to the family or the community. Behind tragedy is the work of a departed ancestor spirit.

In Taiwan the gospel has cultural, social, and traditional dimensions, all of

which are very difficult to overcome. It is a threat to ancestor worship. To the Taiwanese, Christianity means forsaking the ancestors. That makes it a main stumbling block to the unsaved and they consider it an offense to filial piety so deeply ingrained in them. One of the three greatest offenses to filial piety is not to give a decent (proper) burial to parents. This includes worship of the spirit and other rites to be continued thereafter.

Much of family and business life is rooted in ancestor-worship to preserve family unity. A convert to Christianity may have his name removed from the family register, tantamount to disinheritance or being cut off from the family. Converted business men have lost patronage and some have had to change their occupations. A Taiwanese (Chinese) may not believe in all that is involved in ancestor worship. He may say, "I don't know why I do it but it is traditional. The Chinese do this and I am Chinese".

What does Christianity bring to him? Christ's resurrection said Mr. Smith. "Because I live ye shall live also". Christians are united in Christ. We and our departed Christian loved ones have an eternal solidarity, our union with him. The church is the true family of God. We are one in Christ, a tie which can never be broken.

Let's join in more specific, earnest, persevering prayer for God's blessings upon the work of our missionaries in Taiwan.

Following Mr. Smith's message and slide presentation, the business meeting was conducted. The offering toward a fund for air-conditioning for our missionaries in Taiwan was \$347.69.

Home and Foreign Mission news was then given, and prayer groups formed to pray for the requests. This concluded the inspirational and challenging program.

Thank you, ladies of Calvary Glenside and Bethany Oxford, for the splendid program and cordial entertainment.

Spring Presbyterial will be an overnight Retreat for which the exact date and place are to be decided.

Eugenia McIlwaine

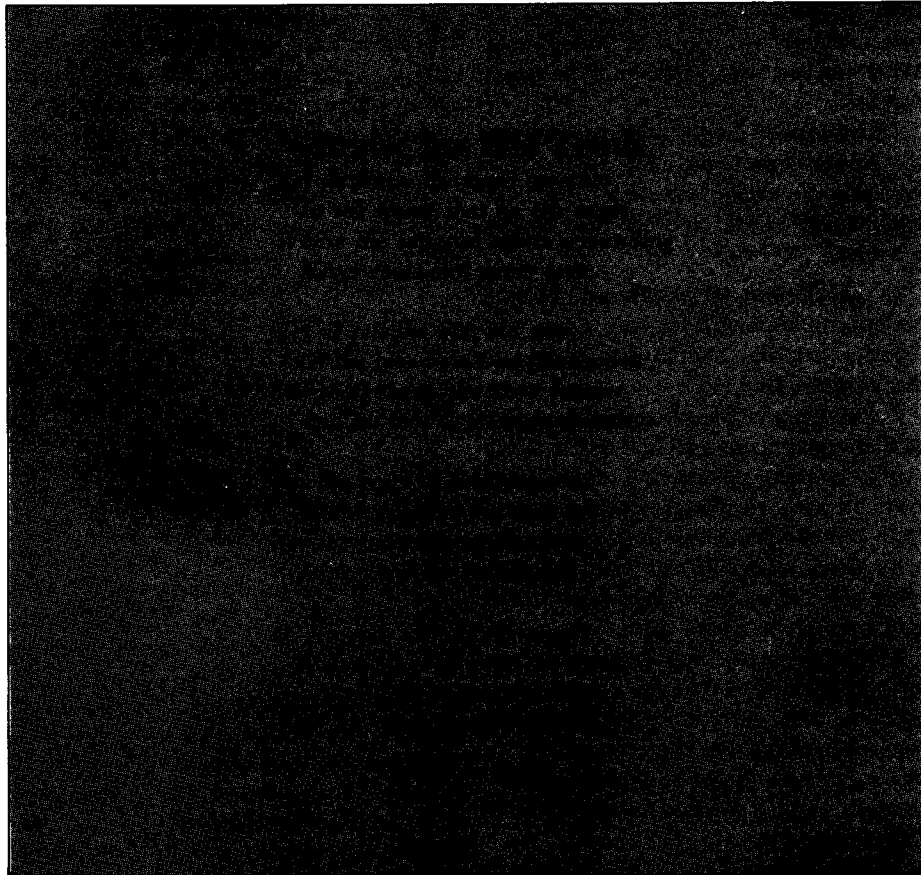
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The Chicago Statement

(continued)

tom independent reason now has authority, as opposed to Scriptural teaching. If this is not seen and if for the time being basic evangelical doctrines are still held, persons denying the full truth of Scripture may claim an evangelical identity while methodologically they have moved away from the evangelical principle of knowledge to an unstable subjectivism, and will find it hard not to move further.

We affirm that what Scripture says, God says. May He be glorified. Amen and Amen.

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