

# *The Presbyterian* **GUARDIAN**

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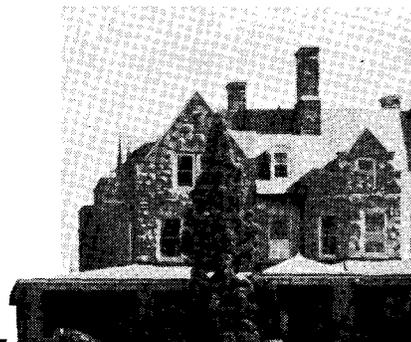
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# The Grace of Humility

By C. RALPH VERO

To anyone familiar with Scripture it is quite evident that the Bible places great emphasis upon the Christian virtue of humility. Throughout the Word of God it is made very clear that true humility is indispensable for the child of God. It is not a characteristic that distinguishes the very pious saint from the ordinary Christian; it is rather an essential ingredient in the life of the true believer. In light of the Scriptural emphasis upon humility the necessity and importance of this grace can hardly be overemphasized.

Moses was noted and commended for his meekness (Numbers 12:3). Our Lord begins his Sermon on the Mount with messianic benediction upon the poor in spirit and the meek (Mt. 5:3, 5). Meekness or gentleness is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Jacob manifests genuine humility when he confesses that he is unworthy of even the least of all the Lord's mercy and fidelity (Gen. 32:10). John the Baptist exemplifies this quality when he says of Christ, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

The true child of God must show forth Christian love, but such love is not puffed up (I Cor. 13:4). Peter tells us that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (I Peter 5:5). Paul reminds us that a man ought not to think or set his affections on himself more highly than he ought to do (Romans 12:3). Of course the supreme example of humility is the perfect life of our Savior (which makes it quite clear that humility does not necessarily presuppose personal sinfulness).

## Not Easily Achieved

The difficulty of manifesting true humility is obvious not only from a perusal of the Biblical history, but also from observation of the widespread lack of it all about us today. We live in a proud nation filled with millions of proud individuals. Even within the professing Christian church

there is an appalling deficiency in this respect. This is sadly true not only of many of us as ordinary laymen, but also, and more tragically, in the case of some prominent Christian leaders.

There are, on the other hand, multitudes of God's people who do see the imperative nature of this great need for humility and who genuinely try to maintain an unassuming attitude. It is to be regretted, however, that many even of these saints have a false view of what humility really is according to Holy Scripture. Thus misguided, though truly sincere, they do much harm to the church of Christ. Certainly nobody who accepts the teaching of the Bible can deny that true humility on our part as sinners entails the honest recognition that in and of ourselves we are utterly unworthy, that we have nothing to commend us to God. Too often, however, God's people practice what is certainly a false humility when they speak of themselves with contempt, denying their talents, abilities and usefulness. Many believers, when called upon to use talents graciously given by our covenant God, refuse or beg off by piously denying these gifts in the name of humility. In trying to avoid pride and presumption they deny that they can do anything worthwhile; thus they become progressively unambitious and virtually dormant where Kingdom work is concerned.

## A False Concept

This all-too-common attitude is surely not the humility which Scripture demands of us, which God wants in his people. Moreover, notwithstanding its sincerity, it is simply sinful. There is a basic matter of honesty involved. If a Bob Cousy were to deny that he is an outstanding basketball player, he wouldn't be humble; he would be lying. If a Dr. Machen had denied his proficiency in Greek, he wouldn't be demonstrating humility, he would be violating the ninth commandment. Surely one's talents do not have to be as outstanding

as these examples in order for them to be obvious, in order for the denial of them to be sin.

The sinfulness of this type of false humility is aggravated, moreover, because it is an affront to our sovereign God. The denial of the gift is in effect a denial of the Giver. How shameful it is when God's people who have been graciously blessed and equipped with abilities and talents, instead of glorifying God thereby, offend him by denying that they have been so blessed; and all this is in the name of humility!

Not only is God dishonored by such false humility, but his church and kingdom are robbed. God gives talents to be faithfully used and developed in his service. We would no doubt be amazed and ashamed if we could know how much more the church of Christ might have accomplished and could hereafter accomplish if such a false concept of humility were eliminated. Whether it be in the pulpit or assisting in Bible school, singing in the choir or serving on a committee, talents are to be used rather than to be buried with the shovel of a false humility. Pious saints, desiring to be humble, have deprived God's kingdom of much useful service through their unscriptural view of humility.

## True Humility

What we badly need, then, is a true humility which involves an honest, frank self-evaluation. As Romans 12:3 clearly implies, we *are* to have a proper estimate of ourselves: we *are* to think as highly of ourselves as we ought to think; not more, but not less either. In fact Romans 12 stresses the need of such a humble use of gifts received by grace. We need to humbly acknowledge that the abilities we do possess have been given to us by our gracious Lord in spite of our complete unworthiness. Then we are to utilize these talents in the service of Christ, humbly recognizing that their ultimate effect and usefulness comes also from God's gracious blessing upon them. As Hodge so aptly comments on Romans 12:3, "A right estimate can never be other than a very humble one, since, whatever there is of good in us is not of ourselves, but of God."

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# Preparing to Preach Today

By CORNELIUS VAN TIL

*Professor Van Til, Presiding Fellow of the Faculty and Professor of Apologetics, welcomed the students entering Westminster Theological Seminary on the occasion of the 33rd annual opening exercises on September 20. His remarks are relevant to the Protestant situation today, particularly in the light of the upcoming conference at New Delhi. After noting that we "live in trying times," Dr. Van Til went on to speak as follows.*

**Y**ou are going to preach Christ as the redeemer from sin. But there are those who deny that they are sinners. Therefore they also say that they do not need Christ to save them from sin. Or, if they think they need to be 'saved,' then they think they can save themselves.

When I speak of those who deny that they are sinners you are thinking with me of those who have, as they say they have, no religious need at all. We hear much of secularism today. You are thinking also of those who say that any particular religion is as good as any other particular religion. You are thinking of those who say that there are many paths that lead to the top of the same mountain. All men are God's children and as a true father, so they say, God never gets permanently angry with any of them. God, if there be a god, we are told, loves all men and all men, in the depth of their heart, love a God who loves all men. If Christ comes into the picture at all for those who speak in this fashion, it is in the same way that Buddha comes into the picture for Buddhists, namely, as an example of the love of the universal father of men.

Mr. Wybenga, who was hospitalized for a time, will continue his studies in the Gospel of Luke next month. The series appears regularly on the opposite page.

There are, moreover, the millions who have never even heard the name of Christ, that only name by which men must be saved.

## Universal Need of Christ

How anxious then you are to go out into the world and to the ends of the world to tell men of the crucified One. How anxious you are to tell men, that whether they acknowledge it or not, it is because of sin that they are under the wrath of God. How anxious you are to tell men that their condition is far worse than the greatest minds of the world have ever thought of it as being. And then how anxious you also are to tell men how far better their condition will be if only they believe and trust in the crucified and risen Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. You would hasten to tell them that he who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, and that he who was rich was made poor so that we by his poverty might become rich. Men need to be told that they are sinners in the sense that as such they are under the wrath and condemnation of God, and men need to be told that Christ Jesus died to save those who believe in him from the wrath to come and that he will come again to take them into his presence.

## How Few Prepare Themselves

Of course, in thinking of the false views of sin and salvation that are entertained by so many millions of men you are mindful of how few there be who prepare themselves to preach the gospel. Counting all those that are being trained in all the seminaries of all 'Christian' churches will only make you say, "What are these among so many?" The fields are white



unto the harvest. How shall so few minister to so many?

But the full seriousness of the situation appears only if we realize that of the "few" that prepare themselves for the Christian ministry only a "very few" prepare themselves to preach the true Christ. How many serious young men are about to enter Roman Catholic seminaries! How sad to realize that there they learn to preach only an adulterated gospel.

As little as did Luther do they learn at these seminaries to know either the full heinousness of sin or the full joy of the forgiveness of sins. When these young men go out into the field they are ready, unless Christ in his mercy intervenes as he did with Luther, to compromise with the false saviors that sinners have made for themselves.

Once more then your urgency to prepare yourselves to preach the Christ who died and rose again according to the Scriptures increases. You realize

*How very few prepare to preach the true Christ.*

that only the sons of the Reformation, the followers of Luther and of Calvin, may be expected to preach Christ as the redeemer from sin without compromise with the desires of the natural man.

### What of New Delhi?

But you are deterred by divisions found among these sons of the Reformation. You bewail the schismatic and sectarian nature of those who claim to follow Luther and Calvin. You long for a united voice of Protestantism. Did not our Savior pray that his followers might all be one in their speaking of him? Is this prayer never to be answered on earth?

Involuntarily your thoughts turn to the meeting of Protestant leaders soon to be held at New Delhi. Are we there to see the answer to the great high-priestly prayer of our Lord? There are those who seem to think that we shall or that, if that prayer is ever to be answered, it must at least be by such means of unification as are there to be employed.

Here at New Delhi the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council will meet together, and may well be joined into one organization. If such a union is effected the possibility of a united Protestantism may seem, to some, to have been virtually realized. Then too the World Council will have within itself a division of World Missions and Evangelism.

Must we not take at face value the aims of both of these organizations as expressed in their official documents? "The Tambaras, Madras Meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1938 issued a statement on 'The Faith by which the Church Lives' that declared unequivocally:

*We believe that Christ is the Way for all, that He alone is adequate for the world's need. . . . We are bold enough to call men out from them [other religions] to the feet of Christ. We do so because we believe that in Him alone is the full salvation which man needs."*<sup>1</sup>

As for the World Council, until recently its basis has been "acceptance 'of our Lord Jesus Christ as God and as Saviour.'"<sup>2</sup> If this should seem to allow for doubt as to where the Christ may be found, the proposed revision of this basis reads as follows: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the

Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

If then "the Christ" is to be proclaimed "according to the Scriptures," what more could any son of Luther or of Calvin desire? Are we not all ecumenically minded? How can we help but be if we remember John 17?

### Morrison's Ecumenical Ideal

It might seem then that soon the ideal of ecumenical-minded men of the modern church will be realized. One of them, Charles Clayton Morrison, reviews the history of Protestant churches in relation to the process of their unification.

The whole history of Protestantism, says he, "appears as a long series of schismatic chain reactions—one schism producing other schisms and they in turn producing others, in a process which continued up to, let us say, the late nineteenth century."<sup>3</sup> But now, says Morrison, "we live in a different time and a new kind of world." The "walls of our sectarian isolationism are in a process of crumbling."<sup>4</sup> The prophetic voices of "inspired idealists" calling for Protestant unity are at long last meeting with response.<sup>5</sup> Men are beginning to see that "every denominational creed used as a basis of Chris-

tian fellowship is a violation of the unity of the ecumenical church."<sup>6</sup> Any local church will soon be seen to be "the ecumenical church manifested in a particular locality."<sup>7</sup> When the ecumenical church is a reality it will mean "the virtual passing of the heretic."<sup>8</sup> The church will have a "new vision of Jesus Christ."<sup>9</sup> The ecumenical spirit, born of the Holy Spirit, was well expressed by Philips Brooks when he said: "To me, the gospel is just one great Figure standing with outstretched arms."<sup>10</sup> And this, adds Morrison, expresses the "spirit of Martin Luther who, in his earlier days, desired the Reformation to rest upon no other foundation than 'the forgiving love of God in Jesus Christ.'"<sup>11</sup>

### The Mission Appeal

With the appearance of the ecumenical church, we are told, the proper missionary approach to the peoples of the Orient can be taken. These religions themselves have lost much of their own mutual exclusiveness.<sup>12</sup> "For instance, such words as Karma and Maya to the modern Hindu, or Metta and Nibbana to the modern Moslem now convey new meanings." And the "newness" about these doctrines "makes them challenging and relevant to all people."<sup>13</sup> "What vitally matters is the dynamic of faith undergirding these concepts,

### LARGEST STUDENT BODY ENROLLED

With classrooms bulging with students and the more than crowded library pointing up the urgent need for a new building, Westminster Seminary is in the midst of another year of strategic service in the cause of the gospel. For the second year in a row enrollment figures show an increase of 20 percent.

The widening appeal of this seminary for those who want a theological training grounded in a commitment to the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God is in part indicated by the fact that the 120 students hold degrees from 63 different colleges and universities. Of the 28 denominations represented just half would be classified as Presbyterian or Reformed. There are 14 Orthodox Presbyterian students.

Twenty per cent of the students come from countries other than the United States: Australia—2, Canada—6, India—1, Japan—6, Korea—7, Netherlands—1, United Kingdom—1, for a total of 24. There are 34 in the entering, or Junior class. Of more than 20 in the graduate program nine are candidates for the degree of Doctor of Theology.

A large crowd attended the opening exercises, at which the Rev. Henry Fikkert, pastor of Community Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Center Square, Pa. gave the invocation. Scripture was read by the Rev. John DeWitt, pastor of the Sixth Reformed Church, Paterson, N. J. The Rev. Egbert Andrews, missionary to Formosa of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, offered prayer. The address by the Rev. Alexander De Jong, Th.D., pastor of the Second Christian Reformed Church, Highland, Ind. on "The Focus of Our Consecration," stressed the central concern of the ministry with the welfare and task of the church.

## *The true church of Christ still speaks the words of Christ.*

making them relevant to present life and meaningful in contemporary history."<sup>14</sup>

It is thus that according to modern ecumenicists, the ecumenical spirit back of the Protestant creeds and the ecumenical spirit back of the Oriental religions may merge in one great ecumenical spirit centered in the common ideals of all good men. The "dynamic of faith" common to all truly religious men may hereafter be "mobilized to create a just social order, a true community of people, a world in which human rights are guaranteed." All faiths may now "seek to put meaning to our common humanity and ensure the worth of human values."<sup>15</sup>

### **Not Historic Protestantism**

Now if you look at all this even with a measure of care, my friends, you will observe that if the voice of *united* Protestantism does emerge at New Delhi it will no longer be the voice of Protestantism in the historic sense of that term.

The new voice of modern ecumenical Protestantism seemingly about to emerge at New Delhi will not sound either like the voice of Luther or of Calvin. In God's providence Luther and Calvin set men free to believe and to preach the gospel of free grace apart from works. But the voice of modern ecumenical Protestantism ultimately makes man his own savior. Luther and Calvin pointed men to the Christ of whom the Scriptures speak plainly. Modern ecumenical Protestantism will presumably also speak 'according to the Scripture,' but its Scripture is nothing more than a sublimation of sinful man's self-constructed ideals. Its Christ is nowhere to be found for he is but the ideal that sinful man makes for himself.

Luther and Calvin preached Christ as dying on the cross for them, in their room and stead, in order to set them free from the wrath to come. Modern ecumenical Protestantism preaches a Christ-ideal in terms of which men tell themselves that there is no such thing as the wrath of God upon the sin of man and therefore no eternal punishment.

Luther and Calvin preached Christ as the One who, when he had blotted out the handwriting of sin that was against them, returned to his Father in heaven to prepare a place for them.

Modern ecumenical Protestantism leaves men without a merciful heavenly Father and therefore without hope in the world.

### **Be of Good Courage**

Here then is the situation. An apostate church preaches a false Christ to a world that is dying in sin. Is then the prince of darkness to be victorious after all? Will your work of preparation for the preaching of the Christ of the Scriptures at best rescue a few brands from the burning?

No! Christ broke the power of sin and death! He did rise from the tomb. Through him death is swallowed up in victory. He did save men from the wrath to come. He did ascend to heaven to prepare a habitation for his people. He does rule over all. Satan is a vanquished foe. The voice of the gospel is still heard among men. There are those who have not bowed their knees to Baal. The true church of Christ still speaks the words of Christ. In spite of much apostasy Christ's voice is still heard among men. And by the grace of God men still respond to the preaching of the gospel. Christ did save the world. He is saving the world. He will save the world. In his name you may freely preach "liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

Let us then with full commitment to the Lord, with great love for his name, with great zeal for his cause, with great joy because of the certainty of his victory undertake our work together.

God's truth abideth still,  
His kingdom is forever.

1. *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, Gerald H. Anderson (ed.), London, 1961, p. 11.
2. Bernard Leeming S. J., *The Churches and the Church*, London, 1960, p. 6.
3. *The Unfinished Reformation*, New York, 1951, p. 5.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 194.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
11. *Idem.*
12. *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, p. 150.
13. *Idem.*
14. *Idem.*
15. *Ibid.*, p. 151.

## **Orthodox Presbyterian Churches Use Seminarians**

During the past summer a dozen or more Westminster Seminary students were given the opportunity throughout the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to apply knowledge previously acquired in the classroom. Two churches — Emmanuel, Wilmington, Del. and Covenant, Pittsburgh, Pa. — were able to supply the full summer support of a student. With the cooperation of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension 14 additional congregations and home mission fields were able to employ ten students for at least a part of the summer.

"The work assigned to the seminarians was varied and strenuous, from renovating a barracks building for services to acting as camp counselor," reports the Rev. LeRoy Oliver, general secretary. Most taught in vacation Bible school, preached while pastors were on vacation, and did extensive calling.

### **Florida to California**

The students and their fields of labor were: Jack Corzine, Redeemer, Newtown Square, Pa.; Ivan DeMaster, Covenant, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Raymond Drake, Sharon, Hialeah and the new home mission field in Southwest Miami, Fla.; George Hall, Trinity, Hatboro, Pa.; Norman Jones, Park Hill, Denver, Sable, and Thornton, Colo.; Rollin Keller, Neptune, N. J.; Duncan Lowe, First, Waterloo, Iowa; David Moore, Knox, Silver Spring, Md.; Michael Stingley, La Puente, First, Manhattan Beach, and Westminster, Los Angeles, Calif.; and Bernard Stonehouse, Emmanuel, Wilmington, Del. Richard Gaffin, Jr. and Peter Steen spent one week canvassing a suburb of Baltimore, Md. for First Church. Calvin Malcor was employed part time by Greyfriars, Torrance, Calif.

As reported by the Committee on Home Missions to the 28th General Assembly, "We believe that the employment of students for summer activity is in the best interests, not only of the local churches, but also of the whole denomination. For while the students are assisting in the program of evangelism they are trained for future services as ministers" of the gospel.

# Observations of a Missionary on Furlough

By FRANCIS E. MAHAFFY

Recently we stood on the deck of the *S.S. Steel Worker* in Brooklyn joined by a group of pastors, elders, and Christian laymen from a number of our Orthodox Presbyterian churches along with a few others. I was deeply moved during the brief farewell service of hymns, Scripture and prayer and the farewells and wishes of God-speed on our way.

This past year it had been my privilege of visiting in most of the churches represented by these Christian brothers and sisters and, for that matter, most of our Orthodox Presbyterian churches; as well as many of the Reformed (Eureka Classis) churches, some Christian Reformed, Protestant Reformed, Reformed Presbyterian, Evangelical Presbyterian and a few others. I have enjoyed the most gracious Christian hospitality from the coasts of Florida, bustling New York and New Jersey to beautiful Oregon and burgeoning California, as well as many places in between. It is my hope that in the process the church received a clearer picture of her mission work in Africa, that her prayers and gifts for the spread of the gospel were stimulated.

Perhaps the missionary returning every sixth year to the U. S. has a privilege that most pastors do not enjoy. He is in a position to get a bird's eye view of the church. Being away from the scene for so long the changes that may go unnoticed by those closer at hand often stand out more vividly for him. It may be that passing on a few of my observations and impressions will be of some help to others.

## Some Disappointments

While in many respects my furlough proved a source of real encouragement to me as I saw the life of the church, the growth of so many Christians whom I have come to know through the years, the interest of many young people in missions and the church, the expansion of the church so generally, yet there were, as might be expected, some disappointments also. Now and then there were homes where the parents seem to have lost

their sense of God-given authority and responsibility for their covenant youth. A few churches seem to be standing still or moving backwards, inadequately aware of their task of reaching the lost with the gospel and building up and challenging the saints to a vital Christian life and witness.

There is room for improvement in some of our Sunday schools: more emphasis needs to be laid on a thorough instruction of the covenant youth and adults in the verities of our faith. A few seem inadequately concerned for the necessity of promoting Christian schools for our youth and the effects of a godless education are too often apparent. Sometimes there is a lack in emphasis and practice of the communion of the saints.

Visiting in the homes of pastors, elders and Christians active in our churches, discussing the progress and problems of individual congregations was a stimulating experience. I came to a greater appreciation of various

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*At our request Mr. Mahaffy took time on the long journey back to Eritrea to write out these observations. He writes of a pleasant trip including brief visits in Spain and Turkey — with a side trip to old Antioch. The Mahaffys arrived in Senafe "to find the house a bit worse for the exceptionally heavy rains, but it did not fare as badly as did many houses. About 150 houses fell in here. Our walls were damp and mouldy but we are getting them dried out and cleaned. There will be more patching and redecorating to be done."*

*"The children will start school before the end of this week" (Sept. 12), he continued. "Actually they did quite a bit on the trip back. The services in Adi Caieh and Senafe on Sundays have been well attended. We had a Sunday school for the children in Senafe both Sundays and over 60 were there, working with them in two languages — I in Saho and Kidani or Fasil in Tigrinya. I'm gradually getting back into the feel of the Saho language again."*

aspects of the churches' life and learned of effective means of dealing with diverse problems. It was of special interest to me to observe the variety of means and emphases followed by different pastors and churches in the work of evangelism in the community.

## Work of Evangelism

For some the Sunday school or daily vacation Bible school provided the main contacts which led to the conversion of parents as well as children. For others the time-honored method of doorbell pushing seemed the most effective means. Some have classes in evangelism for the interested church members. One church has a family call night each month when church members two by two call on the homes of the community in their evangelistic outreach. Some believe the emphasis should be on neighborhood get-togethers where a church family invites a group of neighbors in for an evening of fellowship and to meet and talk with the pastor informally. Another church tries small steak fries as a means of evangelistic contacts.

One spoke of the use of a flyer, containing a message by the pastor on pertinent matters of interest, that was distributed in the community. A number of churches have attractive printed invitations to the church which are used along with other tracts in calls. Some pastors and elders find sick calls have been an effective means of reaching the lost with the gospel. Occasional use is made of street meetings and one wonders if more effective use might not be made of this means of evangelism. The encouraging fact is that most of our churches are becoming increasingly aware of their task in evangelism and are searching eagerly for the best means to reach the lost sheep with the message of salvation.

## Communication

One need has impressed me in my tour of the churches. That is the need for more adequate communication among the churches. Probably many

building committees in our churches would be glad to learn of ways of putting up an adequate building for the worship of God and yet of cutting expenses to a minimum. Some could no doubt profit from the experience of others as to suitable places for expansion and methods in getting new works started. Many pastors and people could profit considerably from the experiences and mistakes of others in finding more effective means of getting the gospel to John Doe who has no interest in coming to where the gospel is proclaimed.

Others could share sources of helps for MACHEN League meetings, for Christian education, Christian school promotion, pastoral problems and many other matters of mutual interest to the churches. Perhaps the *Guardian* might perform a useful service to the church by encouraging more articles along these lines and by devoting a page to the informal exchange of ideas from pastors and people. Could the papers that some Presbyteries publish profitably be expanded and circulated more widely through the church?

The work of the Kingdom is going forward in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Some of the pastors in our churches impress me particularly as men of deep devotion and of exceptional ability as preachers of the Word and shepherds of Christ's flock, a tribute among other factors to the part Westminster Theological Seminary has had in their training. New churches are being established. The work of Christian education in Christian schools and through Christian literature is being expanded. There is a vital growing interest in the spread of the gospel at home and abroad. Many of our churches are becoming more deeply conscious and appreciative of the rich heritage that is ours in the Reformed Faith.

### Sense of Urgency

Yet it would be a great error to be complacent and to think that we have arrived. The one thing we of the Orthodox Presbyterian and fellow Reformed groups need above all else is a deep sense of the urgency of the task of Christ's church. Is it not because Christians generally have become complacent that the forces of anti-Christ are encircling the world? Is not the complacency of Christians one of the chief causes of the de-

### "LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE"

The editor of *Christian Economics*, fortnightly publication of Christian Freedom Foundation, was a dinner guest of the Mahaffys during their furlough. This tribute entitled "A Family Benediction" appeared in the issue dated Oct. 17 as the regular "Sermonette" feature. It is slightly abridged here.

The scholarly young minister who met our train at the Union Station in Chicago was slightly built, graying a little at the temples and probably about 40 years of age. He proudly presented to us his two small sons, Paul and Samuel. We had long hoped to meet him and he had invited us to dinner with his family.

We climbed the steep stairs to the two attic rooms and there met his smiling, energetic wife and five other children. The oldest, John, is 16. Then come James, Paul, Samuel, Peter, Mary, and Elizabeth, aged three. Their paternal grandmother, who is a part of the household, seemed proud of these bright, good-looking, well-mannered boys and girls.

The living room contained two double beds and a third was in a small hallway near the tiny bathroom. The kitchen and dining room were not large but the mother of the seven children had prepared a delicious meal of ample variety within an hour after returning from church, and assured us it was "no trouble at all." She said, "If we were two the coming of ten guests would be a problem, but we are ten and the coming of two more is hardly noticeable."

A long table in one side of the kitchen accommodated eight, two of the boys sat at a small table nearby and the little girls occupied high chairs at two corners of the big table. In this small space there seemed to be plenty of room for all. There was no friction, impatience, loud voices or discourtesy of any kind. Because these wonderful people, young and old alike, had room in their hearts for others, there was no lack of space in their crowded quarters. The children answered pleasantly when spoken to but otherwise had little to say. They ate their food, even the little ones, without urging, and they were neat and mannerly while doing it.

We had not been in their home five minutes before we became aware of its unusual quality and culture. These people were different! There was something fine about them. We felt that God was not far away!

As we rose from the table I noticed one of the older boys, without prompting, take three-year old Elizabeth to the bathroom to wash her hands. Then he with the other older children helped clear the table and wash the dishes. They all seemed to have a sense of responsibility and proceeded, promptly and efficiently, to perform their respective duties without prompting.

The small apartment was neat and clean. Playthings appeared at intervals from boxes or closets, were thoroughly enjoyed and afterwards promptly put away. Three of the boys took turns reading from a children's Bible with some of their brothers and sisters listening. There was no confusion or clutter of things which one might expect to find in a family of seven children.

The father of these children has formulated an alphabet and reduced the language spoken in the country to which he was sent, to writing, translated (part of) the New Testament into the newly written language and has taught a substantial number of people to read and write. A large family and low income seem not to reduce his scholarly accomplishments.

To most of us, life in cramped quarters on a small income would be uncomfortable and productive of many tensions, but this family showed no evidence of strain or unhappiness. They all appeared to be buoyant, constructive and well-adjusted. We felt greatly blessed by being privileged to associate with them for a few hours.

Once again we verified our belief that the problems of this world arise because men separate themselves from God. Those who abide in the shadow of the Almighty . . . go through life with shining faces and are spared the tragedy and suffering that afflicts all who refuse or neglect to be reconciled to Him.

scending arm of God's judgment on the nations?

Is the preaching in our churches and the witness of our people filled with a sense of the urgency of the gospel message for our day? Do we call men to repent and believe the gospel? Do we who love the Reformed Faith really take the whole counsel of God dead seriously? Is the Word in reality the guide to all our thinking and lives?

Is God's law the absolute standard for our conduct in the private and social sphere? Or have we rationalized ourselves into a position of accepting as normal and right the all too common disregard for this law by the powers that be, failing even to register our protest to this public evil? Have we lost the prophetic voice of the church proclaiming the Word and applying it to all of life?

We have indeed made progress but have only begun to fulfill the great responsibility that Christ, the Lord and Head of the church, has committed to us who love him in truth and who seek to proclaim the fullness of the gospel. We can learn much about methods from each other. But above all may God give us as members, pastors and missionaries of Orthodox Presbyterian and other churches that take the Reformed Faith seriously, a deeper commitment to Christ and a sense of the urgency of the gospel for us and all the world in this day of crisis.

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## Presbytery Meets in Rochester, N. Y.

The Rev. George Willis was re-elected moderator and the Rev. Theodore Georgian was again named clerk at the opening of the stated fall meeting of the Presbytery of New York and New England. Memorial Church was host to the two-day session on October 10 and 11.

Mr. Ronald Nickerson, who received his B.D. from Westminster Seminary last May, was examined and licensed to preach the gospel. He is a member of the Grace Church of Fall River, Mass. The Rev. G. I. Williamson was elected executive secretary of the home missions work of the presbytery. Oral reports were given by the three home missionaries who are recipients of aid through the presbytery: the Rev.

Messrs. Harold Dorman, Cornville, Me., Wendell Rockey, Cranston, R. I., and Charles Stanton, Lewiston, Me.

Greetings from Classis Eastern Ontario of the Christian Reformed Church were brought by the Rev. Mr. Hans Wittenbosch. The Rev. Laurence Sibley, Lisbon, N. Y., reported on his visit to Classis Eastern Ontario. A committee of three was appointed to correspond with neighboring classes, in accord with a recommendation to the last General Assembly by the Committee to Confer with Representatives of the Christian Reformed Church.

A call from Westminster Church, Hamden, Conn. for the pastoral services of the Rev. Arthur B. Spooner was found in order and transmitted to the Presbytery of New Jersey.

A call from Pilgrim Church, Bangor, Maine to the Rev. George E. Haney, Jr. was found in order and transmitted to the Presbytery of Wisconsin. Mr. Haney is the pastor of First Church, Waterloo, Iowa. This action was taken at an earlier special meeting.

## Peniel Motion

With reference to the matter of Peniel the following motion was passed: "That in view of the action of the 28th General Assembly with respect to the teaching of the Peniel Bible Conference on sanctification and guidance, we instruct the ministers of presbytery who have places of responsibility in the Peniel Bible Conference to justify their continuing to act in that capacity."

The 28th General Assembly declared that Peniel's "Formulation of the Doctrine of Guidance" is "erroneous . . . in teaching that in every decision of life the Christian may look for a sense of assurance akin to the witness of the Holy Spirit to his sonship; in teaching that a witness of the Spirit is the decisive index constraining assurance respecting the proper course of action in daily life; and in teaching a non-exegetical conscious leading of the Holy Spirit; which views constitute a deviation from the doctrine set forth in the Word of God and our subordinate standards."

The Assembly also declared that, as indicated in the section on Sanctification in the report of the Committee, "the particular conception of method entertained by Peniel, especially with regard to counseling, introduces unwarranted restrictions in connection with the process of sanctification and

involves unwholesome tendencies as specified in the report."

(See the *Presbyterian Guardian* for July, 1961, pp. 130-134, for the actions of the Assembly and the Committee's Report on Peniel's Doctrine of Guidance.)

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## Reformation Services

An increasing number of churches plan services on or near October 31st each fall to call attention to the Protestant Reformation and its continuing significance. Among those that have been reported to us is a joint service between the Grace Church, Fall River, Mass. and the Calvary Church, Cranston, R.I. Pastor Wendell Rockey, Jr. of the latter congregation is the speaker at the November 1st meeting in Fall River.

Dr. Edwin Palmer of Westminster Seminary was the scheduled speaker at a Reformation rally on October 27 at the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Md., with the Reformed Episcopal Church, whose pastor is the Rev. Karl Rudolph, participating in the observance of the 444th anniversary of Martin Luther's historic action.

"Our Reformation Heritage" is the announced subject of an address by Mr. Ralph Verno of Philadelphia on November 1st at the Stratford Church, Stratford, N. J. in conjunction with the Immanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Churches of Bellmawr and West Collingswood.

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## A Calendar Help for Daily Devotions

The 1962 *Daily Manna* calendar (edited by Prof. Martin Monsma and published by Zondervan, listed at \$1.95) is now available. This popular aid to personal or family devotions comes in a box that may be left on a table or hung on a wall for convenience in reaching the daily reading sheet.

Among Orthodox Presbyterian writers in the 1962 calendar are the Rev. Carl Ahlfeldt, the Rev. Robert Atwell, Dr. Burton Goddard and Dr. John Skilton.

The calendar may be obtained through the Committee on Christian Education, 7401 Old York Rd., Phila. 26, Pa.

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# The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

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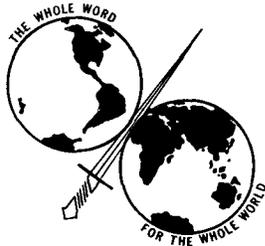
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## Thanksgiving in Depth

The custom of bringing a special offering in gratitude for some special divine favor is an old one. The Old Testament made provision for such thank offerings. The practice is now one of many years' standing in the Orthodox Presbyterian churches.

The Old Testament thank offering included the idea of sacrifice, and the New Testament speaks of sharing what we have as a sacrifice with which God is well pleased. The deep gratitude of our hearts, often expressed with our lips, finds an opportunity to exhibit its innermost concern in the annual thank offering.



With eyes of faith one may see beneath the offering envelopes the well-springs of praise to God flowing out in streams of love that encircle the earth. Thirsty souls in the Orient will drink of living water, never to thirst again. Another congregation of the redeemed will be gathered in some gospel-barren suburb of our land. A young lad will study in vacation Bible school—and may himself one day proclaim the gospel.

Sound biblical lessons for our Sunday schools will be one step nearer realization. A visitor to an east African market will stop to listen to a mis-

sionary or to read a Scripture portion received.

All this and much more—because you gave, not out of what was left over but at the cost of something of yourself—in remembrance of Him who gave His life for your salvation.

This is thanksgiving in depth.

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## Continuous Reformation

The Protestant Reformation is generally dated as beginning on October 31, 1517 with Luther's hammer blows. Actually its antecedents go back of the sixteenth century, and the remembered date was only the beginning of a sequence of events that shook Europe for a century like a series of earthquakes.

The aftershocks of the Reformation have never ceased, nor may they be allowed to stop. Each generation must again raise the cry: "To the law and to the testimony." We do not look to an infallible church or pope or creed for the last word. We look rather to the Scriptures alone, the infallible Word of God, for our final authority. Involved in this basic principle of the Reformation is the requirement of continuing to do just that. Every decision of a general assembly or a presbytery or a session, each sermon or Sunday school lesson or Bible study, every idea or action of life must stand under the light of God's Word.

In the light of its truth we must examine our lives and re-examine our practices. Too often Protestantism has forsaken its first allegiance in setting alleged 'new insights' or 'scientific findings' or 'contemporary thought' over against the Bible as its interpreter. Thus in the name of the right of 'private interpretation' the opinion of man has been raised above the Word of God, with devastating results throughout the church. Just because the idea of re-examining our beliefs and practices has been so widely perverted, however, we who hold to the Reformed faith must not be deterred from continually examining our own way of doing things, and our own attitudes. We do stand in need of continuous reformation.

Which of us has not sometimes simply said, "Yes, but that's the way we've always done it." Now the tradition may be right, but it is truly Protestant to ask, "What saith the Scripture?"

In this changing world of startling horizons, how many of us are continually checking the new concepts that we are forced to reckon with, by the timeless Word of God? How well are we able to cope with the questions of the coming generation without more study of Scripture and its application than has been our habit?

Have we sometimes fallen into argumentation by slogan or label, without digging out the reason for the position we take? Are we honestly thinking not only in opposition to false ecumenism, for example, but also in the direction of scriptural unity?

Now what is being said and asked here, in part at least, is said in order to call attention to the fact that several articles in this issue are in keeping with the theme of continuous reformation. The reader may be forced to examine his thinking in terms of what the Bible teaches. (We hope there is something of this in every issue, of course, but we don't mention it often!)

One writer touches on a very practical matter of the Christian's frame of mind. A missionary makes some observations to his denomination at its quarter-century mark. A pastor wonders whether tradition alone dictates a certain practice in Reformed churches. A professor faces ecumenism at New Delhi in the light of Scripture. A presbytery concerns itself with the implications of Assembly action on Peniel last June. A minister reminds us that we cannot avoid some accent on the negative. A news story tells of Reformation Day services in several churches.

It seems that what happened on the last day of October some 444 years ago is still a live issue today. May it ever be so. One characteristic of orthodoxy is its willingness to keep looking into the perfect law of liberty and if necessary to reform its practices thereby. Straight thinking is bound to lead to continuous reformation.

R. E. N.

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## EDITOR'S MAIL BOX

Dear Brethren:

After attending the Missouri Synod Lutheran "State of the Church Conference," Mr. Reitsma reports that the picture presented is "dark, frightening, and all too familiar." It is no less frightening to read his referring to this gathering of a splinter group of committed traditionalists with the words:

"It was like the exciting meetings that led to the formation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church . . . I had the comfortable feeling that these were our kind of people."

When threatened schism in the church is cause for exhilaration, we have come a long way from the Christianity of John 17:21 and John 13:34, 35. This is all the more cause for concern because the issue at stake in the Missouri Synod is *not at all* one to which II Cor. 6:14 or Romans 16:17, 18 can be applied. This is *not* a separation of Christian Bible-believer from non-Christian Bible-denier, but between two groups of men each committed to the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and to the Bible as the only rule of God in faith and practice.

Yours in His Name,

RICHARD H. BUBE  
Princeton, N. J.

### A Missouri-Lutheran Voice

Dear Sir:

As a member of the Lutheran-Church-Missouri Synod I was very interested in the discussion of doctrinal issues in my church by the Rev. Carl J. Reitsma, in the August issue of the *Presbyterian Guardian*.

Mr. Reitsma correctly points out that the few hundred members who attended the "State of the Church Conference" formed a very small fraction of the total membership of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. However, it would be most unfortunate if *Guardian* readers received the impression that this small group constituted the "Bible-believers" in the Missouri Synod. There are many members (probably a large majority) who strongly disagree with the aims and approach of the "State of the Church Conference," but who are nevertheless "Bible-believers." These members do not view the efforts of contemporary theologians as being necessarily a priori heretical, but would rather examine them in the light of Scripture as sincere efforts to meet problems unknown to our founding fathers and of possible value in making the gospel relevant to the twentieth century.

Regardless of our differences we are all praying and working to avoid schism.

The Holy Scriptures are taken seriously in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and for this reason there is extensive discussion in all quarters of the

church on the meaning and implications of the doctrine of inspiration. When Dr. Scharlemann's writings are quoted in connection with this discussion, it should always be mentioned that he has repeatedly stated his conviction that the Scriptures are inspired and "utterly reliable in making us 'wise unto salvation.'" The constitution of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod stipulates that every member accepts the Scriptures "as the written Word of God and the only rule of faith and practice."

There are many things which would have to be said about the "State of the Church Conference" before a fair evaluation could be made. I would like to mention just one aspect not covered by Mr. Reitsma which should be of interest to *Guardian* readers. The conference was advertised as being free and open, but registrants were re-

quired to sign a card affirming agreement with the aims of the organizers of the conference. Only those who signed the card had the privilege of speaking from the floor. Many church officers and faculty members of our seminaries attended but could not sign the card in good conscience. Thus they were able only to listen without opportunity to reply when they were attacked in essays and discussion . . .

Differences in theological opinions and inherited traditions separate us into denominations. Even within a denomination, church body, or congregation there always exist differences of opinion which could rend asunder the Body of Christ unless we remember that we all worship the same Redeemer.

Sincerely yours,

EDWARD L. LIND  
Lawrenceville, N. J.

### Protestant Reformed Churches Merge with Christian Reformed Church

As a result of contacts and conversations over a period of several years the Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches (commonly referred to in association with the name De Wolf) meeting on July 13, 1961 agreed to a proposed basis for reunion with the Christian Reformed Church.

The Protestant Reformed Church originated in 1924 "as a secession from the Christian Reformed Church in protest to the deposition of the Rev. Herman Hoeksema and others" who opposed the doctrine of "common grace" as Arminian. (See for further reference an article by the Rev. Carl J. Reitsma in the *Presbyterian Guardian* for Sept. 15, 1958, pp. 118-119.) As the church "drifted more and more into hyper-Calvinism" there were voices raised in protest and in 1953 the Rev. Hubert De Wolf was suspended for preaching that "God promises to every one of you that, if you believe, you shall be saved," and "Our act of conversion is a prerequisite to enter into the kingdom of heaven." These were called "heretical statements." The denomination was divided in half, with some 17 churches siding with De Wolf.

During the past year a few of these congregations had already entered the Christian Reformed Church, perhaps anticipating the July resolution of the Grand Rapids Synod which stated that

"in the interest of seeking the unity of the Church of Christ we express that we no longer are justified in maintaining separate denominational existence." The agreement provided that the members of any congregation which disbanded might transfer to a nearby Christian Reformed church. Other congregations might continue by mutual agreement with Christian Reformed churches, if any, in the locality and with the approval of classis. Assurance was given by the Protestant Reformed Synod that any congregation which did not choose to go along with the union "had the legal right and freedom to retain its property and assets." So far as known, there were none such. Ministers, after submitting to a *colloquium doctum* by a classis, would be enrolled in the Christian Reformed Church.

The July issue of the *Reformed Guardian* has a fuller account of the proceedings of this final meeting of the Synod. This monthly publication, which had served the interests of these Protestant Reformed Churches since 1953, ceased publication with the August number, Volume VII, Number 5.

### The Guam Field

The Protestant Reformed Churches began a missionary work on Guam early in 1957, supporting as their mission-

ary the Rev. Edwin L. Wade, a minister of the Presbytery of California of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Mr. Wade was joined three years later by the Rev. John Hoffman, Jr. of the PR Church. The Synod on July 14 of this year voted to request the Christian Reformed Church to "take over the responsibility and care of the Guam field as soon as feasible after Sept. 1, 1961." The future course of the present personnel on Guam was to be worked out by the PR Missions Committee in conjunction with the CR Board of Foreign Missions and the missionaries, and arrangements were to be made for the transfer of all property on Guam to the CR Church.

If a mutually satisfactory relationship could not be worked out between the new missions agency and Mr. Wade (whose request last spring of the Presbytery of California for a re-commission to labor on Guam had been held in abeyance), the Presbytery of California would be asked to recall him. Subsequently, under communication to the Presbytery dated Sept. 19, the PR Missions Committee did so request, indicating that it would honor its commitment to provide six months' furlough salary and housing from the August termination of their contract, and return transportation for the Wades and their household goods.

Mr. Wade, in a letter dated Sept. 21, petitioned Presbytery to uphold his "right to remain here, if I feel so led of the Lord, as long as I feel so led, and He grants me the strength and opportunity to do so in His sovereign providence." The congregation which worships at the Busanda Christian Church on Guam was reported to the Presbytery as being desirous of the continued services of Mr. Wade. The Presbytery of California took no final action at its meeting on Sept. 28 but sent communications to Mr. Wade, to the Board of Foreign Missions of the CR Church and to the PR Missions Committee.

Since that time, however, it has been reported that Mr. Wade has submitted his resignation as pastor of the Busanda Church and that Mr. Hoffman has assumed responsibility for the radio work and the Guam mission for the Christian Reformed Church. The property has been turned over to that body. Mr. Wade is said to have requested of the PR Missions Committee an extension of time beyond that originally stipulated for his leaving Guam.

## A plea for re-examination of a traditional practice

# Are We Encouraging Sacramentalism in Reformed Churches ?

By ALBERT G. EDWARDS, III

Reformed churches today, through a practice dictated by tradition, are in grave danger of toning down one of their most cherished principles. The principle is the primacy of the Word of God as the great means of grace. The practice which is in question is the practice connected with the traditional frequency and mode of observance of the Lord's Supper.

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God," says the Apostle Paul. The Westminster Shorter Catechism, in questions 88 and 89, echoes this teaching. The hearing of the Word of God is the principal means by which we are informed of the grace of God, and in connection with which the Holy Spirit is pleased to bring us to faith in Jesus Christ. We of course repudiate, and properly so, the view held by Lutherans, that the Word of God itself produces faith. It is the Holy Spirit who engenders faith in our hearts, but He does so in connection with the hearing of the Word of God. In this sense, the Word of God is the primary means of grace.

There is little dispute about this in Reformed circles. Yet by our practice, our tradition in the matter here discussed, we tend to tone down this principle to the point where we almost make the Word of God a secondary means of grace.

### The Word and Tradition

Consider discerningly the usual manner and frequency of the observance of the Lord's Supper in Reformed churches. Traditionally, Reformed churches observe the Lord's Supper once a quarter, or four times a year. No one questions the right of every church, every session or consistory, to determine the frequency of the ob-

servance of this sacrament. However, the Scriptures give evidence that the Lord's Supper was observed in the early church once a week, if not even more frequently. The New Testament is not saying by this that therefore the Lord's Supper must be observed once every week, but simply that the Lord's Supper should be observed with frequency, with a good frequency.

Now what has the tradition of Reformed churches dictated? Tradition has it that the frequency of observance is about once every three months — a far cry from the once a week observance of the early church. But what is of real concern is the effect of this infrequent observance of the Lord's Supper upon the attitude of Christians toward it. The effect is this: if the Lord's Supper is observed so infrequently, people come to think that it must be something extra-special, much more special than that which is observed every week, namely the preaching of the Word of God.

Consequently we find in many Reformed churches that there are people who would never think of missing a Communion service, though they may not be so scrupulous about attending every service of the preaching of the Word on a Sabbath day. They have, evidently, regarded the Lord's Supper as a primary means of grace which they would neglect only with greatest reluctance. Their attitude toward the Word of God hardly shows the same high esteem. And our churches, by their practice, dictated largely by custom, are teaching our people to think in this way.

### Preparatory Service

Another tradition of Reformed churches is a *preparatory service*. There

is no evidence in the Scripture that preparatory services were held a few days or a week prior to the observance of the Lord's Supper. Rather, it seems that all in the church were exhorted to prepare themselves individually beforehand, and that in the observance of the Lord's Supper the preaching of the Word of God during that service was intended to be the preparation for the proper participation in it. There is no question that preparation is needed today, even as it was in the days of the Apostles. But what Scriptural support can be given to the idea that a Communion service may not be observed unless a preparatory service has first been held, either during the previous week or on the previous Sabbath?

What is the effect of this tradition of the preparatory service? The effect is that the preparatory service further sets off the observance of the Lord's Supper as something extra special, above the preaching of the Word of God. Truly, if preparation were needed, it were needed that people might hear reverently the preaching of the Word of God. How excellent is the teaching of the Westminster Larger Catechism on this point. Questions 156 and 157 are quite explicit. Why do we, as Reformed churches, not have preparatory services to prepare people to hear the preaching of the Word of God reverently, with understanding and with self-examination, when we are so insistent that they must attend preparatory services in order to observe the Lord's Supper.

### The Other Sacrament

Then also there is the inconsistent attitude of Reformed churches in this matter toward the other Scriptural sacrament, namely, Baptism. By tradition we require preparatory services for the whole church in order to participate in the Lord's Supper. But we do not do so with respect to the sacrament of Baptism. True, the minister counsels with and instructs the parents of the child to be baptized, and instructs the convert to be baptized, but there is no preparatory service for the whole church a few days or a week before the administering of the sacrament of Baptism. Actually, the sacrament of Baptism is all too often casually observed in our churches. Why is there such discrimination?

Another matter is the custom of many churches to take attendance of

members and participants only at Communion services. Does not this imply that the churches which do such, regard the Communion service as a more important service than the regular weekly preaching of the Word of God? Do our churches ordinarily follow up those members who miss one of the preaching services on the Lord's Day, or who might happen not to attend any service on some particular Lord's Day? And yet there is great concern if members miss one Communion service. In sessions and consistories there are even rumblings as to the advisability of discipline in such cases.

### Relation to Preaching

Now, lest the thrust of these remarks be misunderstood, let it be said that in no way does this writer undervalue the great privileges and blessings of the Lord's Supper. However, he does value greatly the preaching of the Word of God and is concerned lest our Reformed churches, by their practices, dictated chiefly by tradition, tend to undervalue the importance of the preaching of God's Word. We are unwittingly, by our practice, leaning toward sacramentalism.

It would be well if our Reformed churches were to re-examine their practices concerning the Lord's Supper in relation to the preaching of the Word of God and the administration of Baptism.

In a previous charge this writer successfully encouraged the church to observe the Lord's Supper once a month, which turned out to be a great blessing to the whole church. In his present charge, the Lord's Supper is now observed bi-monthly instead of quarterly, which is an advance. Notice is given in the church bulletin the week previous to the administration of the Lord's Supper, that the members should prepare themselves by spiritual examination for participation in the sacrament. During the same service in which the Lord's Supper is observed a message of a preparatory nature is presented, not only setting forth the meaning and blessing of the sacrament, but pointing out the necessity of self-examination concerning the genuineness of one's faith in Jesus Christ in order to participate in it.

The Pharisees of old were not the only people to be governed unduly by tradition. Nor is the Roman Catholic Church today the only church to be governed by tradition. We who are of Reformed persuasion should awake to the fact that we are also at certain points in grave danger of being governed by tradition. Let us fearlessly re-examine our practices to make sure not only that they meet the formal requirements of Scripture, but that they encourage believers to have a proper estimate of the importance of the preaching of the Word of God, our supreme rule for faith and practice.

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## Must We Be Negative ?

By G. I. WILLIAMSON

From time to time we hear criticism—and we regard it as well intended—because we not only defend the truth but also expose error. It is suggested that we would do better merely to present the truth in a positive way without mentioning error, leaving it to the individual to make his own contrast and draw his own conclusion. In this way, it is hoped, no one will be offended, and more progress will be made.

It is to be admitted, of course, that one can be too negative. One certainly cannot preach or witness the

gospel wholly by this approach. But there is no use pretending that the negative aspect can be entirely avoided by those who follow the Scriptures.

Was Christ too negative? Or can anyone say that he was not positive enough? Yet it cannot be denied that he not only told men what the truth was, but also told them exactly what the errors of the day were. It was Jesus who said, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Mt. 16:6). "Then understood they how that he bade them . . . beware . . . of the doctrine of the

Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (16: 12).

In one extended passage recorded in both Mark and Matthew, Christ specifically condemned their practice of "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men . . . making the word of God of none effect through your tradition" (Mk. 7:7, 13). In another passage (Mt. 23) we see him condemning error after error.

As it was his custom to condemn error as well as teach truth, so it was his constant habit to reveal the source of that error as well as the consequence of maintaining it. He said (as to the source of error), "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures" (Mt. 22:29). And he said (as to the consequences of error), "In vain do they worship" (Mk. 7:7), "Woe unto you" (Mt. 23 often).

### Apostolic Example

The Apostles followed the example of their Lord, and condemned error faithfully. The whole epistle of Jude deals with the false teachers that had, even then, crept into the Christian church. And one can hardly find a New Testament epistle that does not contain direct attack upon error. In I Cor. 15:12 Paul attacks the error of those who said there was no resurrection. In Galatians he attacks those who were teaching that circumcision was a requirement in the New Testament era.

The instructions that the Apostle Paul gave to Timothy include the duty to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2). True, he is to be "gentle to all," but he is also "in meekness (to) correct those that oppose themselves" (2: 24, 25). And even the members of the congregation as well as the minister are to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather (to) reprove them" (Eph. 5: 11).

The truth is that the Scriptures (which are our only rule of faith and practice) require us to be negative as well as positive. One cannot be "for" truth unless he is "against" error. Imagine the Voice of America speaking only pleasant truths about itself, without also exposing lies and distortions being put forth by the Communists! Would you be content to say nice things about your friend, but nothing about the false and evil things that are being said about him?

### The Bluntness of Jesus

If a minister today were to be as blunt and truthful as Jesus was, he would be regarded as a scoundrel. Listen: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites . . . ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell" (Mt. 23:29, 33 etc.? Imagine calling the recognized religious leaders of His day 'snakes'!

Well, you may say, Jesus was God's Son and therefore had the right to say such a thing, but other men must never do so. But John the Baptist said, when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, "Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come" (Mt. 3:7)? And Jesus said of John, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater . . ." (Mt. 11:11). And why not? If it was true when Jesus said it, why not when John said it? And why not say it if it is true?

Must we be negative? Yes indeed we must, if we are to serve in the cause of Christ. For that is what Christ's cause is: it is a fight to the finish against the kingdom of darkness, which is built upon nothing but error.

When all is said and done we believe that those who would avoid the assault on error cannot really serve God in the battle for truth. One must choose sides. And he who does not choose to oppose error, cannot but be opposed to the truth. Indeed, the only ones who have nothing to fear are those who love the truth. Those who love the truth are not unwilling to be shown, by God's holy Word, that they themselves are in error at a given point. But to those who do not love the truth, every attack upon error is in effect an attack upon themselves.

### An Important Distinction

Right here we must make one very important distinction. It is the distinction between the *cause* which the man represents, and the *man* who represents the cause. We can see the point if we will remember that occasion when Jesus said to none other than the Apostle Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men" (Mt. 16:23). Because Peter, at this moment, adopted the doctrine of Satan he represented the cause of Satan. And so

long as he held the doctrine of Satan, he could be fairly rebuked as one in whom Satan worked. There was nothing 'harsh' or 'unjust' therefore in condemning Peter severely for holding such a view.

Now we are well aware of the fact that it sometimes causes restless uneasiness when, in the preaching of God's word, we take the time to condemn error. When we do this it may seem as if we had some personal bitterness against those who hold an erroneous view. But this is not the case. When Jesus rebuked Peter he did it, not because he hated Peter, but because he loved him. We condemn error precisely because we desire to save those who hold the same.

Does not the Bible say: "My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:19, 20)?

When we take pains to point out the errors of the Roman Catholic religion it is not because we desire to see men condemned, but because we desire to save men from the errors which can cause them to be condemned. When Paul said that "the Spirit expressly" warned of the day in which men would "give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils" (I Tim. 4:1, 2), was he joking? And when he named those "doctrines of devils" as "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats," was he being harsh and bitter? And if such things should not be condemned today, why did he go on to say, "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 4:6)? How else can a minister "correct them that oppose themselves" (II Tim. 2:25)?

The Word of God requires that the preaching of the gospel be negative as well as positive. It is not enough to be for something, we must also be against something. And so there must be a rebuke of error, as well as exhortation in truth.

Suppose you were a physician and a sick man came to you claiming that he had been cured by a home-remedy? You would not only need to give him the true remedy, you would also need to warn him against the false one. So it is with the medicine of God's true gospel for the soul.

## California Churches Dedicate Buildings

Within a period of thirteen months five California Orthodox Presbyterian Churches have dedicated new buildings to the glory of God and two other congregations have entered renovated structures. Not previously reported in these columns were three services of dedication last spring.

### Whittier

More than 300 persons gathered at Calvary Church, 12132 S. Luitwieler Ave., Whittier on Palm Sunday afternoon to participate in the responsive refrain, "We dedicate this house." The Rev. Edward Kellogg preached a sermon on "Christ in the Midst of the Churches."

Others who took part were the Rev. Messrs. Louis Knowles, Wilson Albright, Lawrence Eyres, LeRoy Oliver (general secretary of the Committee on Home Missions, who was on the West Coast at the time), and Dwight Poundstone, pastor. All of the Orthodox Presbyterian congregations of the area were represented on the occasion, which was followed by a time of fellowship and refreshments on the lower level of the new and attractive building.

It was a happy day indeed for the congregation which began as a Bible class in a home ten years ago, later moved to a recreation building in a public park and then to the Whittier YMCA. More recently the meeting-place had been a renovated chapel (formerly a garage) on the present property. The new unit is part of an overall plan for development in meeting the needs of the growing area which Calvary Church serves.

### San Francisco

Earlier in the month First Church of San Francisco was filled to overflowing as some 250 people crowded into the upstairs chapel and into the social hall below. The Rev. John Galbraith (general secretary of the Committee on Foreign Missions) used as his theme for the dedication sermon "Size Doesn't Count."

Pastors of other congregations in the area who participated were the Rev. Messrs. Henry Coray, Richard Lewis, Jack Miller, and Arthur Riffel. First Church began under the ministry of the Rev. Robert Atwell, meeting in a store building until the purchase and remodeling of the old Stanley Dollar home on Turk St. Following the pastorates of the Rev. Carl Ahlfeldt and the Rev. Edwards Elliott, the Rev. Salvador Solis was called as minister in the spring of 1958.

About a year later Covenant Church (whose former pastor, the Rev. Lionel Brown, is now in Volga, S. D.) and First Church merged, the properties were sold and the present location acquired at 1350 Lawton St., at 20th Avenue. An existing building serves as a manse, with Sunday school rooms downstairs. The exterior of the new chapel is of stucco and brick, with a copper steeple above a high slanted roof. The interior has a driftwood finish, with laminated arches. Blue carpeting adds to the loveliness of the chapel, which seats 165. A social hall and pastor's study are downstairs.

On the Friday after the dedication the church family gathered for a fellowship dinner and a time of remi-

niscing. The MacKenzies showed color slides portraying the history of the church from its beginning and closing with pictures of the many volunteers whose labors brought the construction to its completion.

### Torrance

A few weeks earlier the Greyfriars Church, 22511 S. Figueroa St., Torrance held its dedicatory services. Dr. David Calderwood, pastor, preached a sermon on "Things Which Cannot Be Shaken." The Rev. Dwight Poundstone and the Rev. Paul Lovik took part, and the choir of First Church, Long Beach, furnished special music. Other ministers of presbytery were also present.

Although the seating capacity is nearly 350 not all who came to the service were able to get inside. Seven new families from the community attended the morning worship service the week following the dedication, and 21 adults were received into the church during the next three months, it is reported.

Greyfriars Church moved to Torrance from its former location on Western Avenue, meeting for some time with its branch mission group in a recreation building in Sea-Aire Park, Torrance. Various restrictions prevented the use of the first piece of property bought, but the increase in value at its sale made possible the purchase of the present site and a sizeable building fund. The new structure has a colorful interior with pink and wood-rose hues combined with lavender and blue windows. The spire displays the church's emblem, the burning bush, which is lit at night.

Messrs. Solis, Coray, Galbraith, Lewis, Riffel, Miller, in First Church, San Francisco.

View of Calvary Church, Whittier



Interior of Greyfriars' Sanctuary, Torrance



## Presbytery of California

Sixteen ministers, and elders from ten congregations, gathered at the Brentwood Orthodox Presbyterian Church of South San Francisco for the stated fall meeting of the Presbytery of California on September 27 and 28, under the moderatorship of the Rev. Edward Kellogg. The Rev. Lawrence Eyres served as temporary assistant clerk. Stated clerk is the Rev. Edwards Elliott.

After an examination in theology the Rev. Robert Graham was received by transfer from the Presbytery of Philadelphia and arrangements were made for his installation as pastor of the Bayview Church, Chula Vista on October 11. The reception of Dr. William Welmers from the Presbytery of New York and New England was also scheduled for that special meeting.

A call from the Westminster Church, Los Angeles, for the pastoral services of Mr. Michael Stingley was found in order and transmitted to the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Mr. Stingley is a licentiate of the latter presbytery and a senior at Westminster Seminary.

A committee was erected to examine potential members and elders-elect of a church to be organized at Sonora, where the Rev. Robert Churchill is laboring.

Subsequent to the 26th General Assembly in 1959 the Presbytery of California had requested the Presbytery of New York and New England to consider disciplinary action in light of a statement reportedly made by the Rev. Raymond Meiners repudiating the idea that "normative preceptive guidance is obtained exclusively by exegesis of the Scriptural revelation" (Minutes of 26th Assembly, p. 83). A communication dated June 8, 1960 and rejecting the suggestion was received from the Presbytery of New York and New England, and a committee was appointed to deal with the matter.

The committee recommended that action be deferred because "Presbytery does not wish in any way to prejudice the respectful consideration of the action of the 28th General Assembly relative to Peniel Bible Conference..." A substitute motion prevailed, however, expressing "dissatisfaction with the reasons given by the Presbytery of New York and New England for failing to take disciplinary action" and reserving "the right, in the event of further delay of disciplinary action, to

present charges." (See a report elsewhere in this issue of an action taken by the Presbytery of New York and New England at their fall meeting, October 10-11, 1961.)

Greetings from Classis California of the Christian Reformed Church were brought by the Rev. Louis Voskuil. On motion it was decided to invite Classis California of the Christian Reformed Church, the presbyteries of the Evangelical Presbyterian and the Reformed Presbyterian Churches, and the Eureka Classis to send fraternal delegates to the spring meeting, which is to be held April 25 and 26 at First Church, Long Beach and Greyfriars Church, Torrance.

On Wednesday evening at the popular service the Rev. Robert Graham spoke on the theme of the 25th anniversary of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

At an earlier meeting (June 26th) the presbytery examined and licensed two candidates for the gospel ministry. One, Mr. Robert Newsom, a member of the Garden Grove congregation, has taken his seminary training at Dallas and Fuller. Mr. Calvin Malcor, a senior at Westminster Seminary, is a member of First Church, Manhattan Beach.

## Westminster Lecture

Dr. H. R. Rookmaaker, of the Netherlands, is to give an illustrated lecture on Thursday, November 9th, according to an announcement by the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary. The subject is: "A Christian Looks at Art—19th and 20th Century Visual Arts."

Professor Rookmaaker, who is a specialist in the history of art, is a member of the faculty of the University of Leiden, the Netherlands. For a number of years he was the art critic for a leading Christian daily in that country. He has been asked to deliver several lectures in the United States during his stay here.

The public is cordially invited to attend the November 9th address which will be held at 8 p. m. in the auditorium of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, across from the Seminary campus. Dr. Rookmaaker will be the fifteenth lecturer to be presented under the auspices of the Worcester Lectureship Fund established through the generosity of Mrs. Harry A. Worcester in memory of her husband.

## Presbytery of Philadelphia

Calvary Church of Middletown, Pa., was host to the September 25th meeting of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, with the Rev. John Mitchell conducting the devotional service. Elected as moderator was the Rev. Charles Ellis, as assistant clerk, the Rev. Cromwell Roskamp, and as treasurer, Mr. Howard Porter. The Rev. Henry Fikkert is the clerk.

A call to the Rev. Arthur B. Spooner from Trinity Church, Hatboro, was found in order and transmitted to the Presbytery of New Jersey. Mr. David Carson, a member of Calvary Church, Glenside, and a graduate of Gordon Divinity School, was received under care of presbytery as a candidate for the gospel ministry.

The name of licentiate William White was removed from the roll, at his request, since he is no longer a member of the denomination.

## Henry R. Van Til

Henry R. Van Til suffered a heart attack on September 28th while in his Calvin College classroom and died immediately. He was in his 55th year. After a pastorate in the Christian Reformed Church and three years as a chaplain in the army, he was appointed to the Bible department of Calvin College in 1946.

He took some of his undergraduate seminary work at Westminster, and after receiving his Th.B. degree from Calvin Seminary obtained a Th.M. in 1938 from Westminster Seminary and also studied at the Free University of Amsterdam. A man of strong convictions in the classroom and outside, Professor Van Til was a co-editor of the periodical *Torch and Trumpet* and author of *The Calvinistic Concept of Culture*, published in 1959.

He is survived by his wife, the former Elizabeth Zandstra, and seven children. Henry Van Til was a nephew of Dr. Cornelius Van Til.

## Changes of Address

Rev. Edwin C. Urban, 2 Lane 311, Antung St., Taipei, Formosa (while the Andrewses are on furlough).

Rev. Robert H. Graham, 464 Jamul Court, Chula Vista, Calif. (note the Court, please).

# THE PASSING SCENE

By HENRY W. CORAY

In a flash of refreshing honesty the creator of Cubism in art, Pablo Picasso, unburdened himself to Papini, the famed Italian writer. The confession is startling, particularly in the light of the vast prominence given Picasso and his brush by modern artists.

"From the moment that art ceases to be the food that feeds the best minds the artist can use his talent to perform all the tricks of the intellectual charlatan," Picasso told Papini. "Most people today can no longer expect to receive consolation and exaltation from art. The 'refined,' the rich, the professional 'do-nothings,' the 'distillers of quintessence' desire only the peculiar, the sensational, the eccentric, the scandalous in today's art. And I myself, since the advent of Cubism, have fed these fellows what they wanted and satisfied these critics with all the ridiculous ideas that have passed through my head. The less they understood them, the more they admired me.

"Today, as you know, I am celebrated; I am rich. But when I am alone, I do not have the effrontery to consider myself an artist at all, not in the grand old meaning of the word: Giotto, Titian, Rembrandt, Goya, those great painters.

"I am only a public clown, a mountebank. I have understood my time and exploited the imbecility, the vanity, the greed of my contemporaries.

"It is a bitter confession, this confession of mine, more painful than it may seem, but it, at least, does have the merit of being honest!"

A few years ago the myth of the Piltdown Man exploded before the world causing much scarlet to flow into the cheeks of certain scientists who had pinned their faith to a phantom hypothesis. Here in the sphere of art we view a similar bomb burst. Yet curiously, even though the confession was voiced by Picasso some nine years ago, multitudes of Picasso's admirers still fall down and joyfully worship his Abstract Expressionism.

According to John Garth, the artist's mission in life "is not selfishly to accumulate a lot of money by cheap trickery, but to use, in the finest manner of which he is capable, the rare gifts God has entrusted to him." This is true. Abraham Kuyper in his Stone Lectures declared: "The world of sounds, the world of tints, and the world of poetic ideas can have no other source than God; and it is our privilege as bearers of His image, to have a perception of this beautiful world, artistically to produce, and humbly to enjoy it."

\* \* \* \*

**P**resbyterian Life, the organ of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., recently ran an article on the Scriptures, the Only Infallible Rule of Faith and Practice. The writer insists that the Bible has been, and still is the sole standard in his church. This is strange and ironical writing in view of the developments in this largest Presbyterian body in recent years. One might properly challenge the accuracy

of that statement in view of some pertinent facts.

Why, for example, in the light of I Corinthians 6:1-6, did the (then) Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. go to law against the (now) Orthodox Presbyterian Church over the use of the name Presbyterian Church of America originally adopted by the founders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church? And before I Timothy 2:11, 12, why does the United Presbyterian Church ordain women to the office of ruling elder?

Why in the face of Galatians 1:8, 9, II John 10, and many other relevant passages, does the church permit theologians like Dr. Theodore Gill and other liberal ministers to teach and preach the doctrines of neo-orthodoxy, existentialism, and other Christ-dishonoring tenets and to occupy high posts in its seminaries? And how justify the iniquitous mandate of the 1936 General Assembly demanding blanket loyalty to the church's board and labeling disloyalty to human agencies as serious a sin as a church member's refusing to partake of the Lord's Supper? *Presbyterian Life* has an abbreviated memory. Not many years ago it featured an article by one Dr. Walker of Evanston, Illinois blatantly denying the doctrine of hell.

The deplorable defection from the great and glorious Presbyterian doctrines outlined in the catechism calls for *Presbyterian Life* to open its church's record books, study them carefully in the blazing rays of God's holy Word, and repudiate such articles as the one boasting the church's allegiance to the Bible as the one infallible rule of faith and practice.

\* \* \* \*

**I** note that a well-known doctor recommends that his patients vary their daily routine in order to make life more exciting. For instance, he says, if you are used to taking a walk alone, try going with companions and vice versa; if you are accustomed to commute to the city by train, try the bus; skip an occasional meal for a change; do you play nothing but golf? Go in for tennis. Do you love to read? Try writing. And so on and on and on. Well, I thought, this is excellent advice; so why don't I try going to church this Sunday night? And Prayer Meeting next Wednesday evening?

*The Old Chinese Philosopher*

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