

The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

J. GRESHAM MACHEN • EDITOR 1936-1937

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“Christ died for our sins, He was buried, He rose again”—that, with all that goes with it, with the whole saving work of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, so gloriously set forth in the Scriptures and so splendidly summarized in the Catechism of our Church, that and that alone constitutes the gospel.

—J. Gresham Machen



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Your FAMILY ALTAR

Daily Bible Readings

Week of March 15

Monday	<i>Psalm 2</i>
Tuesday	<i>Psalm 72:1-11</i>
Wednesday	<i>Psalm 72:12-20</i>
Thursday	<i>Daniel 7:1-14</i>
Friday	<i>Daniel 7:15-28</i>
Saturday	<i>Zechariah 9:9-17</i>
Sunday	<i>Colossians 1:9-22</i>

Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. What is accomplished by man's rebellion against God? How does God look upon the raging of the people?
2. In Messiah's kingdom described in Psalm 72, what sort of peace will the righteous enjoy? Is that peace their's now?
3. Does Zechariah predict deliverance from political bondage for God's people?
4. Who are members of the kingdom of God's dear Son?

Christ Our King

How utterly futile are the attempts of ungodly men to overthrow the kingdom of God! And yet no age of mankind's history has lacked pretenders to the throne of the universe. The blind wish to lead the blind and both reject the true King.

The prophets of old foretold the coming of the Just One that men might be prepared to receive their King and submit to Him. In their hearts they were to honor Him and then surrender their substance and their lives. But none could acknowledge His kingship until He broke sin's galling fetters and liberated the prisoner of sin. The kingdom would be established in the hearts of free men. And that freedom would come when the King having first purchased redemption subdued the rebellious hearts of His people.

Many of those who wave palm branches and shout hosannas will desert Him when they see the Savior's eyes piercing their souls and discovering their sin. Many will look for a crown of gold upon the King of the Jews and seeing only thorns will set themselves against the Lord's anointed, and the chains that bind them will tighten.

But will any question His right to rule or His power to conquer? Has He capitulated to the plotting rulers of the earth? Is Hutchinson right when he says,

"Ay, down the years, behold, He rides,
The lowly Christ, upon an ass;
But conquering? Ten shall heed the call,
A thousand idly watch Him pass."

Though only one be grasped from sin's domain, the lowly Christ by the blood of His Cross and the might of His resurrection has conquered. Mankind is saved. For even a raging Saul is to enter the Kingdom of Christ in chains — chains of love which were forged in eternity but gently laid upon this bondservant by the Christ he had despised. Ten thousand times ten thousand heed His call, for this King conquers sinners by His Spirit.

Week of March 22

Monday	<i>Mark 11:12-26</i>
Tuesday	<i>Mark 12:1-12</i>
Wednesday	<i>Matthew 24:1-14</i>
Thursday	<i>Mark 14:12-26</i>
Friday	<i>Mark 15:22-38</i>
Saturday	<i>Mark 15:39-47</i>
Sunday	<i>I Peter 2:11-25</i>

Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. Why did Jesus cast out the money changers from the temple? Why did the scribes and Pharisees seek to destroy Him?
2. Who are the wicked husbandmen in the parable of the vineyard? Who are the servants who were sent by the owner to the husbandmen?
3. What are the provisions of the new testament (covenant) that Jesus spoke of in Mark 14:24? See Hebrews 8.
4. What explanation might be given for Jesus' refusal to drink the wine mingled with myrrh offered to Him?

The Man of Sorrows

How true are the words, "Earth has no sorrow that heav'n cannot heal." But true because heaven owns the Man who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. The afflictions that befall us are not to be compared with the suffering borne by the Lord Jesus Christ. We must confess with the penitent

thief who hung at the side of the Saviour, "We receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss."

Walk along the streets of Jerusalem with Jesus that last week before the Cross and behold His griefs. Because He honored His Father's house enough to indignantly cast out those who would defile it, schemers sought to destroy Him. In a parable He beholds Himself on Calvary as He shows how Israel's earthly leaders had persistently rejected God's servants and now plan to kill the King's Son and Heir.

His heart is touched as He views the persecution that will surely come upon His people as woes will fall on a wicked world ripe for judgment. But then He eats bread with His disciples and not only is the Betrayer revealed as among them, but this little band misunderstands the nature of the Savior's kingdom and their place in it. How grieved He must have been to hear them quarrel about places of honor when in a matter of hours they would forsake Him. Self-confident Peter becomes a blasphemer and only repents when overwhelming love from saddened eyes draws forth tears.

Follow Jesus through Pilate's hall and outside the city and see the thorns placed on His brow, the nails pierce His hands. But even then you will not see His full suffering. For you have yet to hear His words, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" And that cry will be only dimly comprehensible. For as Abraham Kuyper has written: To understand Calvary one must stand at the foot of the Cross and ask the question, "What should I have had to suffer eternally, if I should have had to bear myself the righteous retribution for all my sins and godlessness." Then multiply that by all the sinners for whom Christ died. Only then can you form the faintest idea of His sufferings.

Week of March 29

Monday	<i>Nehemiah 13:1-14</i>
Tuesday	<i>Daniel 6:1-10</i>
Wednesday	<i>Deuteronomy 25:1-16</i>

A prayer suggestion

1. Pray that funds needed for the work of Home Missions may be provided through God's people.

LEROY B. OLIVER

The Presbyterian
GUARDIAN

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Presbyterian Life

UNDER date of February 14, 1948, there appeared Volume 1, Number 1, of the official publication of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., *Presbyterian Life*. It is the first official journal of general interest that that church has had for many years.

There is little of distinction about the first number of the paper. Its format is fairly attractive. The cover picture of a presbyterian minister in a Genevan gown baptizing an infant, with the caption—We dedicate this child...—unwittingly presages the theological fuzziness that one finds within. The point of the photograph seems to be that as a child is baptized he is dedicated to the Lord, and that, in like manner, the infant magazine is dedicated. But the analogy between the dedication of a magazine and the baptism of a covenant child is far-fetched, and probably rests on an erroneous idea, or at least on no clear-cut view, of the meaning of baptism, as the caption suggests.

The contents of the magazine are about what one would expect. Its frontispiece is a glowing tribute to the late Robert E. Speer, in which President John Mackay of Princeton Theological Seminary characterizes him as "a Pauline figure among his contemporaries". It has a number of articles on its thirty-two pages, but it lacks any devotional material, and contains no study in the Word of God.

Time characterizes its feature articles as "non-controversial", and that is putting it mildly. There is nothing in the magazine at which any good Modernist could take offence, and there is nothing

approaching an earnest contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. It gives a pat on the back to all officially sponsored projects, and the nod of approval to all things that do not threaten to disturb the status quo in church life. For instance, it tells us that a book, *Their Search for God*, which blasphemously assures us that the "fundamental religious truths are universal", "will be a valuable source for parents and teachers, and a rewarding experience for mature readers" (p. 27).

But are not the faults of *Presbyterian Life* characteristic faults (we almost said necessary faults) of all denominationally authorized journals? Are they not really inherent in the very idea of a denominational paper? Does not a denominational journal necessarily follow the majority opinion in a church, or at least, the opinion of those who are in power? While the majority of a denomination is true to the Word of God, the promotion which a denominational paper supplies can be very valuable. But when the majority is in danger of departing from the truth, a denominational paper cannot vigorously call it back to the truth. There are a few conspicuous examples of successful denominational papers, but history is strewn with great denominations which were shipwrecked upon the rocks of unbelief from which their controlled papers failed to warn them. A denominational paper must cater to the majority which controls and supports it; if it errs it is the majority that has erred, and there is none to call it to account.

A denominational paper might conceivably be a blessing if there were a vigorous independent paper of relatively equal circulation within the church. Yet such a vigorous independent paper, subsisting alongside a denominational paper, is a virtual impossibility, for a denominational paper enjoys the financial subsidy of the denomination, and the prestige which official sanction gives it. No independent paper can compete with such a journal. A vigorous independent religious journal will sometimes be wrong, but it can be brought to account fairly easily. If, in the judgment of the readers, it errs often and grievously, it will lose its clientele. It constantly invites other journals into competition with it, and it has no weapon to impel readers to buy it save the truth itself. A denominational paper can continue

even though it has lost the confidence of the Christians in the denomination, through general inertia, and because of the virtual impossibility of getting something stopped once it has gained a following. Such a paper tends to crystallize and solidify the errors of the majority, and to establish their respectability.

The non-controversial element which even the secular magazine *Time* detected in the first issue is another necessary characteristic of a denominational paper. It must assume that the decisions of the majority of the denomination are right, for it represents the majority, and it cannot effectively criticize itself. It can engage in only those controversies that the majority sponsors, and such controversies have nearly always been against any vigorously evangelical minority. We make bold to predict that this will be the case with *Presbyterian Life*. It will not engage in controversy as long as none in the church threatens effectively to challenge any major policy of the majority. But when any minority seeks to bring the church back to its biblical standards, it will engage in controversy with such a minority, unless it can ignore the situation. It will do so because any religious journal which deliberately sets out to be non-controversial has as its basis a false idea of the church. It assumes that the affairs of the church are the concern of the hierarchy or of those who are competent to concern themselves with controversial matters, but not the concern of the average lay members. The biblical church is the people; they have a vital interest in all the church does. If they are competent to be church members they are competent to concern themselves with the controversies of the church in so far as the Lord has committed the settling of such matters to them. The interest of a non-controversial religious journal in keeping controversy from the ears of the laymen is usually an interest in preserving a peace which is divorced from the truth which it is the duty of the church to proclaim.

A journal of Protestant Christianity, as *Presbyterian Life* calls itself, cannot be true to the Lord and be consistently non-controversial. One of Dr. J. Gresham Machen's favorite sermons was that based on Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost. As Dr. Machen pointed out, Peter not only stated what the truth is, but also what it is not, and

that is controversy! None faithfully proclaims the truth until he contrasts it with error, and that is simply another way of saying that no non-controversial journal will consistently proclaim the truth. To state the truth only "positively" is not to be a faithful watchman, and no Christian journal that is not a voice pointing men to the truth and away from error is a trustworthy journal. The promotion of a church, no matter how good that church may be, when it is substituted for the promotion of the truth of God, cannot but lead to the building of an organization for its own sake. When religion centers itself in man and in his needs, or in the church and its needs and ambitions, rather than in the Lord, it ceases to be the Christian religion. There is no evidence in the first issue of *Presbyterian Life* to lead one to suppose that it will be a faithful witness to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, or a force to promote anything save the schemes of an inclusivist church.

R. S. M.

A Refreshing Approach to Church Union

WE have the impression that Christians are not nearly as concerned as they ought to be with the question of the possible union of churches. The reasons for such lethargy are fairly obvious, but none seems to afford a good excuse for our failure to work constructively towards this goal.

We have allowed Modernists to run away with the ball. Nothing is more deplorable, indeed, than the manner in which organizational unity has been promoted at the sacrifice of Christian truth. On the basis of the barest minimum of belief, or even on a program of complete doctrinal indifferentism, we have been urged to give heed to the injunction of Christ that we should be one. The sheer pragmatism of these endeavors is transparent, even in the modified plan of E. Stanley Jones for a federation of Christian churches. It is little wonder that the term "church unionism" has been devised by evangelicals to characterize such an approach to unity.

It is highly unfortunate, however, that by and large evangelicals themselves are doing nothing about the challenge to express and promote unity

in the external manifestation of the body of Christ. The two councils of evangelicals have a disappointing record at this point. For all of their repudiation of Modernism and their efforts to counteract its influence, they apparently do not envisage activity to promote doctrinal unity and to effect church union as a definite aspect of their programs. One gets the impression rather that, being satisfied with such unity as is expressed through their common commitment to brief evangelical creeds, they devote themselves entirely to cooperative efforts. Stressing the spiritual unity of Christians, they seem to minimize the significance of expressing that unity outwardly in conformity with the ordinances of Christ regarding the government and discipline of the church. On such an approach, while traditional denominational life is perpetuated, the right of separate denominational existence is subtly undermined.

It is refreshing in this situation to observe from time to time notable exceptions to this generally unhappy state of affairs. One such exception has

recently been brought to our attention in the Proceedings of the 40th Regular Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other States, popularly known as the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church. For some years this church has been exploring the possibility of union with other Lutheran bodies, and particularly with the American Lutheran Church. The most impressive feature of the survey of action presented in these Minutes is that, along with an unmistakable zeal for fostering unity and union, the church is determined to be governed in these procedures by "unwavering loyalty to the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God".

That this commitment is taken realistically and earnestly is evident all along the line. Appealing to I Corinthians 1:10, the Synod insists that "fellowship must be based on unity in all doctrines clearly revealed in Holy Writ". In contrast to the typical modern efforts towards achieving church union, vague pronouncements of belief and easy going by-passing of doctrinal (See "Editorial", page 74)

A Visit to Alitena

By CHARLES E. STANTON

THE Roman Catholic Mission at Alitena is of particular interest to the work of our own church. Alitena is in the midst of the Saho-speaking tribes, being barely across the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia. For one hundred years these French priests have carried on their missionary work there. The larger part of the Romanist area is in Eritrea.

I wanted to know what had been accomplished, and especially what progress had been made, in the study of the Saho language by these priests. For this reason I made a trip to Alitena.

The town of Alitena is much to the east of the main Asmara-Addis Ababa road which connects most of the chief centers of population along the eastern part of the highlands. I was able to make the first thirty miles of the trip by machine—about fifteen miles on the main road to Senafe and another fifteen miles on a dirt road through

the fertile plains southeast of Senafe. It took five and a half hours of brisk walking eastward to reach Alitena itself, located on the very edge of the main eastern escarpment. We had descended a considerable distance from the highlands, and the last part of the trip was over glaring rock-strewn hills, the very sight of which made one thirsty. No place in Eritrea had I ever seen such care taken to make the way (See "Stanton", page 76)



Living Quarters of the Catholic mission at Alitena, as seen from the Church.

The Rev. Charles E. Stanton is an Orthodox Presbyterian missionary serving in Eritrea, East Africa.

Christianity and Crisis Theology

By CORNELIUS VAN TIL

THIS brief study of Barthianism was prepared by Dr. VanTil for publication in *Cheng Yen Pao*, the official magazine of the China Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. We publish it by kind permission of the editors of that magazine. Dr. VanTil is professor of Apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary, and the author of the volume, *The New Modernism*, which is an extended appraisal of Barthianism.

IN recent times it has become quite clear that Christianity and Modernism are two mutually exclusive religions. But a third party has appeared upon the scene. It is the *Theology of Crisis*. Its chief exponents, Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, were trained as Modernists. But they have been very critical of Modernism and its great theologians, Schleiermacher and Ritschl. Moreover, they claim the paternity of Luther and Calvin. Their language is frequently that of historic Protestantism. As a result, many orthodox Christians seem to think that the old gospel has found a new and powerful expression through their mouths. We believe that this is not the case. Without in the least presuming to judge the hearts of its exponents, we shall offer evidence to prove that the *Theology of Crisis* is but a new form of Modernism.

The Bible

Barth and Brunner refer to their position as being a *theology of the Word*. But both Barth and Brunner accept the results of negative or "higher" criticism. Both oppose the orthodox doctrine of the words of Scripture as being identical with revelation. The words of Scripture are said to become the words of God but not until they are accepted as such. Thus the theology of the Word is after all but a theology of experience, and not a theology of the Word at all. On this basic point we are back to the position of the old Modernism. (Cf. Barth: *Kirchliche Dogmatik* I, 2, p. 590; I, I, p. 105; also Brunner: *Revelation and Reason*)

Revelation

Barth and Brunner also speak of

their position as a theology of revelation. But they oppose the orthodox idea of a *finished* revelation. According to them revelation is always an *act*. And it is never an act until it is *interaction* between God and man. And to take his part in this interaction man must become more than man. Through the Holy Spirit man's act of accepting revelation becomes God's act of receiving His own Word. God can be known by God only. Thus we are back to the modernist idea of God coming to self-consciousness in man and man coming to self-consciousness in God. (Barth: *K.D.*, I, 1, pp. 313ff; Brunner: *Die Mystik und das Wort*, and *Revelation and Reason*)

God

Barth and Brunner speak much of the transcendent God. Yet they reject the orthodox doctrine of God. For them God is identical with His revelation. And as already noted revelation is a process of interaction of God with man made divine. Barth argues that God's transcendence means His freedom to become wholly identical with man and to take man up into complete identification with himself. For Brunner, God is virtually identical with what he calls the divine-human encounter. Both are vigorously opposed to the orthodox idea of God's self-contained intertrinitarian existence. Both virtually identify God's intertrinitarian activity with His works of creation, providence and redemption. Thus we are back to the God of Schleiermacher and Ritschl, a god made in the image of man. (Barth: *K.D.* I, chapter on "The Freedom of God"; Brunner: *Revelation and Reason*)

Man

Barth and Brunner speak of man as having been created in the image of God and as having fallen into sin. But these ideas, they say, are not to be taken as orthodoxy takes them. The Genesis account is not to be taken as historical narrative. There was no historical Adam. There was no paradise. There was no fall.

The notion of a state of perfection is rather an ideal for the future. It

intimates God's intention for man, and therefore by revelation as interaction is man's ideal for himself. But God's intention may be thwarted by man; which by the process of interaction means that man never lives up to his own ideal. So we are back again to the level of Modernism. In the evolutionary process man forms for himself high ideals but, because of the situation of which he is a part, he never fully lives up to them. (Barth: *K.D.* III, 1; Brunner: *The Mediator*, p. 146; *Man in Revolt*, pp. 85f)

Christ

Barth and Brunner want to interpret all things Christologically. And their Christ, they contend, is the Christ of the Scriptures. This claim, too, must be denied. Their Christ is not the Christ of the historic Christian creeds. He stands for the process of interaction between God and man. God is nothing but what He is toward man in Christ, and man is nothing but what he is in Christ toward God. Identification with Christ is God's ideal for man and through revelation as interaction, Christ is man's ideal for himself. He is the true Adam. So we are led back again to the old modernist notion of a Christ who is naught but an idealized man. A Christ who is a mixture of a God who does not exist apart from Him and a man who does not exist apart from Him is not the Christ of the Scripture. (Barth: *K.D.* I, 2; Brunner: *The Mediator*)

Salvation

Barth and Brunner speak much of God's sovereign grace. By the sound of the words they use, one would even think they were Calvinists. For to them God's election is the source of man's salvation. But election, they say, must be understood Christologically. It is therefore a process. Creation itself is taken up into this process of election. A man does not really exist except in so far as he exists in Christ. Self-consciousness presupposes Christ-consciousness. All men are reprobate, but they are reprobate in Christ. Judas, says Barth, "is not against Jesus" (*K.D.* III, 1, p. 508). He is not wholly for Jesus. Neither is any one else. All men

are elect; they are elect as reprobate (*Idem*, p. 526). Judas represents the principle of evil that is found in all men and Peter represents the ideal perfection in Christ that is found in all men. Christ unites the reprobate and the elect; both are destined for participation in God's glory (*K.D.* II, 2, p. 460). (For Brunner: *Wahrheit als Begegnung*, p. 52). Thus the sovereign grace of the Crisis theologians has been made quite acceptable to the natural man. It is but the auto-soterism of the old Modernism in a new dress.

The Church

Barth and Brunner speak of election as the heart of the church. But as they reject the orthodox doctrine of election so they also reject the orthodox doctrine of the church. For them the church is identical with the process of election as both are identical with the process they call Christ. All men are involved in this process. As vessels of wrath they are outside but as vessels of mercy they are inside the church. As Scripture itself is full of contradictory systems and is but a witness to the truth so no creed can be anything but an arrow pointing toward the truth. Thus we are back again to the level of the old Modernism with its notion of the church as a local improvement association. (Barth: *K.D.* II, 2; Brunner: *The Divine Imperative*, p. 300; *Man in Revolt*, p. 78)

The Commandment

Barth and Brunner speak of interpreting ethics Christologically. There is no God apart from Christ as there is no man apart from Christ. In Christ the commanding God and obedient man have coalesced. There is no other good but Christ and there are no other duties but those to Christ. Christ is the standard of good and evil. The disobedient disobey in Christ. God's judgment upon them is reconciliation in Christ. Men cannot know that they have sinned except in the light that they are forgiven in Christ; self-consciousness is identical with Christ-consciousness. Thus ethics is identical with the process of election. As Esau all men disobey but as Jacobs all men obey in Christ. What God wills of us is the same as that which He wills for us and is doing within us. Thus we are back to the old Modernism according to which Christ is the impersonation of ideals which men have set for themselves in the course of the

evolutionary process. (Barth: *K.D.* III, 1; Brunner: *The Divine Imperative*)

The Last Things

Barth and Brunner deal constantly with the last things. But for them the last things have no connection with the calendar. They are not *pre* or *post* or a millennialists. There was no creation out of nothing. There was no historical Adam. God did not reveal Himself directly in nature and history. The Virgin birth, the death and the resurrection of Christ did not take place in history, but in super-history. And super-history is not measured by hours and days of ordinary history. There is no difference of date between the first and second coming of Christ. There is no difference of date between what Christ did, or rather *does*, for us and what He, through the Spirit, does within us. In Christ God has time for us; in Christ He is buried with us,

with all men. In Christ our time becomes God's time; we, all men, are risen with Him. All revelation events are aspects of the one great Resurrection Event, of which God and man are the two correlative aspects. Thus we have virtually returned to the old Modernism, which reduces historic Christianity to a monistic process philosophy. (Barth: *The Resurrection of the Dead*)

* * * * *

Our conclusion must be that the gospel preached and taught by Barth and Brunner, though couched in orthodox sounding terminology, is still virtually identical with the gospel of the old Modernism. It is an emasculated gospel, a gospel without God, without Christ, without grace, a gospel to the liking of the natural man and withal a gospel of despair. It is a new Modernism more subtle and dangerous than the old.

The Contest with Pharaoh

The Power of God Manifest on Behalf of His Covenant People

By EDWARD J. YOUNG

AS Moses prepared to go before the king of Egypt, he heard the word of the Lord, "—I will lay my hand upon Egypt" (Exodus 7:4a). It was a critical time. The people of God, the Israelites, were in bondage to a hostile oppressor. During the time of their servitude, they could not serve the Lord as an organized body. Their plight was hard, and they groaned for deliverance.

The situation, however, was far more crucial than appears upon the surface. It was a critical time, because God's people were in bondage, but it was also a critical time for a far more profound reason. For the first time in history, the people of God, the descendants of Eve, the heirs of the promise, were to come face to face with the onslaughts of the adversary. The Egyptian people did indeed desire to keep the Israelites as their slaves. That would have been to their advantage. But behind the scenes of history, there are spiritual forces at work. Satan, the adversary, would delight to keep the people in perpetual bondage. For, if the Israelites should be delivered and

leave Egypt, it would mean that they could be organized into a nation. The theocracy could then be established upon the earth. The Temple of God could be erected. Israel could be a light unto the Gentiles to point them to Mount Zion, from whence would come the Deliverer.

This must be prevented at all costs. Jerusalem must not be established; the Temple must not be built. The theocracy must not be established. Israel must remain as a helpless, unorganized group, for, if the Theocracy be founded, out of Zion will come forth the Law and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. This simply must not be. To destroy Israel now; to keep her in perpetual bondage; this will be to preclude the coming of Jesus Christ. This will be to avert Calvary. Satan must work now, and he must work fast.

There are always people ready and willing to do the bidding of Satan. And such were the Egyptians. Of course, they may not have realized that they were being made the instruments of a hostile power, but that does not

lessen their guilt. All who fight against the Lord are on the side of the enemy. The Egyptians apparently thought that they were merely working for their own interests; they were simply endeavoring to prevent slaves from running away. So the matter may have seemed to them. However, the Egyptians were but tools. Behind them we may see the prince of this world, prepared for battle.

It is for this reason, I believe, that the Lord now is ready to display His signs and wonders upon the Egyptians. We are now face to face with the first great period of miracles in Biblical history. God's people have known that He is a powerful God. They have known that He is the Creator, and they are now to learn that He is a redeemer. But they are also to have it impressed upon their minds that He is a mighty Redeemer. His redemption is an act of power; He has the sovereign control of all the forces of heaven and earth. He will now display His great power in the contest with Pharaoh.

The Purpose of the Wonders

We must ever remember that a miracle has a didactic purpose. No miracle is ever performed without some specific end in view. Not only do miracles accompany revelation, but they are in themselves acts of God's special revelation. They are designed to teach. And so it was in the case of the contest with Pharaoh. "And Egypt shall know that I am the Lord when I stretch forth My hand upon Egypt, and bring out the sons of Israel from among them" (Exodus 7:5). In other words, it was necessary to perform these miracles in order that the people of the world—the seed of Satan—might know that the Lord was the true God.

In those days, as also today, there was much confusion in men's thinking about God. There were those at that time who bowed down to the idols which their hands had created, just as today there are those who bow down to the idols which their minds have created. They think of God as like themselves. They have created God in their own image and according to their likeness. They would limit Him and circumscribe His ability. They say to Him: "Thus far mayest Thou go, and no farther."

These erroneous conceptions of God must be destroyed. The God of Israel must be acknowledged by the nations

as a God that is unlike the divinities of the heathen. There is no God like Israel's God. This truth must be impressed upon the world, and it must be particularly impressed at the time when Israel needs to be set free from the oppression of a heathen nation. The miracles, therefore, are not mere displays of power, but they are displays of power, performed for the purpose of proclaiming the superiority of the God of Israel to all other gods.

Analysis of the Miracles

There are ten of these miracles, or plagues. The number ten was chosen of design. It is often a symbol of completeness or perfection. The Lord might have performed more, or He might have performed fewer miracles. However, this number is sufficient. It expresses the thought that the Lord is speaking and performing that which is sufficient to accomplish His purposes. But the number ten is further divided into two groups of nine and one. The first nine plagues were preparatory; they point toward the last. The last plague differed from the first nine in that it served as a climax. When the first born were smitten, there arose a shriek of anguish from each home of Egypt. This was the final judgment of the Lord. Beyond this, there was to be no further hope for the Egyptians.

As we examine the first group of nine plagues, we notice that it again is divided into three smaller groups of three plagues each. Let us examine the first group of three. We note first of all that in these three plagues there is no distinction made between the Israelites and the Egyptians. Thus, to take an example, when the frogs came over the land, they afflicted all the inhabitants. At the first plague, as well as the second, a warning is given to Pharaoh. This was not the case with the third plague. Both the first and second plagues are announced beforehand, but not the third. In each one of the first three plagues the rod of Aaron is used. Lastly, we should note that at the third the magicians acknowledge the hand of God to be present. "This is the finger of God" (Exodus 8:19a), is their cry. Of course these magicians did not know God in truth, nevertheless, they did at least acknowledge that a power was working that was above their own. Among many of the nations there has remained the belief in a supreme Being, and the magicians evidently felt that this su-

preme Being was now at work. It was not, however, an acknowledgment of faith. It was not an expression of adoration or of awe. It was merely a cry of impotence and dismay, as though the magicians had said, "A power greater than ourselves is at work, with which we cannot cope." It is true that, since all men are created in the image of God, they bear impressed in their very constitution the marks and evidences of His being, and in a certain sense they know of Him. For the most part, because of sin, men try to obliterate or to suppress the knowledge of God which they have. However, deep within them, they know that God exists. So, too, the magicians, those servants of Satan in ancient Egypt, now cry, "This is the finger of God."

When we look at the second group of miracles, we notice certain similarities with the first group. In the fourth plague, the warning is given to Pharaoh in the morning, and in the fourth and fifth warning is given beforehand, although this is not the case in the sixth. The rod of Aaron is not mentioned in connection with any of these miracles. This group appears to be designed to affect the comfort and health of mankind. At the sixth the magicians announce that they can no longer stand before the face of Moses. There is here discernible a progress, if such it may be called, in the hardness of the magicians' hearts. When they acknowledge the finger of God to be present, they should bow down before God and worship Him. It is wrong to continue to resist Him. It was this that the magicians did. They refused to bow before God, and now they find that they cannot even stand before His servant. Herein it is proclaimed to all the world that God is indeed above the men of this world.

In the third group of three we note again that in the seventh the warning is given to Pharaoh in the morning. In both the seventh and eighth, the plague is announced beforehand, but not so in the case of the ninth. Again, there is no mention of the rod of Aaron, but there is mention of his hand. These three seem designed to take away from man the staff of life. We may note also that beginning with the fourth plague and continuing throughout the last two groups of three a distinction is observed between the Israelites and the Egyptians. There has been discernible also a growth in the severity of the plagues, and an advance from the external to the internal. At last,

Pharaoh refuses any longer to see the face of Moses.

It is a tragic picture. God has wrought His mighty judgments. Instead of hearkening to their warnings, Pharaoh and the Egyptians stubbornly sought to resist the power of God. At last, they would take no more. The

height of folly has been reached. They would turn aside from the miracle working God; they would face a certain death. But God remains just; He remains true. His people know His power and they may have confidence in His ability to deliver them even from the house of bondage.

Song in the Public Worship of God

A Study of Committee Reports.

By ROBERT S. MARSDEN

I*n the Reformation period, and for 150 years afterward, the Reformed churches of Great Britain and the Netherlands sang chiefly the Psalms. At the present time there are relatively few churches that sing Psalms exclusively. It would appear from this that the question must have been rather definitely decided during the course of these years. However, the arguments which have been advanced on each side of the controversy leave rather much to be desired. There is a lack of reasoned argument based on Scripture. There is much more argument based on expediency and sentiment.*

When the question was raised in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church of preparing an official church hymnal, the matter of Psalm-singing was immediately encountered, as there are those within the denomination who hold that they cannot, in good conscience, in the light of Scripture, sing other than Psalms in public worship. The General Assembly appointed a committee to study the question. The first part of the committee's report was presented in 1946, and the second part in 1947. The completed report is to be considered by the 1948 Assembly.

We present herewith a study of the report and conclusions of the committee, prepared by one of its members. This article is intended to encourage a consideration of the matter on the part of all ministers and laymen. The whole committee was in agreement on the part of the report concerning the regulative principle of worship and the Standards of the church. There was disagreement concerning the application of the principle in the practical circumstances of the church's life.

The Regulative Principle of Worship

The committee began its work by considering the question of whether or not there was a regulative principle of worship. In examining this question, the committee found, first of all, that the Scriptures teach, and the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms enunciate such a principle. That regulative principle is succinctly stated in the Confession of Faith, Chapter XXI, Section 1, as follows: "But the acceptable way of Worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture".

It was found that other parts of the subordinate standards presented statements on the subject consistent with this principle. The principle is simply that we may do nothing in worship save that which is "prescribed" by the Lord Himself in His Word. The question is simply whether the singing of hymns other than those contained in the Scripture is so "prescribed" in the Word. There are some subordinate questions as to whether there is Scriptural warrant for singing all the Psalms, and whether there is Scriptural warrant for the singing of other parts of the Scripture in addition to the Psalms. But the important question was whether according to the regulative principle there is Scriptural warrant for singing other than those songs indited in the Word.

Before considering this question, however, the committee had to consider the question as to whether, in-

deed, the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms are correct in enunciating this regulative principle. There were, in other words, three possible findings which the committee might publish. It could have come to the conclusion that the subordinate standards were incorrect in stating this regulative principle, and then it would have been faced with the task of recommending amendments to the subordinate standards. It could have come to the conclusion that the regulative principle as stated is Biblical, and that the application is correct which those, who contend for the singing of the Psalms exclusively, make. In that event the committee would have been compelled to recommend that only the Psalms be sung in the churches. Or it could have concluded that the regulative principle is that taught in the Bible, but that the application of the principle by those who sing other hymns is the Biblical application. It is this last position which is taken by the report of the committee, while a minority of the committee contends, in a minority report, for the second alternative mentioned.

Since the committee was unanimous in its opinion that the regulative principle stated in the subordinate standards is that taught in the Word of God, it will not be necessary to argue that matter in this article. Doubtless, pastors have preached on this subject, and those who may be in doubt concerning it are referred to the first part of the committee's report which is contained in the *Minutes* of the Thirteenth General Assembly, 1946.

The Analogy of Song with Prayer

The committee bases its argument that the singing of songs other than the Psalms is authorized in Scripture, in accordance with the regulative principle, first of all, upon the analogy with prayer. It is not to be disputed that prayer is a part of worship, and that our prayer must be consistent with the regulative principle for worship. Yet, in our prayer, we are not confined to any set form of words. Songs and prayers have a very close affinity in Scripture; some songs are prayers, and some prayers are songs. The Psalms themselves abound in prayers, and some of the Psalms are called prayers.

But, it may be contended, singing is one part of worship; praying is quite another. It may be contended that

while the Scripture does not restrict our praying to a set form of words, it does so restrict our singing. But are singing and praying two such distinct exercises of worship? Is not their complete distinctness a modern development arising from the great development of music in modern times? Musical arrangement and notation were extremely simple in Bible times, and there seems to be evidence that the prayers were sometimes chanted or uttered in an exalted kind of voice, very closely akin to our singing. This chanting likely constituted the singing of Bible times. If the congregation joined in the prayer which Peter appears to have led (Acts 4:24-31), it appears that it was by means of chanting, or some kind of response, for the prayer certainly appears to have been spontaneous, yet "they lifted up their voice with one accord". It would appear that we are not warranted in making a sharp distinction between the work spoken and the word sung. Sometimes, in the Hebrew services, and, later, in the Christian church services, parts of the Bible were sung, and at other times they were read or recited. Sometimes prayers were spoken in an ordinary tone of voice, and at other times they probably were chanted or sung. To say that the prayers in the Psalms (and no other prayers) were sung, is an unwarranted assertion.

New Occasions Evoke New Songs

The committee finds its most cogent argument for the use of other hymns than the Psalms in the public worship of God in the fact that consistently throughout the Scriptures, new occasions call for the composition of new songs. We have no record of what songs were sung in worship prior to the time of David. The song of Miriam and the song of Hannah which preceded this period were both songs written for particular occasions, as were many of the Psalms. With the composition of the Psalms, some of them were used in the temple worship although there is no evidence that all of them were so used or that all of them were intended to be sung at all.

Even though the Psalms were in existence, and probably were collected, when Hezekiah had been recovered from his sickness, he wrote a song and commanded that it be sung in the temple (Is. 38:10-20). The new experience evoked a new song, and he used that song in the temple after the

Psalms had been provided.

When we come to the New Testament we find several songs surrounding the birth of Jesus (Luke 1, 2). We are not told specifically that these were sung, yet they are in the form of song, and the introduction to the song of the heavenly host indicates that their "Glory to God in the highest" was a song of praise. The hymn of Mary (Luke 1:46-55) known as "the Magnificat" was based upon the song of Hannah in 1 Sam. 2:1-10, yet it is not merely verbal repetition. The songs of Zacharias (Luke 1:67-79) and Simeon (Luke 2:29-32) introduce New Testament elements.

The prayer, already cited, in Acts 4:24-31, again uses Old Testament elements from Psalm 2 as a basis, and introduces in connection with this Psalm New Testament applications. If this was sung, as the expression "they lifted up their voice to God with one accord" would seem to indicate, it is another evidence that new occasions and new experiences of God's loving kindness called for a new song.

In 1 Cor. 14 there appears to be another evidence of this same thing. There we are permitted an insight into a church meeting in which there were supernatural spiritual gifts such as ceased with the completion of revelation. The Apostle Paul is warning against the misuse of these spiritual gifts. He lists, in verse 26, some of the manifestations of these spiritual gifts. In that catalogue he indicates that sometimes a worshiper is given a special song which Paul calls a "psalm". There is no indication that this song is one of the 150 Psalms. Rather, this song which was given as a special gift could hardly have been one of these Psalms which were the possession of the whole church. The "psalm" must have been a new composition, suited for the occasion.

In the Pastoral Epistles of Paul (Epistles to Timothy and Titus), there are five "faithful sayings". Some of these seem to be fragments of New Testament songs. One is quoted in the report of the committee, and it is appropriate here. In 1 Tim. 3:16 we read, "And confessedly great is the mystery of godliness:

Who was manifested in flesh,
Was justified in spirit,
Was seen by angels,
Was preached in nations,
Was believed in (the) world,
Was received up in glory."

Most commentators agree that this is a poetic passage, and there seems to be real possibility that it was one of the earliest of the New Testament songs. This song reflects the expanded revelation which the Lord gave His church in the New Testament.

In the Book of the Revelation (5:9 and 14:3) we are told that in the circumstances that obtain in heaven there will be new songs sung to memorialize the new experiences which the glorified saints will there enjoy. The expanded revelation of heaven will again call forth new songs.

Objections

The primary objection which has been offered to this line of reasoning is that we have no evidence in Scripture that there is warrant for singing *uninspired* compositions. The difficulty in dealing with this argument will immediately be apparent. The fact that we have new songs in the Scripture to memorialize new conditions does not satisfy those who offer this argument. For, the fact that these new songs are in the Scripture makes them inspired, and, consequently what these brethren would ask is the impossible—that we cite from Scripture the use of an un-inspired song. The very fact that it is in the Scripture guarantees that any song we cite from Scripture is inspired! Who could possibly find an un-inspired song in Scripture, and would the Lord demand the completion of so impossible a task before He would permit the singing of un-inspired songs to His praise? To be sure, theoretically it would not be impossible to imagine this kind of warrant in Scripture for such song. It might have been said that a certain disciple, not one of the apostolic company, composed a song which is not recorded in Scripture, and that that song was sung in a public worship service. But even then it would be impossible to *prove* that that song was not inspired. It would thus be impossible to *prove* that un-inspired songs are authorized in the Scripture, and to demand such proof before one can in good conscience sing un-inspired songs is to demand the impossible!

What is to be Accomplished by the Study?

What is to be accomplished through this study? Certainly no study of the Word of God, and of its bearing upon any phase of Christian conduct is in any sense a waste of time. But the

present writer makes bold to hope for some concrete results of the study by the committee.

The most salutary result would be that our church might become united in its opinion that hymns as well as the Psalms may be used in public worship. It is to be hoped that all the members of the church might be able with good conscience to sing these hymns.

If this complete result cannot now be accomplished, then it is certainly to be hoped that those who, in good conscience, can sing hymns, and those who, in good conscience, find it impossible to sing them may respect one another's consciences in the matter. Let none seek to impose his conscience upon the other. There has been a tendency toward intolerance on both sides. Both sides can cite ample historic precedent for their position among Reformed people. If those on each side of the question will come to realize that both really and sincerely accept the regulative principle, and then seek to understand how, on the basis of that biblical principle, each could possibly arrive at his conclusion, much will be accomplished by this study. It is one thing for a man to assert that he cannot with good conscience do a particular thing; it is quite another for one to assert that it is sinful for other Christians to engage in that practice. Let none violate his conscience, but let each in good conscience sing to the glory of God only such songs as he is sure are prescribed by the Word of God.

Conclusion

The conclusion to which the committee comes in its report is carefully worded. It concludes that the Psalms are to be sung by the New Testament church. It does not pass judgment upon the question as to which Psalms are to be sung, nor does it pass judgment as to whether all the Psalms are appropriate for singing. The report gives no comfort to those who would sing hymns only from reasons of expediency, nor to those who would introduce into the worship of God songs which are not Biblical in their content. The songs which we sing must be as clearly a testimony to the truth of God as the sermons which we preach and the prayers which we offer. The conclusion of the report is simply, "The content of song, then, like the content of our prayer, need not be restricted to the

very words of Scripture, although it must be assuredly Scriptural in teaching".

This conclusion brings us back to the place where we were at the time of the general assembly in 1944. At that time, already, a committee had worked a year on preliminary discussion which it was hoped would lead to the publication of a hymnal. If a hymnal was needed then, the need is much greater now. It is a fact that there is now no completely satisfactory hymnal for The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In the opinion of this author, the *Hymnal*, Revised, of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., while it had some glaring faults, came nearest to fulfilling the requirements for our church. Yet even this is now out of print and almost unobtainable, and its successor, published in 1933, is in my judgment generally unfitted for use in an Orthodox Presbyterian church. Other hymnals may suffice for the time being. The *Psalter Hymnal* of the Christian Reformed Church has many excellencies, but it lacks many of the best hymns that are most familiar to American congregations, and its tunes are generally unfamiliar to American audiences. It would appear that four or five years must, of necessity, go into the preparation and publication of a hymnal, and it is to be hoped that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church will soon be in position to proceed with this necessary project.

Editorial

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divergences are repudiated. In a concrete situation, for example, it was insisted that a single declaration of faith, "Scriptural, clear, concise and unequivocal", should be formulated and prove acceptable to both parties to assure progress.

One finds also a healthy recognition that responsibility rests upon the entire church. Isolated action of congregations in establishing fellowship with other churches is opposed on the ground that the great goal must be "joint defense against schism and sectarianism", in accordance with Romans 16:17. And it is intimated that documents bearing upon union proposals were studied "throughout the length and breadth of the Synod, by individual members, by

pastoral conferences, in Bible classes, in meetings of our young people, and elsewhere."

It is also heartening to observe that the Synod's *Brief Statement* of its doctrinal position contains the following article: "The orthodox character of a church is established not by its mere name nor by its outward acceptance of, and subscription to, an orthodox creed, but by the doctrine which is actually taught in its pulpits, in its theological seminaries, and in its publications. On the other hand, a church does not forfeit its orthodox character through the casual intrusion of errors, provided these are combatted and eventually removed by means of doctrinal discipline".

Our generally favorable evaluation of the approach of the Missouri Synod to the question of church union does not imply, of course, that we necessarily concur with every detail, and much less that we approve the distinctive doctrinal position of the Synod. We reject as unscriptural, for example, its conception of "universal grace" and its declaration that "in the New Testament God has abrogated the sabbath..." We express such disagreement with the greater sorrow because of our deep agreement with this church in its stand for the inspiration and integrity of the Scriptures. We also welcome the emphasis which falls upon the doctrine that "conversion is wrought by the grace and power of God alone", rejecting as "apostasy from the Christian religion all doctrines whereby man's own works and merit are mingled into the doctrine of justification before God".

What we have been especially concerned to emphasize is the principle that church union must be sought without compromise of the truth. Such zeal must, indeed, be distinguished from dogmatism and ecclesiasticism. Fidelity to the Scriptures will demand that we sharpen our perspectives as to the elements in our faith and practice which are merely human traditions, and those which are *clearly* revealed. Efforts to achieve unity will prosper only when a spirit of humility and good will prevails. But the Scriptures, which enjoin the fullest possible unity among Christians, must themselves be regulative of the practice of individuals and churches.

Shall we not put this principle into action?

N. B. S.

The Glory of the Christian Church

By the REV. PROFESSOR R. B. KUIPER

VI

UNITY WITHOUT UNIFORMITY

A FEW years ago Wendell Wilkie wrote a best-seller entitled "One World". It was a plea for the harmonious cooperation of all nations. Mr. Wilkie's aim was most laudable, but his book suffered from oversimplification and superficial optimism. He did not reckon sufficiently with the depravity of human nature in general nor with the ungodliness of Marxian Communism in particular. Today the world is exceedingly far from being one. Scripture tells us that it will not be one until God has established the new earth.

The plight of the Christian church seems almost as sad as that of the world. To all appearances it too is a house divided against itself. It resembles a beautiful vase that, fallen from its perch, lies shattered in a thousand pieces. It is like a grand structure transformed by an exploding bomb into a tangled mass of wreckage.

One Church

Unbelievable though it may seem, the church of Jesus Christ is really one.

This truth is presupposed in the Apostles' Creed, which makes mention of "a holy catholic church" in the singular and defines this church as "the"—the one and only—"communion of saints". To be sure, according to the same creed the church's unity is a matter of faith rather than sight, but that does not detract a whit from its reality.

The Word of God teaches the unity of the church unmistakably, repeatedly and emphatically. It is no exaggeration to assert that this is one of the most outstanding teachings of the New Testament. It tells us, for instance, that the church has one Head (Eph. 1:22), one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), one foundation (1 Cor. 3:11), one faith and one baptism (Eph. 4:5). Two whole chapters,

Romans 12 and First Corinthians 12, are devoted to setting forth the truth that all believers constitute one body, even the body of Christ. All of which adds up to the fact that spiritually the church is one.

That being the case, the question arises why Jesus in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel prayed for the unity of believers. Referring to the apostles He said in the eleventh verse: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are". And in the twenty-first verse, with the believers of succeeding ages in mind, He continued: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us". Surely, if the spiritual unity of believers is a reality, it would seem superfluous to pray that it may come to pass.

Many present-day advocates of church union take it for granted that Jesus prayed in John seventeen for the organizational unity of His followers. Glibly they quote the Savior's prayer for the unity of believers in support of the wholesale wiping out of denominational boundaries. But even he who runs may see that Jesus was thinking primarily of the *spiritual* unity of believers. He prayed that they might be one as He and the Father are one. To be sure, He also desired that this unity might become manifest, for He added: "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me"; but that in no way alters the fact that the unity for which He prayed was specifically spiritual.

Indisputably the Lord prayed for the spiritual unity of His church. And so the question will not down how this prayer may be reconciled with the fact that spiritually the church is one. A comparison may help discover the answer. The Christian is holy. Every Christian is a saint. It may even be said that in principle he is perfect. Did not John assert: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is born of God" (1 John

3:9)? And yet, how obvious that the very best Christian needs to grow in holiness and has a long way to go before he shall have attained to the goal of perfection. In much the same way the spiritual unity of all who believe in Christ is indeed a present reality, but its fullest realization and the attainment of the highest degree of unity lie in the future. The spiritual unity of the church is both real and to be realized.

The fact remains that the church of God, far from being a tangled heap of wreckage, is even now God's own perfectly proportioned temple, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ Himself as the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building is fitly framed together and all believers are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2:20-22). God omniscient sees it thus. So does God's child with the eye of faith.

Many Forms

That there is considerable variety among individual Christians and also among groups of Christians cannot be disputed. There is no good reason why anybody should care to dispute it. Uniformity among Christians is not necessarily a good. When carried to extremes it becomes an evil. It can be shown that complete uniformity within the church would not enhance its beauty but rather detract from it.

Theologians often speak of the multiformity of the church. By and large they regard it as a good. However, few have stopped to define the term, and that has led to confusion. Sad to say, the term multiformity has even been used to cover a multitude of sins.

It has been made to include heresies, for instance. There are, no doubt, greater heresies than Arminianism. Modernism is far worse. But Arminianism too is error. Let no one say that the difference between the Reformed faith and Arminianism is merely one of emphasis, the former stressing the sovereignty of God, the latter the re-

sponsibility of man, and that therefore it is desirable that there be both Reformed churches and Arminian churches. The fact is that Arminianism does great violence to both divine sovereignty and human responsibility. It may never be forgotten that error is sin. To make sin look respectable by casting about it the cloak of multiformity is itself sin.

Again, the term multiformity has often been employed to excuse schism within the church. Schism is sinful division. To leave one denomination in order to found another is an extremely serious matter, and it may be done only for compelling reasons. To do so on the issue whether leavened or unleavened bread and fermented or unfermented wine should be used at the Lord's Supper is not merely ridiculous but extremely sinful. Such differences are much too insignificant to justify division in the body of Christ. When division does occur because of them there is joy among the fallen angels. Multiformity and schism are not synonymous.

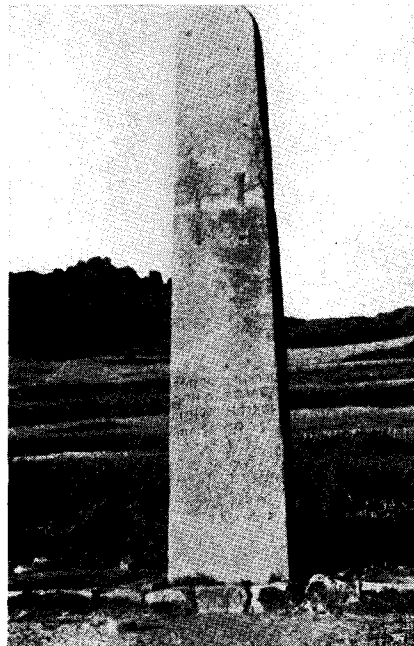
If churchmen could make up their minds to use the term multiformity only for permissible differences and not for sin, that would remove much misunderstanding and might well promote the unity of the church.

It is not difficult to think of permissible differences. In the interest of uniformity Rome has adopted one language, Latin, for its services of worship throughout the world; but surely there is room within the church of Christ for any number of languages. Three modes of baptism are found within the church—immersion in water, pouring on of water, and sprinkling with water—and, the Baptists to the contrary notwithstanding, it cannot be proved that one is better than another. Granted that the preaching of the Word is the chief element in public worship, there still remains room for differences as to the number of songs to be sung and the number of prayers to be prayed. What does it matter whether a minister wears a Genevan gown, a Prince Albert, a cut-away coat with striped trousers, or just an ordinary suit of clothes in the pulpit? The Scotchman has the reputation of being stolid and usually there is something stolid about his worship, while the African is more emotional and this too is reflected in his mode of worship; but instead of finding fault with each other for this difference

they should hold one another in high esteem.

Such multiformity does not obscure the unity of Christ's church, but rather causes it to stand out the more boldly. Unity that comes to expression in uniformity may well be, and usually is, superficial. On the other hand, unity that constitutes the background of multiformity is necessarily deep. For us to be at one with those who are like us is easy; to be at one with those who are unlike us is possible only if a profound unity underlies surface differences. Cicero, pagan though he was, made the wise observation that love surpasses friendship in that, while friendship is esteem of one for another who agrees with him, love is esteem of one for another who differs from him.

By the same token, multiformity short of sin, instead of detracting from the glory of the church, enhances it. How much more beautiful is a building constructed of stones of different shapes and sizes than is a structure of blocks all of which look alike. As the human body derives its beauty from the variety of its members, so does the body of Christ. It is when love rises above uniformity and embraces multiformity that the greatest of Christian virtues comes to its most glorious expression.



Crescent and disk, pagan religious symbolism, can be seen near the top of this obelisk, on a path in Eritrea.

Stanton

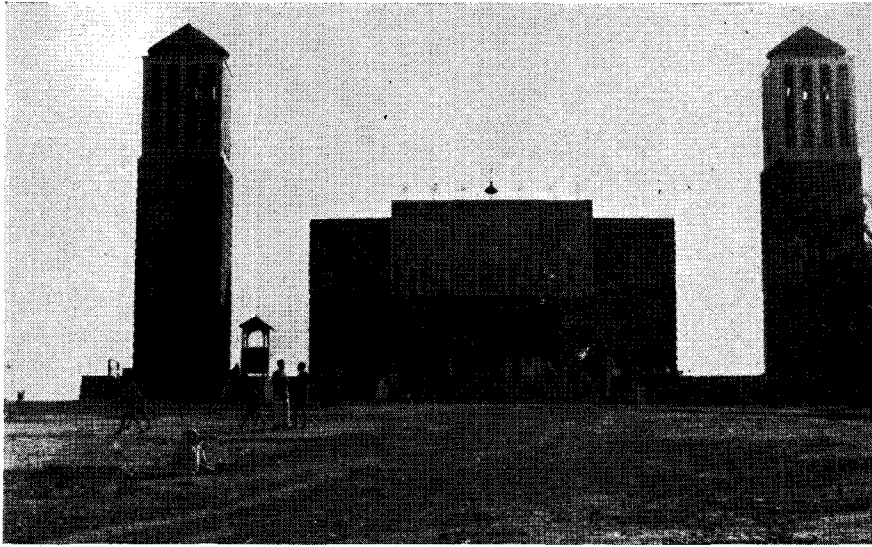
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easy for weary feet of travelers. There in the midst of the wilderness of gigantic barren hills, steps had been made up a hillside, and made so well that the storms of many years had not washed them away.

We (Ahmed, a guide and I) were hospitably entertained by the native priest who now has oversight of Alitena mission. He appeared to be an intelligent fellow who is able to read and write French, Italian and Amharic. Saho is his native language. He brought us a large jar of fresh honey-water, than which nothing could have been more welcome or delicious. He said I was the first white man to visit Alitena for years. The French priests had all been compelled to leave in 1936 when the Italians came. The native priest seemed pleased that I had come for a visit. That night I slept on a comfortable bed with a mattress, and I had an abundance of the best native food I have yet seen or tasted.

The set of buildings that provided living quarters for the missionaries has the appearance of a fort, built on a large projection of solid rock. The walls are of rock and well made. Across the little valley is the church building with the church yard and cemetery. The building is a large, fine structure such as one might see in the older Roman Catholic section of Philadelphia. It is really remarkable, for such a wilderness spot, and far more elaborate than the living quarters. At the front a large lovely chandelier was suspended from the ceiling, and the priest showed me an organ which for ten years had not been played. Every part of this fine building except the stones in it had been carried many miles over the steep, hot hills by donkey or mule, or on the backs of men. I could not do other than admire the great and patient zeal of these people who had worked so hard to construct in that wilderness spot a beautiful building for the worship of God. Yet this was not the first building they had constructed. A previous church building here had been burned to the ground by Ethiopian soldiers in 1881, and the mission had been plundered.

The persecution that the Roman Catholic Church endured in the early days is the reason why Alitena became the mission's chief station. Its asset was



Coptic Church at Asmara. Drawings on the front are thought to represent

saints of the Coptic church. There are numerous church buildings in the area.

its remoteness from the larger centers of population in the highlands.

The French missionaries had made a garden beside the stream at Alitena, a part of which still remains. A number of sturdy luxuriant lemon and orange trees were there, well laden with fruit. The priest sent two donkey loads of oranges (180 pounds) back to Addi

Caieh with me, asking me to sell them for him if possible. We sold them.

I was chiefly interested to know what the French missionaries had done in the study of Saho. All the teaching, reading and writing had been in Amharic. Only one of the French missionaries had attempted any work in Saho. He had composed some notes,

but they proved to be more limited than the material we have already worked out. From some unseen library this priest brought out and gave to me to keep the small German grammar by Leo Reinisch on the Saho language, that I had heard of before but had never been able to find.

The past importance of the Alitena mission can be estimated by the fact that in 1930 the 1170 believers at the station made up almost half the total number of Catholic adherents in all the ten Romanist stations established up to that time. With the coming of the Italians in larger numbers, Asmara and other larger towns became the chief centers of the Catholic influence, but Alitena continues to be one of the chief areas of Catholic population.

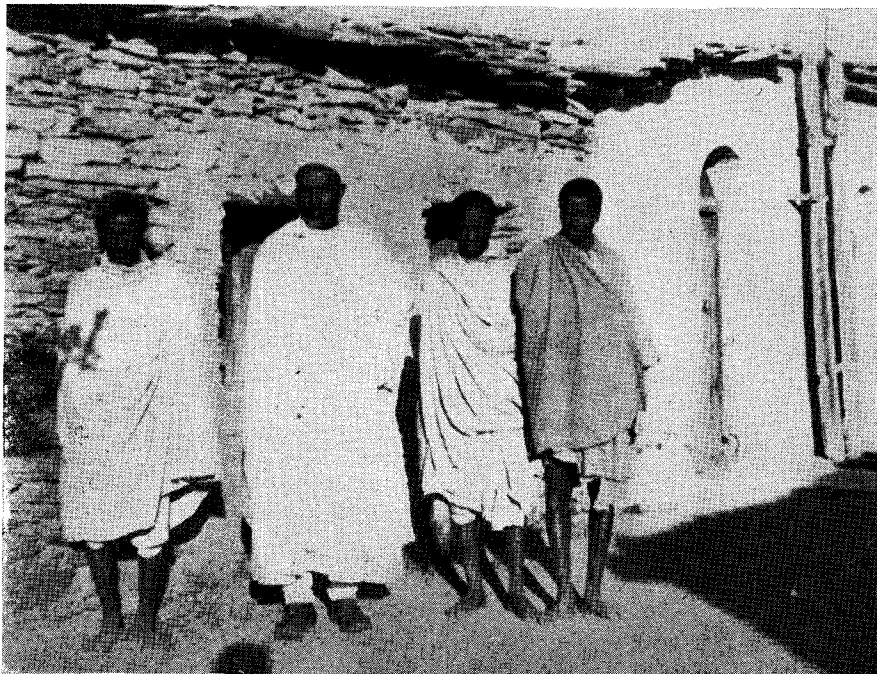
New Archbishop In Baltimore

A large company of church dignitaries and a number of civil officials were on hand for the official installation of the Rev. F. X. Keough as the 11th Archbishop of Baltimore. The ceremony took place in the cathedral of the Assumption, claimed as the mother church of Roman Catholicism in the United States. The new Archbishop succeeds Archbishop Michael J. Curley who died last May.

Westminster Auxiliary Hears Willis, Atwell

THE Women's Auxiliary of Westminster Theological Seminary held a fellowship and get-acquainted meeting on Friday afternoon, February 6, at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel in Philadelphia. Sponsored by Mrs. Frank H. Stevenson, president of the Auxiliary, the gathering was primarily to provide an opportunity for members in the eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey areas to become acquainted with one another, and to hear messages from the Rev. Robert L. Atwell and the Rev. George J. Willis.

Mr. Willis, who was seriously injured in an automobile accident over a year ago, is now back in active service as field representative of Westminster. He took the occasion to speak of the excellence of the faculty of the Seminary, as scholars and teachers of



Native priest at Alitena with three of his men. In the back there is a small

chapel with bell. Structure of the walls shows clearly in this picture.

the Word. He called for devoted and sacrificial support of the work of the Seminary on the part of Auxiliary members.

Mr. Atwell, who is on leave of absence from the pastorate of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Middletown, Pa., in order to visit colleges in the interests of Westminster, spoke concerning his trip of the previous year, and the character of students

who are interested in the work of the ministry. He expressed encouragement concerning the future ministerial supply of the church, and emphasized the value of the training which Westminster gives candidates for the ministry.

Following the talks by Mr. Atwell and Mr. Willis, refreshments were served and a period of fellowship was enjoyed. Approximately 85 persons attended the meeting.

hearers a statement that what he is about to preach is not a part of the public testimony of their Church, that it is not in conflict with that testimony, and that he believes it to be a doctrine of God's Word. In the third place, preaching of extra-confessional doctrines should be kept in strict subordination, as to time and emphasis, to the task of preaching the doctrines of the Church's corporate testimony. The main burden of every minister's pulpit work should always be the doctrines which his Church holds as a body. The practice of some denominations of requiring ministers to devote one service each Sabbath to doctrinal preaching following the order of the Church's catechism has much to commend it. There could hardly be a better safeguard against the exploitation of extra-confessional specialties in the pulpit.

The principles just outlined cannot of course be applied to expository preaching in exactly the same way as to doctrinal preaching. In the nature of the case, much expository preaching will deal with the historical and biographical portions of the Bible. It would be absurd to expect a minister who preaches on the life of Joseph, for example, to explain to his hearers that what he is about to say is taught in the Bible, but is not mentioned in the Standards of the Church. Church members of ordinary intelligence understand that their Church's Standards present a formulation of *doctrine*, not a condensed summary of everything in the Bible. Still it must be remembered that expository preaching, while not *formally* doctrinal, cannot be divorced from doctrine. The doctrines which a minister holds will inevitably come to the surface even in expository preaching. And surely if in the course of expository preaching a minister wishes to emphasize some extra-confessional doctrine, he should take care to make its status clear to his hearers. The minister is not merely an individual proclaimer of the Gospel; he is also an organ of the visible Church, and this fact involves an obligation to maintain a distinction between that which he holds and proclaims merely as a matter of personal conviction concerning the meaning of Scriptures, and that which he holds and proclaims as also the corporate witness of the Church of which he is a member, and in which he is a servant.

The Visible Church

Part II: The Minister and the Creeds

By JOHANNES G. VOS

THE question of the form of subscription to the doctrinal standards of a denomination which should be required of ministers is an important one but too large to be taken up in any detail in this article. Among Churches of the Presbyterian family in America, the prevalent form of subscription has been one to the Confession of Faith, or to the Confession and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Scriptures. The question as to the meaning of the expression "the system of doctrine"—whether it means every proposition in the Confession, or the "substance" of doctrine, or the Calvinistic system of doctrine—has been thoroughly discussed in the past. The first of the views listed cannot be defended, for it would amount to claiming infallibility for the Confession. The second, which would define "system" as "substance", distorts the meaning of words, and would open the door to serious errors; a candidate for ordination could reject the doctrines which are essential to the system of Calvinism, and yet claim to hold the "substance" of doctrine taught in the Scriptures. The third view, namely, that which defines "the system of doctrine" as consistent Calvinism as set forth in the Confession of Faith, is undoubtedly correct and should be insisted on.

Something should be said about preaching and teaching on the part of ministers in its relation to the corporate witness of the Church. It is not necessary to state that a minister should faithfully teach and preach the body of truth set forth in the Standards of his Church. But what about the portion of Scriptural ground which lies beyond the area of confessionally defined

dogma? Is a minister limited to preaching truth embodied in his Church's corporate witness? Must he refrain from handling matters on which his Church's Standards are non-committal? For example, may a minister in preaching advocate the "restitution theory" of the meaning of Genesis 1:1, 2? The traducian view of the origin of the soul? The Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews? The view that the earth is to be destroyed as to form only, and not as to matter, or the contrary view that it is to be destroyed as to both form and matter?

With respect to this problem it may be said, first of all, that a minister is ordained to proclaim the *whole* counsel of God, and therefore is not limited to that portion which has already been defined as dogma by his Church; indeed, no doctrine would historically have been defined as dogma unless it had previously been preached by ministers and thus had come to be recognized as Scriptural by the Church. Yet a minister in his preaching and teaching must never *contradict* anything which he had professed to accept in his subscription to the Standards of his Church at his ordination. In the second place, he may never represent any doctrine as an element of the corporate witness of his Church unless it really is set forth in the Standards. Common honesty would seem to involve this, yet it is not infrequently violated in practice; ministers who hold some extra-confessional doctrinal specialty with great zeal sometimes preach it so fervently and so persistently that the public gets the impression that it is a chief point of the denomination's testimony. When a minister preaches an extra-confessional doctrine he owes his

The GUARDIAN NEWS COMMENTATOR

VIEWING THE NEWS FROM THE RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE AND THE RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR PRESS

Lutherans Operate Palestine Missions

AN agreement has been reached with the British government by which the National Lutheran Council will assume complete charge of Lutheran missions in Palestine. The Council is the U. S. Committee for Lutheran World Federation. The mission property is clustered in a small area in and near Jerusalem, and is valued in the neighborhood of 20 million dollars.

Before the war the missions were operated by missionary societies having headquarters in Germany. They were taken over by the British during the war and have been supervised by the British Custodian of Enemy Property. At one time they required the services of at least 100 foreign missionaries.

Church-Schools in New Mexico

CONSIDERABLE attention has been directed recently to the situation in certain communities of New Mexico, where so-called public schools appear to be controlled and operated by the Catholic church, with nuns as teachers. Dr. J. M. Dawson, Secretary for Protestants and Others United . . . has recently returned from a trip for the purpose of investigating the situation there. Dawson claimed that schools listed on church records as parochial are entirely supported by public taxation. Textbooks pertaining to the Catholic faith are paid for by the state. Nuns in religious garb and priests are teachers. Protestant children were graded in Catechism, and were punished if they failed to attend Mass. Payment of teachers is in some cases made directly to the order, rather than to the individuals, and in a number of cases no withholding tax was deducted from the salaries.

The community of Dixon, N. M., is particularly involved in the situation. A Santa Fe attorney has promised to

file suit in the near future against the religious encroachment in public schools, and intimates that the case will probably reach the U. S. Supreme Court.

Protestant Center In New York

PLANS are under way for the establishment in New York City of a Protestant Center, aimed at bringing together on a single site denominations which already have headquarters in that city. Included would be the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and Congregational churches, and the Federal Council. Although a bill to approve this procedure has been introduced in the New York legislature, it is not expected that the Center will materialize for a number of years.

This is the second proposal for a religious center. Proposals were made some time ago for the erection of a temple of good will in Columbus, Ohio, where all American Protestant groups might have their headquarters. That proposal has been officially endorsed, however, by only one national denomination, and by the International Council of Religious Education.

Protestant Men

A SURVEY of the protestant religious constituency in Indianapolis has indicated that Protestantism lacks attraction for men, is failing to reach the low income groups, and is barely keeping pace with the population growth of the city.

The survey showed that only 29.2 percent of protestant church members were males. Laborers, who make up 26 percent of the working population generally, made up only 8.6 percent of church membership, and during a period when the population grew 15.6 per cent, church membership increased only 16 percent. Only 31.4 percent of

Indianapolis Protestants attend Sunday morning services, and only about seven percent Sunday evening services. And some 50,000 persons of the protestant faith are unchurched.

We doubt that the Indianapolis situation is unusual. But when presented in this fashion, it emphasizes the challenge which confronts the Church of Christ.

Pachomius to be Honored

EVERYONE who has studied early church history has encountered the name of St. Pachomius, one of the founders of Monasticism in Egypt. He died about 16 centuries ago, which would bring us to 348 AD. Plans are being made for the celebration of his feast day, by a number of religious communions. Included are not only the Catholics, but several Eastern Orthodox groups, Coptic groups, and the Church of England.

It is interesting to note the increasing contact which the Church of England is having with the churches of Eastern Orthodoxy. Both, while rejecting the claims of the Papacy, hold to the ancient traditions and the true ecumenical councils of Christendom, and there is really more in common between them than might at first seem.

Culbertson President of Moody

DR. WILLIAM CULBERTSON has been named the new president of Moody Bible Institute, it was announced on February 4th at the Founder's week conference. Dr. Culbertson has been acting president since the death of Dr. Will H. Houghton last year. He came to the institution as dean of education in 1942.

Before going to Chicago, Dr. Culbertson was a bishop of the New York and Philadelphia Synod of the Re-

formed Episcopal Church, and rector of the Church of the Atonement in Germantown, Penna. Dr. Culbertson is editor-in-chief of *Moody Monthly*, and writes the International Sunday school lessons for that magazine.

Plans for Amsterdam Assembly

PLANS are progressing for the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held in Amsterdam beginning on August 22nd. Some 20 American Protestant denominations have already selected 137 representatives. Among these are Reinhold Niebuhr, G. Bromley Oxnam, John R. Mott, Charles P. Taft, and John A. Mackay.

A review of the historical interdenominational movements leading up to the first Assembly will feature the first plenary session on the evening of the 22nd. Speakers will be Bishop G. H. K. Bell of Chichester, England, Dr. Marc Boegner of France, Bishop Brilioth of Sweden, and Dr. Mackay of the United States. For most of the sessions the Assembly will be divided into study groups, considering reports later to be published in book form.

Yes or No?

IN Montreal one Charles Elvy, 22-year old member of Jehovah's Witnesses, was acquitted in the Court of the King's Bench by an English speaking jury on the charge of publishing seditious libel, in a pamphlet entitled "Quebec's Burning Hate for God, Christ and Freedom is the Shame of all Canada". The jury took only 20 minutes for deliberation. It was the first time a member of the sect had ever been acquitted in this Province.

But just a few weeks ago a French speaking jury convicted another member of the sect, a woman, on the same charge. So in Canada the language the jury speaks seems to be a matter of importance.

Meanwhile, under the direction of Quebec's Catholic Premier M. Duplessis, police officials padlocked the publication office of *Combat*, Canadian Communist publication. There were some who saw in this the threat of further use of the padlock, not only against Communist publications, but against anything out of agreement with Quebec's Catholic controlled government.

Moscow Group Wins Cathedral

THE right of the Patriarchal Russian Orthodox Church in America to occupy St. Nicholas Cathedral in New York has been upheld by a justice of the New York State Supreme Court. The decision was rendered in a dispute between the Moscow controlled group and the Russian Orthodox Church in North America, the latter being the majority branch of the church which has declared itself autonomous, free of Moscow control. The decision was based on a decision of the Appellate Court in 1935 which gave possession to Archbishop Kedrovsky of the Renovated Church. The American group claim that this was a schismatic group, not now recognized by anyone as canonical, and that the 1935 decision should have had nothing to do with the present case.

There has been for some time a controversy between two factions of the Russian Orthodox Church in this country. One group recognized the Moscow patriarch as its proper head, but the other has declared itself autonomous, at least in political affairs. Efforts on the part of Russian emissaries have so far failed to heal the breach.

Japan Bible Society to Resume Work

THE Japan Bible Society, which was forced to suspend work during the war, has announced that it will soon resume publishing activities, with the aid of a first shipment of paper being sent by the American Bible Society. The announced schedule indicates that first publication will be of New Testaments and Psalms.

Denver Church Re-Organizes

AT a meeting held on Wednesday evening, February 18, in the parlors of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Denver, Colorado, the merger of Colorado Boulevard Mission Church, independent, and the First Church was effected. The two organizations had previously voted unanimously for the merger. The name selected for the new organization is the Park Hill Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The Colorado Boulevard Mission Church has been in existence for some

25 years, and has been meeting in a basement chapel in a suburban area of northeastern Denver. The Superintendent of the mission work is Miss Mabel C. Britton, who has labored faithfully and sacrificially for the maintenance of a gospel work.

First Church was located in an area that was deteriorating, and a move to another locality had become imperative. Ten lots were recently purchased half a block from the mission property, when it became obvious that the union would occur. With the combined resources of the two organizations, it is expected a church building will be erected on these lots.

The new location is in a district that is rapidly building up with modest homes and apartment houses. It appears to be one of the most desirable parts of the city of Denver, and suggests real promise for the future.

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