

# The Presbyterian Guardian

VOL. 43, NO. 8—OCTOBER, 1974

## THE LORD'S WAY

*A paraphrase of Psalm One*

Oh, happy is the one who scorns  
The advice of man's invention!  
His way, it correspondeth not  
To the course of sin's intention.

But what he loves the most of all  
Is doing what the Word doth say.  
Delight! both day and night is his,  
To know the Lord's own way.

For like a tree is he, so blessed;  
It's watered well—I give the reason—  
His leaves yet crisp and ever green,  
His limbs bear fruit in every season.

So all he does will have success.  
But none who join the rebel horde  
May hope to cling to lasting life—  
They walk not with the living Lord.

What then the fate of these who sinned?  
Driven like chaff before the wind!

No explanation in that day;  
They will not stand, nor tell him "Nay!"  
Yet still above the saints of God,  
His love—the Lord doth know their way.

— Thomas E. Tyson

Dear Sarah:

I had a personality problem with my pastor's wife. It came to a head in our Missionary Society and as a result I quit the Society and never went back. I'm not even in that church anymore, but the memory bothers me. What should I do?

—Troubled.

Dear Troubled:

God has a way of never letting us forget unresolved problems. Have you recently read Matthew 18:15-17? Here God tells us to go to our sister to clear up matters and to ask her forgiveness—and until you have her forgiveness you'll never be at peace.

—Sarah.

P.S. I would suggest you telephone her rather than write. And remember not to try and justify your own actions, but to focus on true forgiveness. "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32).

# Genesis Two:

## Open Letter

Dear Sisters (and curious Brothers):

Greetings from the heart of the Cascade Mountains! How wonderful that our glorious God is not only omniscient and omnipotent, but he's also omnipresent.

As we work together from the Atlantic to the Pacific, both clockwise and counterclockwise, to develop a new ministry through these women's pages in the *Guardian*, let us first remember that Jesus is risen and is reigning that we might serve him.

And that service takes many forms—in our homes, our physical churches, our communities, yes, and with our pens.

You represent many Christian experiences and inspirations relevant to our theme of Women in Service. It's only as you share, however, that this section will be an alive and dynamic influence in our lives.

The "nuts 'n bolts" of participating are: Please type your manuscripts, double-spaced, with at least one-inch margins. Three 8½" x 11" sheets approximately equal a *Guardian* page. Black and white pictures, article ideas, letters to "Sarah"—all are welcome.

I look forward to communicating with you. And thanks be to God for giving us the printing press that we can have this means of fellowship and edification!

In His service,  
Juanita Ward Rolph  
Route 2, Box 9,  
Glenwood, WA 98619

## The Psalm of a Liberated Woman

Thank you, Lord, for liberating me  
from the need to protect  
myself and my children.  
For, in your divine plan,  
you made me the helpmeet  
and my husband the protector.  
Thank you for the strong men  
who protect us—  
our husbands, fathers, brothers,  
the soldiers, policemen, firemen—  
who protect us from war, crime, disaster.  
I praise you, Lord, for liberating me  
from the need to support  
myself and my children.  
Thank you, Lord, for liberating me  
from authoritative duty in my home,  
for a stronger hand than mine,  
A stronger will for the family's needs.  
Thank you, Lord for blessing me  
with a husband who fits your pattern,  
for a husband who is strong to protect,  
who is capable of support,  
whose authority I can respect.

Thank you, Lord, that it was your plan  
for me to know the pleasure  
of a man-woman relationship.  
We praise you that two can become one.  
I praise you that I know the joys  
of "richly satisfying my husband's needs."  
But in my happiness, Lord,  
teach me to realize that  
some women must support themselves,  
some do not have husbands  
who fulfill your ordained role;  
help me to understand  
those women whose special gifts  
have endowed them with energy  
and capacity for a stronger role.  
Let me not be guilty  
of supporting injustices for any of these.  
Let them not be guilty  
of destroying your divine institution  
of family and marriage  
through any lack of wisdom.

—Dorothy Hake

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# Twenty - Two

There's a radical difference between public and Christian education!

Dr. Walter Maier, that great preacher on The Lutheran Hour of some thirty years ago, said in a radio address entitled, "First of All—Christian Education":

The fundamental principle of our faith that education must not be atheistic, skeptical or anti-Christian, but that true culture starts with Biblical truth, has been endorsed by great leaders whose names have made scientific history. The desire for Christian Education has led to the establishment of our greatest universities.

He went on to name, as examples, Harvard's motto—"For Christ and the Church"—Yale's seal recalling the high priest of the Old Testament, and Princeton's first president, John Witherspoon, who declared, "Cursed be all learning that is contrary to the cross of Christ. Cursed be all learning that is not coincident with the cross of Christ. Cursed be all learning that is not subservient to the cross of Christ."

## Secularized education

What happened to the Christian principles to which our forefathers adhered? Through the passing years, public education has been divorced from religious teaching and now all is taught without reference to God and the Bible. In other words, education has been secularized.

Many of us have been educated in public schools and have accepted secularization as a necessary outcome of our educational system without realizing that, in reality, it's paganism. But when we see it as it is, we can understand why we're no longer the Christian nation our forefathers envisioned. The lawlessness and godlessness and the new morality so prevalent today are but the natural outcome of our system of public training. We've been educating generations of children as pagans.

Too many of us have become so secularized that we think of religion as just another subject to be taught. Since we believe in separation of church and

## Why Christian Education?

RUTH H. GRAHAM

state, we go to church to learn religion and to school to learn all other subjects.

Our lives have become departmentalized. We think of religion as having to do only with our souls, our salvation and our after-life. It's very difficult for us who were educated in the secular way to understand the meaning of God-centered living in the here and now. Christian education is training our children to understand the kingship of God in Christ Jesus over *all* of life so that it leavens *all* our activities and *all* our interests.

## God's separated people

We are God's chosen people. Peter calls us "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9). We're called to separate ourselves from the world. As Paul puts it: "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Al-

## A Resolution for Parents

Whereas the Bible clearly states that parents are responsible for the training of their children (Deuteronomy 6; Proverbs 22; Ephesians 6), and Whereas we believe that our children are God's children, and Whereas Reformed Christians believe that God is in *all* of life, and Whereas we parents intend to pass along this "goodly heritage" to our children, and

Whereas the child spends most of his waking hours in a learning situation at school,

Be It Resolved that our children will attend a Christian school, where God's Word serves as the basis for all instruction in all subjects; where Christ is honored as Lord of all; and where children may learn to know, love, and respond to Him in a life of obedient service to both God and man!

Prepared by the National Union of Christian Schools, an international service organization representing 300 Christian schools. The NUCS will gladly help you find, or even begin, a Christian school. Their address:

National Union of  
Christian Schools  
865 28th St., S.E.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49508

mighty" (2 Corinthians 6:16-18).

When we grasp the significance of this truth, we will shrink from exposing our children to an education that molds them in the assumption that there are large areas of life where God is not in control, where God can be ignored. Instead, we will want our children to learn that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge," "that of him, through him, and to him are all things."

There is no area of life where Christ can be ignored. He is either Lord of all or not Lord at all. And that's the real reason why we must send our children to the Christian schools.

*The above is excerpted from a talk given by Mrs. Robert H. Graham in San Jose, California. She is, incidentally, a graduate of Wellesley, a school founded to give Christian training to young women, but which has since gone the secular way of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and so many others.*

## The Reformed Faith on Cyprus

KENNETH G. SMITH

While Greeks and Turks struggle to determine whether and where to establish a ceasefire line, another struggle goes largely unnoticed. That struggle stubbornly persists between biblical Christianity and a strange alliance of counterparts.

The island of Cyprus itself has a history not unlike newspaper reports today. Centuries before Paul and Barnabas landed at Salamis, near present-day Famagusta, Cyprus had been the pawn of powerful politics. Two interesting facts about the "first missionary journey" reveal that one of those ambassadors, Barnabas, was really going home and not to a foreign country. The other point is that the first recorded convert on Cyprus was a Roman. The island has maintained this cosmopolitan character, and it has culturally affected attempts to make it a truly Christian community.

Today Cyprus maintains a population of about 650,000 persons, 18% of whom—prior to Turkey's invasion—were Turkish. These two ethnic communities of Greek and Turk have had their ups and downs before. In fact, prior to the 1870s when Britain took control, Cyprus had been ruled for over four hundred years by the Ottoman Turks. Those were hard days for the Greek Cypriots, committed to Greek Orthodoxy.

Since Britain was forced out, Cyprus has tried to function as an independent republic. But ethnic ties have kept the tensions in force. What will happen now? Time alone will tell.

### Reformed mission in Cyprus

Toward the end of the last century, Reformed Presbyterian missionaries from America began working in Cyprus. They came, not directly from America with a clear studied call, but rather from other Middle Eastern lands having suffered many reverses there.

Early in the 1900s these Covenanter missionaries decided to win a hearing—something extremely hard in those days—by opening a school. This they did in Larnaca, then the capital city. Later a girls' academy was opened in Nicosia, today's civic center.

The struggle to establish a church of evangelical commitment comes hard in Cyprus because of the two ethnic backgrounds. Greek Cypriots asked, "Why do they send missionaries to us? Aren't we Christians?" The Turks, on the other hand, were and are Muslim. Yet both groups were amenable to schools that would provide a good education and teach them English, and these Christian schools have had a very extensive influence on the island. One Turk told me, "It's the only place I know on the island that demonstrates that Greeks and Turks can learn to love one another."

Nevertheless, the schools could not produce an evangelical church that melded these two cultures together. While education might be in another language, religion sticks to the mother tongue. And each language breathes of its own culture. Other evangelical efforts on the island have been sparse. But the Jehovah's Witnesses, parasiting on a decadent Christianity, today boast of over one thousand persons; their approach is built on the cultural need within the Greek villages and the movement is led by Greek Cypriots.

### Seeking an indigenous ministry

A few years ago, Reformed Presbyterians took a hard look at what it would require to establish an indigenous ministry in Cyprus. Steps were taken to seek other means of evangelizing, since in 1971 the government had declared it unlawful to use a private school to try to "change a person's religion."

The change in approach involved a commitment to use the Greek language, the major tongue of Cyprus. Emphasis was given to the primacy of preaching, both publicly and house to house, together with a view to training local men to handle that preaching. The target year was set for 1978 and since 1972 the mission has given itself toward meeting this goal.

Meanwhile, two points in such a ministry demand constant attention. How do we relate to the Greek Orthodox Church? The Reformation left this branch of the church untouched,

though some Greek theologians did espouse Calvinism. By their own testimony, the Orthodox in Cyprus today are in deep spiritual need. The attempt to establish a truly evangelical church continually runs into the fact that, for the Greek Cypriot, "Christian" and "Greek" are synonyms. To leave the Orthodox Church is to stop being Greek. Unless, that is, God enables us to see a real reformation in that church and a new image of what it means to be Christian.

The other point is the Turk. Though he is a Cypriot, his culture and tongue are vastly different, to say nothing of his being a Muslim. For him to be "Turk" is to be "Muslim," and the result is another nominal religion. Except through our schools, approaches to Turks have been frowned upon by the government, the situation being too volatile. Turkish converts to Christianity have been few, though genuine. But especially in view of recent events, any person bringing the gospel to Cyprus will have to reconsider his relationship to the Turkish people.

A small, but dedicated, congregation of Reformed Presbyterians does exist in Cyprus. Their struggle is most difficult. But the opportunities are large. Decadent Christianity, aggressive cultism, nominal Islam—they are all there. And so is Western humanism represented by televised materialism, not to mention those who espouse the basic position of Marxism. Other evangelicals on Cyprus include a small congregation of Pentecostals, and a dedicated group who operate a bookstore and school in Limassol.

What will God do in Cyprus? Praying Christians should know what is behind the news and pray specifically.

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*The Rev. Kenneth Smith is a missionary to Cyprus for the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America ("Covenanter"). He and his family are safe in Lebanon, waiting to return to their work in Cyprus. A first attempt to do so failed when the Turkish forces moved to control Famagusta.*

*The Presbyterian Guardian*

# Do Not Lie to One Another

ROBERT B. STRIMPLE

In these late summer days of 1974, while you have been engaged in the study of the language in which the New Testament word of truth was given, we have had some startling revelations of the propensity for lying which seems to be pandemic in our society.

## Credibility chasm

For a long time Americans have seemed to be very tolerant of patent falsehood, coining many new euphemisms for an untruth. Whereas our fathers had the "white lie," we have had the "credibility gap." And we have had it not only on Madison Avenue but on Pennsylvania Avenue. When revealed as untrue, previous statements have simply become "inoperative."

But with the release of the Nixon-Haldeman tape of June 23, 1972, something at last snapped, and even our sinful society was pushed beyond the limits of tolerance. When President Nixon spoke of certain facts being "at variance with certain of my previous statements," it would no longer wash. Senator Goldwater expressed the reaction of so many: "There are only so many lies you can take, and now there has been one too many."

For the first time in years you hear Americans mouthing the old adage that "honesty is the best policy." And now we have a new President who knows he has a sure-fire applause-getter whenever he refers to the virtue of truthfulness.

I suppose one could have felt a certain sympathy for the general manager of the local football club who had the misfortune to be exposed that same weekend as having "papered the house" — the euphemism for giving out free tickets and then releasing false paid attendance figures. I'm sure he was caught completely off guard by the volume of the public outcry; and he could only mumble the pragmatic rationalization he had thought was still accepted in this country: "I don't see who was hurt."

## Truth stretching

If the children of darkness can be moved to such indignation as we have heard expressed in recent weeks, surely it behooves the children of the kingdom to reexamine their own standards. Living in such a society as we have been living in, our own consciences can easily become desensitized and our own standard of truth can become rather elastic.

We need to remind ourselves that the necessity of *absolute truthfulness* in us rests upon the fact that our God is true. This is the cardinal principle guiding the Christian's life. We are to be mirrors of God's purity, imitators of his actions, sons of our Father. We are to be perfect as he is perfect; holy as he is holy; and we are to be truthful as he is truthful.

It is inconceivable that God should lie; it *should be inconceivable*, I suggest, that a Christian should lie. But we all know the sad fact that such an action as a Christian lying is all too conceivable to us.

What is especially saddening, it seems to me, is the fact that we sometimes seem to be most careless about the truth when we are discussing our Christian experience or reporting the results of our ministry of the gospel. There is a phrase that used to jar me every time I heard it. Since I don't seem to hear it any more I can only hope it is passing out of the church's vocabulary. The phrase "speaking evangelistically," was usually said with a smile to indicate the speaker was conscious of stretching the truth a bit. How tragic that this should ever have become an accepted connotation of the term "evangelistic"!

Spurgeon says in one of his sermons: "The art of stretching is uncommonly general. Fine imaginations are not at all scarce. Certain people are always on the lookout for wonders; and if they do not see them they invent them. When a man gets into this style of talk, it is no matter what he is hammering at, he speaks of it as the finest, greatest, and most marvelous in the kingdom or else the most awful, horrible, and dreadful in the world."

## God's standard

What we must face is the fact that lying is very natural to the natural man — is second nature to him — and remains very natural to that corruption of nature which, as the Confession puts it, remains with the regenerated during this life.

It is truthfulness that has become unnatural to man. And it can become second nature to him only as he receives a new nature by the supernatural transforming work of God the Holy Spirit making him over in the image of Christ, who is the Truth.

Two points, therefore, we do well to emphasize: 1) We cannot expect that a character of transparent honesty will come easily to us, or without a struggle. And 2) We must be satisfied with nothing less than this — difficult and slow though its achievement may seem to be. We can be satisfied with nothing less than God's standard of absolute truthfulness in thought, word, and deed. We must constantly be on our guard against the almost unthinking deceptions we seem so prone to.

We must give conscious diligence — conscious diligence, not expecting that this will simply come automatically — to fulfilling these divine commandments: "Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour; for we are members one of another" (Ephesians 4:25). "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Colossians 3:9, 10).

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*Dr. Strimple is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Seminary. This exhortation was given at a chapel for beginning students on campus for their introductory Greek instruction.*

Ye are my witnesses . . .

## an encounter with Muhammad Ali and Rev. Jesse Jackson

*You could say that Charles Brown was a "born loser." But he was re-born by sovereign power to become a means of winning others to Christ.*



**CHARLES BROWN**

Some people believe that if you don't drink, smoke, dance, or go to parties and listen to rock music, that makes you a good Christian. But I thank God that I know better. On February 1, Gladys Knight and the Pips were appearing at the Spectrum in Philadelphia. I like Gladys Knight and the Pips, so my wife and I went to see them.

I am glad that I went. I saw Mohammed Ali and Rev. Jessie Jackson. Gladys Knight and the Pips were very good, but the act before them was enough to turn anybody's stomach. For a solid hour all he did was take God's name in vain and made jokes about how immoral black people can be and how cruel white people can be, and made being a junkie something to laugh at.

Believe me, the things he talked about and made jokes of were not fit for anyone to hear. There was nothing that he did not say. I know that there were about 20,000 young people there. I know one who was there; his name is Bruce, from Jenkintown. Bruce is a young black person with a lot of problems. He has trouble at school and was even kicked out several times. As I sat there I thought of the effect something

like this would have on young people like Bruce. About three weeks ago, Bruce confessed Christ, and now he was hearing God's name taken in vain, with everybody laughing and blowing whistles. I really wanted to cry.

### A word from Rev. Jackson

The master of ceremonies had said that Rev. Jessie Jackson would be saying a word to the crowd. I really looked forward to hearing him speak and make it known to all those people that it was dishonoring to God for his name to be taken in vain like that, and that Christ could free them from the kind of life Richard Prior seemed to think was so funny.

But after Prior's act, to everybody's surprise, the MC introduced the heavy-weight champion of the world, Muhammad Ali.

I just knew that Ali would take a few minutes to warn his 20,000 black sisters and brothers that the kind of life Richard Prior had described in such detail was not the type of life they should live. It really is not funny. But instead, he said he was going to beat that guy who was going around calling himself the champ, George Foreman. Then he did the "Ali shuffle" and sat down.

Then they introduced Rev. Jessie Jackson, "the country preacher." All he did was to tell everybody to repeat after him, "I am somebody, I am somebody, I am somebody." If anybody were to ask them, "What's happening?" they were to say, "The land is changing hands, the land is changing hands."

I thought how Bruce would feel.

I really wanted to have a talk with both of them to see why they allowed God's name to be trampled in the ground. Next day I found out where Rev. Jackson was staying. As I walked into the lobby of his motel, I met Muhammad Ali. I asked him why he had not said anything about what had happened. He said "They like that kind of stuff. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad can't change them, and I can't either."

I said to him, "You are right. Only the Spirit of God can change anybody."

And Rev. Jackson said that he had

not gone to the Spectrum that night to preach.

### A sermon by Rev. Jackson

Two days later I went to a church to hear Rev. Jackson preach. During his whole sermon he never once mentioned what Christ could do. It was always what we could do or what you can do, and what money could do, and what the white man has done and is doing to the black man in this country, and how we've got to get our minds together. He also said that we could do things ourselves if we thought we could.

I really tried to see him before he left the church. But he left before the service was over, so later I called his hotel room. One of his aides answered and wanted to know what I wanted with Rev. Jackson. I told him I wanted to know what kind of gospel he was preaching because during his whole sermon not once did he mention Christ. The aide said, "Wait just a minute." When he came back he said that Rev. Jackson was asleep, but they were having a rally at the YMCA next day and that Rev. Jackson would be there.

I arrived next day at the YMCA about 11:45. Rev. Jackson was to speak at 12:00. There were about 500 people there. All but about ten were black; most of them were young blacks looking for some kind of direction for their lives. As I looked at the crowd, I thought about the day before when Rev. Jackson preached a whole sermon and not once had he told them about the new life that Christ gives. His whole sermon was what we could do for ourselves. From my experience, every time I tried to do something myself I made a mess of it.

I had about twenty copies of my testimony with me. [This testimony was reprinted in a local paper in Doylestown and has had a wide circulation since; it has been a means of bringing several souls to the Lord.] Everything was quiet as everybody waited for Rev. Jackson. The name of his organization is Operation PUSH (People Unified to Save Humanity). I really wanted to share with the people how Christ gave me a new life. While

**“Regardless how much money or how many things you get, if you don’t have Christ, you are in trouble regardless who you are. I did not change myself, but Christ changed me!”**

waiting for Rev. Jackson, I stood up and said to the people, “I am not a part of Operation PUSH, but I would like to share with you how Christ changed my life. I have a few copies of my story for everybody that would like one.”

When I finished passing out my story, I told them in a loud voice, “Regardless how much money or how many things you get, if you don’t have Christ, you are in trouble regardless who you are. I did not change myself,” I told them, “but Christ changed me!” I also told them that any religion that allowed hatred for another man was not of God, because God commands us to love one another.

Then a member of the PUSH organization got on stage and said, “Everything is a little confused, but Rev. Jackson will be here in a few minutes. He will straighten things out.” A few minutes later Rev. Jackson walked on stage and the crowd cheered.

#### **“Give ourselves a big hand!”**

The first thing he said was to give ourselves a big hand. He started his speech by saying, “Repeat after me, my black brothers and sisters, ‘I’m somebody, I am God’s child.’”

The Bible teaches that the only way we can have a righteous relationship with God is through Christ. “No one can come to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). “For this is the will of my Father, that everyone that beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life, and I myself will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:40).

People’s problem is that they are spiritually dead and separated from God (Romans 5:12). The sad part is that when we do not belong to Christ, the Devil will blind us and have us thinking our problem is everything but what it really is (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4).

During Rev. Jackson’s speech he talked about politics and economics. He talked about blacks having better and more important jobs. I can understand everything he is trying to do and I think that’s good. But I also think he’s putting the cart before the horse. His first concern should be for the spiritual life of his brothers and sisters.

You see, we are dead outside of Christ, so the first thing we have to do is get life, real life (Romans 5:17).

After his speech was over Rev. Jackson said, “I thank God for being here.” I think a lot of people were more confused after he spoke than before. Not only do they still have this spiritual life to be concerned about but also political and economic problems. Rev. Jackson had no answer to these because he didn’t point them to Christ, the real source of strength. Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.”

Afterward, I tried to ask Rev. Jackson what kind of gospel he was preaching. But his bodyguards surrounded him and escorted him offstage. But as he passed by, I tapped him on the shoulder and asked if I could speak to him. He said, “Make it quick, because I am wet with sweat.” So I told him that God could use him, but he would first have to humble himself before God.

#### **God, black people, white people**

As I saw all those black people there I thought of the 20,000 that were at the Spectrum. Then I thought, there must be a lot of black people in Philadelphia, and Philadelphia is just one city. How many black people there must be that really don’t know who Jesus Christ is!

I think that is really a shame that a lot of famous black people, that other blacks respect and look up to and that God could use greatly, are held captured by the Devil and blinded by pride and materialism.

And there are a lot of white people who believe they are superior to black people. I think God is using the black athlete to show whites that they are not superior to the blacks. Now, it is the black man that has to deal with his pride.

But Christ is the answer. There are a lot of black people that need Christ. But there are more whites in this country that need Christ than blacks, because there are more whites in the U. S. than blacks. Only Christ can give people spiritual life. Regardless of what color you are, you are still spiritually dead and separated from God outside of Christ. Religion is not what saves

people. The world is full of religions and religious people that go to church but do not know God because they do not have a personal commitment to Christ and to his Word which is the Bible.

*God’s wrath.* God destroyed this earth one time. He destroyed it because of man’s sin, rebellion, disobedience, selfishness, trying to play God. The Lord saw the wickedness of man was great, that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The Lord was sorry he made man and was grieved in his heart. And the Lord said, I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land. But Noah found favor in God’s sight.

*God’s judgment.* Everybody that is not a Christian is under God’s judgment. God is a just God; if each of us gets what we justly deserve from God we all would go to hell and burn forever (Romans 3:23).

*God’s Judge.* A lot of people think that judgment day is sometime in the future. The Bible teaches that Judgment Day started when Christ came (John 9:39). “For not even the Father judges anyone, but he has given all judgment to the Son; in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him” (John 5:22, 23).

*Guilty before God.* It is faith in Christ that justifies us before God. We are justified by grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, that God might be just and yet be the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus (Romans 3:24-26).

*Nothing apart from Christ.* What I’m saying is that we can’t do anything without Christ. It is Christ that needs to be exalted and not ourselves. A lot of people everywhere don’t know who Christ is. But the Bible teaches that Christ is God himself, Lord of heaven and earth (John 1:1, 14; Acts 17:24).

A lot of people feel that just because they are a certain race that they are just a little better than somebody of another race. Some religions even teach that. But the Bible, which is the Word of God, all of it, says that God made from one blood all nations of men, which means that all men are brothers by nature. They are brothers whose father is the Devil, or else by God’s grace they are brothers to the only Son of God, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and his Father is then our Father in heaven.

# Seeking God's guidance biblically

WILLIAM H. BELL, JR.

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,  
pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty,  
hold me with thy powerful hand:  
Bread of Heaven, Bread of Heaven,  
feed me till I want no more.

Many Christians are familiar with the words of this great hymn. But if we really seek for God's guidance, two principles should be kept in mind: 1) There must be an honest *desire* to do the will of God, whatever it is, whatever it may cost, and wherever it may lead. 2) There must be a concentrated effort to subject one's own will to the infallible rule of our faith and practice — God's own Word. Martin Luther said, "My conscience is tied to the Word of God." This must be the Christian's attitude if he or she expects Almighty God's guidance.

### Guidance through the Scripture

How does God guide? The answer is really quite simple: He guides us through a careful and consistent use of the Scriptures, as the Holy Spirit illumines the Word. "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" (*Westminster Confession*, I, 6).

As an example of how to use the Bible in seeking God's guidance we may look to Jesus himself (as in Matthew 4). When Satan tempted our Lord, three times he replied: "It is

written" (verses 4, 7, 10). Christ quoted from Deuteronomy 6 and 8, and the portions he quoted were summary statements of the chapters where they are found. Indeed, what Christ quoted summarizes the great sweeping principles and themes of Scripture. In other words, Jesus took key verses that were true to the context in Deuteronomy as well as to the general tenor of Scripture.

*Our problem is not so much overemphasizing guidance as overlooking our sovereign Guide.*

The common attitude that says, "Jesus gave me a verse just for today," is dangerous. This was not the principle upon which our Lord made decisions. He knew the Old Testament, his Bible! Like Timothy, it was true of Jesus "that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures" (2 Timothy 3:15).

### Thy Word in my heart

Jeremiah and Ezekiel were both told to "eat" the Word of God, that it might become a part of them, rooted in their very being. This is the desire of the hymnwriter quoted above. Not isolated verses, but the basic themes and grand principles of Scripture are what we need.

The psalmist says, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11). The message of Scripture should so saturate our minds that when we come to a difficult or important decision, the Holy Spirit will immediately call to our minds those well-springs of scriptural

truth implanted in our very souls. Spurgeon said, "I am sure those go rightest who keep closest to the Book."

John Newton has a helpful word: "But how then may the Lord's guidance be expected? . . . In general, he guides and directs his people, by affording them, in answer to prayer, the light of his Holy Spirit, which enables them to understand and to love the Scriptures. . . . It is to furnish us with just principles, right apprehensions to regulate our judgments and affections, and thereby to influence and direct our conduct. They who study the Scriptures, in an humble dependence upon divine teaching are convinced of their own weakness, are taught to make a true estimate of everything around them, are gradually formed into a spirit of submission to the will of God. . . . The Word of God dwells richly in them" (*Letters*, pp. 81, 82).

### Prayer for guidance

Indispensable to receiving God's guidance is prayer. Jesus realized this when he taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Our Lord spent the whole night in prayer before choosing his disciples. The backdrop upon which we perform the will of God is prayerful dependence on our sovereign God.

Newton reminds us that the Spirit is the source of light that illumines the treasury of Scripture for us. But the Holy Spirit is given in answer to prayer (Luke 11:13). Certainly, it is proper to say that the Spirit will guide us in understanding the truth of the Word as well as in applying its truths to given situations. As Paul says, the



natural man cannot understand spiritual things, because they are spiritually (Holy-Spirit) discerned. But the Christian has the Spirit to direct him, and so can receive and understand the Word because he now dwells in the light (John 8:12). "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

It is clear from Scripture that God reveals his will to believers by his Spirit *through* the Word. Yet some Christians suppose that God speaks and guides by his Spirit *and* by the Word, as by two distinct methods. This is not true. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). That is true; but we misunderstand Paul if we think this means some sort of yielding to subjective impulses or the "I-felt-led" attitude. We must pray for the Spirit, not to receive visions, voices, dreams, "leadings," but in order that we may understand the truth of God's written Word.

#### "Let go and let God"?

Many Christians speak loosely of "letting Jesus live his life through you." This is dangerous — and reflects a basically lazy attitude. Paul says we are to *work* out our own salvation, not in addition to, but *because* the Holy Spirit is working within us to will and to do God's good pleasure (Philippians 2:12, 13). The Spirit guides and prompts — that is his work — and we are to be working also.

The Spirit of God never guides apart from the written Word. Some Christians are confident they are "in the center of God's will" even while violating a specific command of Scripture. Others pray "Thy will be done," but never seek to discover God's will from the Word. Such mysticism is presumptuous and leaves the door open to disillusionment, deception by Satan, and false assurance of God's guidance.

*Christianity Today* (April 12, 1974) reported that a man was sentenced to life imprisonment for beating his wife to death and severely injuring two of his five children. He had decided to kill his family "to save them from Satan" which he felt "moved" to do after reading Scripture several hours. Another man killed his wife and daughters because he thought he "heard" the Lord order him to do so. Ridiculous? Yes, but it is what can be expected when people think of guidance in terms of inward prompting rather than careful study of the Word.

Moses says, "So teach us to number

our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12). Paul prays that the Colossians "might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (1:9). To discern God's will we need "wisdom," and wisdom is knowledge of the course of action that will please and glorify God. This wisdom is promised to us, but we must ask for it: "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask God who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:15, *NASB*)

#### Receiving God's wisdom

To receive the wisdom that God gives, there are two steps: 1) We must revere God; "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 1:7). When a Christian is humble and submissive to the thrice holy God with whom he has to do, recognizing his own creatureliness and God's creatorhood, then and only then can God's gift of wisdom become his. 2) We must receive God's Word; "teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart" (Psalm 119:33, 34).

How much time do you spend in the Word compared with other books and newspapers? Some of us are fools, as Solomon says (Proverbs 1:7), because we don't appropriate the power of the Spirit in disciplined study of the Word. No wonder we have so little wisdom!

Our problem is not so much over-emphasizing guidance as overlooking our sovereign Guide. We become so concerned about being "in God's will" that we frequently forget God himself. If we are more interested in making decisions than in developing holiness, we are spiritual midgets. Paul's driving purpose was "to know [Christ] and the power of his resurrection" (Philippians 3:11). The biblical way to find God's guidance and to know God himself is not just hearing the Word, but doing it day by day (James 1:22).

#### God's will in God's Word

Nothing can be the will of God for us that is contrary to his Word. The God who inspired the Scriptures is the God who guides his people through the Word. This God will never contradict himself. The whole point of God's leading is to conform his people to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29).

"This is the will of God, your sanc-

*It is clear from Scripture that God reveals his will to believers by his Spirit through the Word. We must pray for the Spirit, that we may understand the truth of God's written Word.*

tification" (1 Thessalonians 4:3; cf. Romans 12:1, 2). Anything that contributes to your growth in holiness and the knowledge of Christ is to be desired and sought (2 Peter 3:18). Anything that hinders that growth cannot be God's will for you.

Certain things are clearly forbidden in Scripture. To ask for guidance in whether to cheat on an exam or your income tax is sinful; in such cases, obedience not guidance is required. We should know God's Word so well that we readily sense what God's will is for our daily choices. The Christian should view all of life from God's perspective, or as Dr. Van Til so frequently says, we are to "think God's thoughts after him."

"He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake" (Psalm 23:3). We must learn to judge what course of action will bring honor and glory to our Lord. This comes only through a life lived in the light of the Word, in the wisdom that comes from fearing God. "Lead me in thy truth and teach me, for Thou art the God of my salvation; for Thee I wait all the day" (Psalm 25:5, *NASB*).

Again as John Newton put it, Christians are to "wait daily upon [God] in prayer; especially when they find their hearts most engaged in any purpose or pursuit, they are most jealous of being deceived by appearances, and dare not move farther or faster than they can perceive his light shining upon their paths. . . . And though there are seasons when faith languishes, and self too much prevails, this is their general disposition; and the Lord, whom they serve, does not disappoint their expectations. He leads them by a right way, preserves them from a thousand snares, and satisfies them that he is and will be their guide even unto death" (*Letters*, p. 82).

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*This is the third in a series of articles on guidance by the Rev. William H. Bell, pastor of the First (National) Presbyterian Church of Greenville, Alabama. The final article in the series will take up some of the practical questions facing Christians.*

# Presbyterian Baptism

DONALD A. DUNKERLEY

Presbyterians have been made to feel guilty, to feel there is something lacking in their relationship with the Lord, because of what they hear from friends in other denominations. Some are made to feel that maybe we weren't baptized properly because we were not immersed. Some are made to feel there is something wrong in having been baptized as infants instead of waiting to become adult believers. Maybe these friends in other denominations are right when they say your baptism didn't take and you really are still unbaptized.

This creates a feeling of guilt, a problem of conscience. It makes some feel they're not really right with the Lord as they should be. So it is important to take a look and see just what the Scriptures say.

## I. The Mode of Baptism

Should we sprinkle, or should we immerse? Now one searches the New Testament and fails to find a single verse clearly requiring one mode or another. But there are verses from which we may draw inferences for one view or another.

For example, great stress is put by some people on the fact that when people were baptized, they frequently went down into the water. Both the baptizer and the baptized went into the water—though that doesn't seem to prove that *both* got immersed.

Some would argue by inference from the meaning of baptism. Baptism identifies the person baptized with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. So, we are told, this meaning is best expressed by immersion. But, is it not expressed, perhaps not so graphically, by sprinkling which points to the sprinkling of the blood of Christ? Then too, water baptism is a sign of the baptism of the Spirit, and we are not dipped into the Spirit but he is poured out upon us.

What then are we to say about this lack of explicit instruction on mode in the New Testament? We ought to say that mode must not be of the essence of baptism. If it were, then the Lord would have given clear instructions.

What we do have is the clear teaching that baptism is the application of water in the name of the triune God. No matter what mode is used, it should be regarded as valid Christian baptism, and no one should be required to be rebaptized on account of mode.

## The meaning of the word

Scripture is sufficient. The Holy Spirit has said all things necessary for our salvation and our obedience. Since the Spirit has not spoken explicitly concerning the mode in the New Testament, could it be that the Old Testament sheds some light?

We see an interesting clue when we read: "Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying" (John 3:25). This matter of purifying refers to the baptism by John the Baptist and some of Jesus' own disciples. As purifying, they stand in the tradition of Old Testament purifying ceremonies.

For example: "And thus shalt thou do unto them to

cleanse them: sprinkle water of purifying upon them . . ." (Numbers 8:7). Throughout the Old Testament, purifying was always by sprinkling, never by immersion. Since John's baptism was viewed as a purifying, then it was by sprinkling.

So the writer of Hebrews speaks of Old Testament ceremonies "which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings . . ." (Hebrews 9:10). "Washings" is a form of the Greek word *baptizo*. In other words, the writer is speaking of Old Testament purifying as "baptizings."

These Old Testament purifying were baptisms. The New Testament baptisms were purifying. Therefore, they were all by sprinkling since that is the mode specified in the Old Testament.

## II. The Administration of Baptism

Whom should we baptize? We are all agreed that no adult, no person capable of faith in Christ as Savior and Lord, should be baptized if he is not a believer. No unbeliever as such should be baptized. The Scriptures are clear on this.

But what about baptizing the infant children of believers? One finds in the New Testament various references to the baptism of households, but it never says explicitly that infant children were present and included. There is a certain silence in the New Testament.

Then, if not in the New Testament, it must be in the Old Testament that the Spirit has spoken. And here we must notice the clear connection drawn in Scripture between Old Testament circumcision and New Testament baptism. These two are often spoken of together, and Paul actually speaks of baptism as "the circumcision of Christ" (Colossians 2:11, 12).

So too the bloody rite of circumcision has been transformed into the New Testament rite of water baptism. Sprinkling with water signifies the sprinkling of Christ's blood. No blood is used in baptism because the blood was shed once for all at Calvary.

## A sign and seal for children

Now I confess that I was once a Baptist. And I felt I had a good argument against infant baptism. Baptism is a sign and seal of justification by faith. But an infant is incapable of faith, and baptism of an infant would be a meaningless ceremony. I thought this was an ironclad argument.

But I was shattered while studying for a Bible class. I was teaching on Abraham and studying Romans 4 when I read: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised" (verse 11). And then I remembered that God commanded Abraham to be circumcised *and* his infant sons throughout all generations.

Here is God commanding a sign and seal of justification by faith to infant children who are incapable of believing!

First, there was an adult believer, Abraham. He received the sign and seal of justification by faith. Then this sign and seal, the rite of circumcision, was administered to his

household. Then I realized I saw the same pattern in the Book of Acts: first, adult believers; then the sign and seal of justification by faith, which is now baptism; and then this sign and seal to their households.

### The explicit commandment of God

I had long insisted on being shown an explicit New Testament commandment to baptize children of believers. But I see now that God gave just such a command in the Old Testament when he ordained that the sign and seal of justification by faith be administered to believers and their children. Unless there is an explicit New Testament reference changing that principle, what right do I have to withhold the sign and seal of justification by faith from the infant children of believers?

Christian parents have no more right to wonder whether to have their child baptized than believing parents in the Old Testament had to wonder whether to have their child circumcised. On both the mode and administration of baptism, the New Testament does not speak explicitly. But it points us to the Old Testament where the Spirit has spoken sufficiently for our instruction.

Our Baptist friends talk about "New Testament Christianity"—and praise the Lord for it! In fact, there's only one thing better than "New Testament Christianity," and that's "Whole Bible Christianity" where we read the New Testament in the context of its setting in the Old!

### III. The Meaning of Baptism

As your child grows up to understand that he has been baptized, you should say this: "Before you were old enough to know or love God, God knew you. He put you in a Christian home where you could grow up hearing the gospel. And God made you a promise: If you would believe in his Son, then God will cleanse you from all sin.

"God made you this promise, and he sealed it in the waters of baptism. As truly as water cleanses dirt from the body, so truly will God cleanse you through faith in Jesus." Explain this to your children. Tell them they have been baptized with the seal of God's promise. Urge them to repent and believe in the Savior.

When a child comes to believe in Christ, he does not need to be rebaptized. He does not have to deny his original baptism, but as the Catechism says he has "improved" that baptism. Until a child believes, baptism is a sign and seal of the salvation offered. It is meaningful whether that child becomes a Christian or not, because that promise of God is genuine whatever the child may do. But when the child believes, then baptism becomes a sign not only of salvation offered, but of salvation effectually given and received.

Now circumcision was certainly a sign of cleansing, of God's promise to cleanse from sin, of our need to be cleansed. So Moses urges the people to "circumcise your hearts," remove the filth of sin from them.

But circumcision had another meaning, and I think it is the primary one. Since circumcision was a cutting off, it was a sign that God would cut off the unbeliever from the number of his people. So circumcision signified both the promises and the threats of the Covenant.

So too with New Testament baptism. This is a sign of God's cleansing, but there is also a threat. It is the threat of the flood of Noah's day, a "baptism" that was a means of salvation to those within the ark even as it was a means of judgment and death to those outside (1 Peter 3:20). Baptism is a sign of salvation to those who believe, but a

sign of condemnation to those who do not.

### IV. Another Problem of Misplaced Trust

There is another spiritual problem involved in baptism affecting some people. They have a wrong view of baptism, one that is quite common among Presbyterians, sadly enough. It is a wrong view so seriously wrong that, so long as a person holds to it, he cannot possibly enter heaven.

This wrong view was one the Old Testament prophets faced over and over. It is the wrong view of the man who trusts for his salvation in the fact that he has been circumcised. "I am circumcised, so I must be one of God's people. God is bound to protect me and save me."

God's prophets repeatedly warned against this misplaced trust in an outward fact. Circumcision offered no guarantee in itself. Indeed, for the man who did not believe, did not enter into the covenant promises, circumcision was no guarantee of safety, but a sign that he would be cut off.

There are those today who are trusting for their salvation in the fact that they have been baptized. "When I was a baby, my mother took me to the church and I was done." (So often people call and say, "I want to have my baby done." And I think, "How? Medium, rare, or well done?" Or they want their baby "christened." I answer that by saying, "We christen battleships; we baptize human beings. Which is your child?")

But people feel they've been baptized, their names are on the roll, so they must be Christians and going to heaven. They are trusting, not in Jesus, but in their baptism. These people need to realize that their baptism is not a sign of safety, but a sign of their condemnation for lack of faith in the Savior.

One must not trust in baptism, or in anything else he or anyone else has done, but only in Jesus who died for us. Baptism is a sign that God has given a Savior for sinners, a promise of cleansing to those who believe in that Savior, who trust in nothing in ourselves—even our baptism—but solely in Jesus alone. These are the ones cleansed from sin.

### A certificate to be traded in

A pastor I know was calling on a man who was unconverted. This man frequently attended the church, had lived in that town all his life, and years before as an infant had been baptized in that very church. As he was showing the pastor around his house, the pastor noticed a framed certificate on the wall. "What is this?" he asked. "Oh," the man said, "that's my baptismal certificate." "Ah, very good," said the pastor. "Tell me, when are you going to cash it in?"

"When are you going to cash it in?" It's a sign that a promise has been made. But when are you going to claim that promise?

Lord, help us to believe and to obey with all our hearts all that is taught in Scripture. Give us no pride in the correctness of ceremonies in contrast to others of like faith with ourselves. But assure our hearts insofar as we have truly been obedient to your Word. Lord, we pray for those that are baptized but lost, that they might come even now and put their trust in Jesus, "cashing in" their baptism and claiming the Savior promised there.

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*The Rev. Mr. Dunkerley is pastor of the McIlwain Memorial Presbyterian Church of Pensacola, Florida.*

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# Letters

## R. P. Bicen background

From time to time I have contributed items to you for consideration in the *Guardian*. This time I want to recommend something to *Guardian* readers.

We have an obligation, I believe, to get to know members, churches, policies, decisions, and the history of both the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America ("Covenanters"), especially in this time when we are considering merger with the former, and while we continue to develop our friendship with the latter.

Therefore, I want to ask you to recommend that each reader of the *Guardian* send \$1.00 to *The Covenanter Witness*, 800 Wood Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15221, requesting a copy or two of the May 22, 1974 special bicentennial issue. This issue contains important information on the history and development of Reformed Presbyterian churches in America, as well as maps showing locations of synods and presbyteries, and charts tracing the organization of other Presbyterian bodies. In my view, it is both informative and instructive and would be helpful to many of us in getting to know our friends and (almost) relations.

Lois Sibley  
Cleveland, Ohio

## Is Pope the Antichrist?

Regarding Carl Reitsma's article on the Antichrist (in the February 1974 issue), I am distressed that he plays down the Protestant position that holds the Pope of Rome to be the Antichrist. This was Calvin's view, and truth does not change. The papal system is more insidious today because it has assumed a friendly guise without giving up a single error.

Paul's comments on "that man of sin" (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12) clearly refer to the "little horn" of Daniel 7. Since the little horn grew out of and followed the fourth beast, representing the Roman Empire, it follows that the Roman Empire of Paul's day was the power that "now letteth" or "withholdeth" (2 Thess. 2:6, 7). The Papacy was established in Rome only after the empire's seat of government had been "taken out of the way" and transferred to Constantinople.

Reitsma's statement that "Antichrist is both a man and movement" is true and significant. The "666" in the article's title fits perfectly too. According to Revelation 13:17, 18, "666" is "the number of the beast" and "the number of a man" and "the number of his name." In other words, the official name of the official leader of this "beast" movement should have a numeric value of 666. To be objective, we must look for a name only in a language that gives numeric value to letters of its alphabet. This would include Greek, Hebrew, or Latin. Now, the official title of the official leader of the Papal Church, in the official Latin language of that church, is VICARIUS FILII DEI, meaning "Vicar of the Son of God." When the Roman numerals in this title are added together, they total 666.

Glenn Lello  
Northern Cape, South Africa

*Ed. note:* We would call attention to the writer's approval of the statement that "Antichrist is both a man and movement," and note that American Presbyterianism has generally removed the reference to the Pope of Rome as *the* Antichrist in the Westminster Confession of Faith (XXV, 6). The reason for this change was the belief that the references to the "spirit of antichrist" (as in 1 John 4:1-3) mean that there is a broader concern for antichrists than just in the Pope of Rome. This is not to deny that the Papacy partakes of that spirit, but it is to say that the spirit of antichrist, already at work when John wrote his first epistle, may be present in many forms.

## Merger does not require perfection

Over the past several years my wife and I have been privileged to worship in Orthodox Presbyterian churches (Hanover Park, Illinois and Westfield, New Jersey), and are presently members of the Reformed Presbyterian church in Nashville, Tennessee.

Objections raised on both sides of the fence to the contemplated merger of the OPC and the RPC/ES undoubtedly reflect the sincere apprehensions of those who express them. And events during the recent annual meetings of the two churches may have reconfirmed these apprehensions for some. Nevertheless, it seems to me both shortsighted and unscriptural to balk at merger on the basis of such scruples as those that have to date been expressed.

# The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITOR

JOHN J. MITCHELL

All correspondence should be addressed to *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 7401 Old York Road, Phila., Pa. 19126

From a descriptive standpoint: 1) The Nashville RP church, manifest by its heavy reliance on the Westminster Confession and Catechisms as pedagogical and evangelistic tools, is more explicitly Reformed than most OP churches I have known. 2) That I am personally acquainted with RP a-mils and OP pre-mils indicates to me that the troubling issue of the precise wording of the catechism can be charitably adjudicated in a merged church. 3) The two RP ministers I know personally who are in "secular" callings have been seeking proper "Christian service" for upwards of three years. [Ed.—One of these recently accepted a call to the pastorate.] 4) There are more total abstainers in the Westfield OP church than in any RP church of my acquaintance. 5) My experiences in both OP and RP churches indicates that modern Presbyterians join the ranks of all American Presbyterians from the eighteenth century on in being unable to say the last word on the independence issue as well as on the formally related matters of subscription and the definition of "Reformed." (There are hard- and soft-liners in both the OPC and the RPC/ES.)

Prescriptively, such Scripture passages as Ephesians 4:11-16 would indicate that it is a mistake to demand mutual perfection as the basis for church union. It strikes me that two groups committed to the sovereignty of God's Word in Scripture, the Reformed faith, and Presbyterian polity would be in an ideal situation to share the gifts of Christ to the church within a single denominational structure, in so doing to speak the truth in love to each other (not only OP to RP, RP to OP, but OP to OP and RP to RP), and thereby to help each other by God's grace in the maturation process of attaining to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God.

Mark A. Noll  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

*The Presbyterian Guardian*

## Reviews Sunnyvale situation

As one who is, in point of age, the oldest active member of the Sunnyvale (Calif.) Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and who has quite a bit of knowledge of the disturbance in the church, to which you referred in the last two issues of the *Guardian*, I do not feel it amiss for me to state a few of my thoughts as to what has been responsible for the unfortunate split in the congregation. [See news item elsewhere in this issue.]

First, may I say that I am sorry that the presentation before the General Assembly's Advisory Committee was so one-sided. In my opinion the committee should not have received the lengthy paper presented to it by Mr. Fred Hoelzel [an elder of the Sunnyvale church who was complaining against the action of the Presbytery of Northern California in refusing to approve the Rev. Lawrence Andres as pastor of the congregation]. This is the document that gave rise to the "conflicting evidence" mentioned in your report of the Assembly's actions. The committee should not have received this document because it contained charges which no one either in the congregation or the presbytery had had opportunity to reply to. This procedure violates Matthew 18:15. At the very least, the Advisory Committee should have made no reference to these charges in its report.

Second, as to the "delay" on the part of the presbytery in completing the examination of Mr. Andres, it should be known that the presbytery had three other candidates before it for examination when Mr. Andres came on the scene. One man scheduled for examination in September (1973) had his examination — and his ordination and installation — delayed one month because of the unscheduled appearance of Mr. Andres. And lest some feel that bias against Reformed Presbyterians led the rejection of Mr. Andres, on the same day that Mr. Andres passed the first part of his examination, another candidate, a Westminster Seminary graduate, failed. Presbytery met monthly during this time to catch up on the examinations and returned to Mr. Andres at the earliest possible moment.

Several weeks before the presbytery decided not to accept Mr. Andres, I spoke to one of our lady members and told her that Mr. Andres was "not O.P.C. in doctrine." She replied,

"What difference does it make if he is not O.P.C. in doctrine?" At a meeting of the congregation, another elder tried to explain to the dissident group that we are not congregational in government, but subject in the Lord to the presbytery; he could make no impression on this group. As regards Mr. Andres' bringing souls into the kingdom, men should not get the credit for the winning of souls. We recognize that there are many fine soul-winners in Arminian churches, but we are obligated to uphold our Reformed standards in evangelism.

I do not want to sound bitter and harsh, but I have spent several years of my life working in God's church in Sunnyvale, and it has hurt me deeply that some of the people are following a man rather than following God's teaching as it is found in our Orthodox Presbyterian standards.

Mrs. Dorothy Hinzie  
Cupertino, California

## R. P. Women Offer Slide-tape on Abortion

St. Louis, Mo. — The Women's Synodical Society of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, has made available a 45-minute slide-tape presentation on the subject of abortion.

Dr. Robert Miller, professor in the medical school of Washington University in St. Louis presents the issue of abortion to Christian audiences with a pictorial presentation of fetal development. Dr. George Knight, professor at Covenant Seminary, introduces and concludes the discussion.

We believe this material could be a valuable tool in informing concerned Christians, both of the physical facts relating to abortion and the biblical concern for the sanctity of life. Details concerning the availability of the presentation may be secured from Mrs. Wilber B. Wallis, Covenant Theological Seminary, 12330 Conway Road, St. Louis, MO 63141.

## We agree . . .

Resolutions from the 1974 National Convention of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America, as published in the IFCA's *Voice*:

Since Scripture is of itself an objective standard, and experience of events is a subjective standard, [we] reaffirm our position that the Scripture is the sole authority in matters of faith and practice, and reject any other authority, such as that based on experience.

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# Here & There

**Taichung, Taiwan** — The Rev. and Mrs. Lendall H. Smith have reached Taiwan to begin service there as missionaries. Their first concern is language study, though opportunities to present the gospel in English do exist. Their address: 57, Lane 25, Lei Chung St., Taichung, Taiwan 400, Rep. of China.

**Ronan, Mont.** — *The Rev. Russell D. Piper is "retiring" here after many years of service as pastor of Faith O. P. Church in Lincoln, Nebraska. He will serve the Mission Valley group full time with retirement income relieving the financial burden on the small church.*

**Sunnyvale, Calif.** — A group of members, including former elder Fred Hoelzel, have left the fellowship of First O. P. Church here to organize the independent Westminster Chapel. The Rev. Lawrence Andres is pastoring the new group. Mr. Andres had been called as pastor of First Church, but was not approved by the presbytery. Mr. Hoelzel had complained against this rejection, but his complaint was denied by the General Assembly.

**Gowen, Mich.** — *Spencer Mills O. P. Church has found itself unable to seat all the vacationing visitors. On the Sunday before Labor Day, a special service was held at a nearby campground. Over 200 gathered, with spirited singing and evident blessing from the Word.*

**Grand Rapids, Mich.** — The Grandville Avenue Gospel Fellowship, an innercity work among Blacks, Mexicans, and Koreans, has been recognized as a chapel by the O. P. Presbytery of the Midwest. Meeting in the Franklin School, the work is under the direction of Mr. Henry Buikema and session of Spencer Mills Church.

**Cedar Grove, Wisc.** — *At its regular meeting here, the Presbytery of the Midwest also recognized a chapel in Escanaba, Michigan. The Rev. Vincent Crosset, a former missionary in the Orient, was received into the presbytery; he is serving a Conservative Congregational church in southern Illinois.*

**Novato, Calif.** — The Rev. Richard C. Miller, pastor of Community O. P. Church in Garfield, New Jersey, has accepted the call to be the pastor of the Novato Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

**Pittsburgh, Pa.** — *Covenant O. P. Church is facing a new experience as their pastor, the Rev. Calvin K. Cummings, resigns a thirty-seven year pastorate. Mr. Cummings helped organize the congregation in 1937. He does not plan to retire from the gospel ministry, but is seeking to serve a group unable to provide a full-time pastor's salary.*



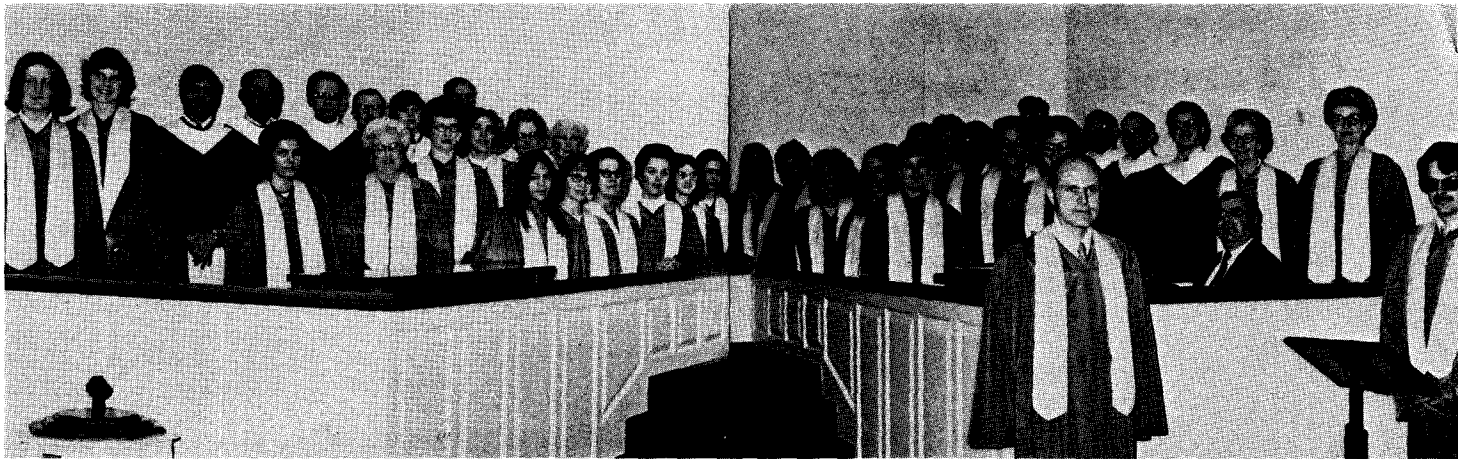
## What is a

Well, it can be a lot of things. It is rather obviously meant to interest God's people in the work of spreading the gospel to a sin-sick world. It may serve to draw forth both prayer and financial support for those who labor in the Lord's vineyards. Sometimes a missionary conference helps some individual see that the Lord has a call to service that must be answered.

Or, perhaps we could say that a missionary conference, whatever its parts and whoever the speakers and however many may attend, has to do with the keys of the kingdom of heaven. That's a concern of God's people all of the time, since God gave those keys to his church. But somehow it is especially so at a missionary conference where we can see how God uses the preaching of the gospel in all sorts of situations to open the doors of heaven.

They had a missionary conference in South Jersey back





## Missionary Conference?

in April. This was the fourth such annual gathering. It involved Orthodox Presbyterian churches in Bridgeton, Pittsgrove, and Vineland, and the Fairfield Independent Church in Fairton. The conference had a variety of things and lasted over a period of four days. Among other things, they heard about:

A work in Philadelphia among people in the ghetto by Larry Falcon.

The persecution of Christians in Uganda, reported by the Rev. Kefa Sempangi, a pastor in Kampala until he was forced to flee.

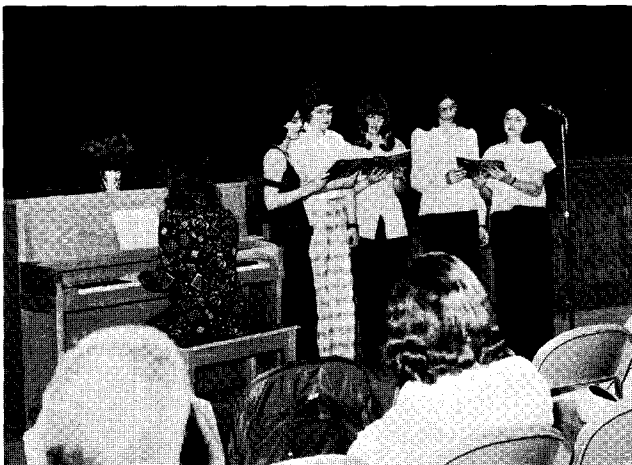
Others who spoke included seminary student Neil Gilmour from Northern Ireland and the Rev. Herbert Bird, former missionary to Ethiopia. The major event of the conference was a dinner with over 250 present at which the Rev. Iyortyom Achineku, principal of the Tiv

Theological Seminary in Nigeria, was the featured speaker.

For Faith Church in Pittsgrove, the conference included a farewell sermon on Sunday from their pastor, the Rev. Lendall Smith, who has since arrived in Taiwan for service as a missionary.

Groups met for prayer in various homes to begin the conference. The program had special meetings for children, older young people, and everyone together. A special cantata, led by Mr. William Maynard, with a combined choir from all the churches, was presented on Sunday evening in Vineland. All in all, those who attended some or all of the conference's varied program were challenged and encouraged, both to greater fellowship among themselves and to the commission of Christ to use the keys of the gospel.

— J. J. M.



# The Presbyterian Guardian

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## News & Comment

### National Presbyterians in General Assembly

Macon, Ga. — Six hundred commissioners from eighteen states gathered here for the Second General Assembly of the National Presbyterian Church. Since the first assembly, held last December, approximately eighty more congregations have joined this latest group of Presbyterians who organized in order to maintain a faithful testimony to the Reformed faith of the Scriptures.

A variety of decisions are being made (and a fuller report will be given in the next issue of the *Guardian*), the sum of which will determine the general direction the new denomination will follow. Having wholeheartedly adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms at its first assembly, and thus having grounded itself on the doctrines of sovereign grace, it remains to be seen how zealously the new denomination will work to conform its life to that standard.

One of the crucial decisions before the assembly has to do with the question of "special gifts" of the Holy Spirit today, such as "speaking in tongues" and other "gifts" claimed by those in the "charismatic movement." The question arose over wording in a section of the denomination's proposed Book of Church Order. A study committee, under the chairmanship of the Rev. Jack B. Scott of Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, has proposed to make the wording read as follows:

"Under the New Testament, our Lord at first collected His people out of different nations, and united them to the household of faith by the ministry of extraordinary officers who received extraordinary gifts of the Spirit and who were agents by whom God completed His revelations to His



Dr. Francis Schaeffer was featured speaker at a public session of the Assembly, meeting in Macon, Ga.

church. Such officers and gifts related to new revelation have no successors, since God completed His revelation at the conclusion of the Apostolic Age."

This wording clearly affirms that the canonical Scriptures are completed, that special gifts for the receiving and recording of that canonical revelation are no longer being given by the Spirit. But the wording leaves it an open question whether such gifts as "speaking in tongues," when not understood as a channel of revelation from God, may be expected today. So clear an affirmation of revelation as completed once for all is indeed encouraging; whether the unanswered question of non-revelatory gifts will arise to plague the denomination is yet to be seen.

The General Assembly will also be adopting budgets for its committees, with a total of \$1,800,000 being requested, for home and foreign missions, Christian education, and assembly administration. Included in this is a proposal to make a grant of \$50,000 to

Great Commission Publications of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to aid in its publishing of Sunday School materials. The NPC's Committee on Christian Education has urged the use of Great Commission materials, and does not plan at present to publish its own.

#### NPC ASSEMBLY BULLETINS

Last-minute reports from Macon reveal several important decisions by the NPC's General Assembly:

Faced with a lawsuit over its name by the National Presbyterian Church (UPUSA) in Washington, D.C., the Assembly adopted a new name: The Presbyterian Church *in America*.

The Assembly did approve entering into a joint publishing venture with the Orthodox Presbyterian's Great Commission Publications.

The report on special gifts of the Holy Spirit (see above) was approved as presented.

The Rev. Erskine L. Jackson, a pastor in rural Mississippi, was elected Moderator.

A proposal to establish extension schools for theological education of future pastors was approved and referred to the Committee on Christian Education for planning.

Despite strong objections, a proposal to allow the Committee on Mission to the World to work with independent mission agencies, if NPC missionaries were free to be fully Reformed while under such agencies, was approved.

The Assembly determined to seek fraternal relations with the Orthodox Presbyterian, both Reformed Presbyterian bodies, the Associate Reformed Presbyterian, and the Christian Reformed churches.