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**BETHEL CHURCH, OOSTBURG, DEDICATES NEW ADDITION TO BUILDING**

With its seating capacity increased to 600, the building addition of Bethel Church, Oostburg, Wisconsin was dedicated at an evening service on December 18. Presiding was the pastor, the Rev. Donald Stanton. Former Pastor John Verhage, now of Grand Junction, Colorado, preached a sermon on "The Christian's Love for the Lord's House," from Psalm 26:8.

A prayer of dedication was offered by the Rev. Henry Fikkert, Cedar Grove. The Rev. Ivan DeMaster, a son of the congregation now in Westchester, Illinois, brought greetings from

the Presbytery. Mrs. Oscar Holkeboer of Calvin College, widow of the founding pastor, spoke of the early days in 1936 when the Orthodox Presbyterian Church began. The choir under the direction of Richard Soerens, with Mrs. John Daane at the organ, sang an anthem of praise.

The additional 16 feet on each side also provides ten more Sunday school classrooms downstairs. A 'cry' room is found near the entrance. Aisles and narthex are carpeted and a new transistorized public address system has been installed. The exterior of the \$120,000 addition is of reddish brown brick.

# Captain with the Mighty Heart

HENRY W. CORAY

## Chapter 6

### THE NATURALIST

*To him who in the love of  
Nature holds*

*Communion with her visible  
forms she speaks*

*A various language . . .*

So wrote Bryant. He must have had in mind a subject like J. Gresham Machen when he spelled out the thought poetically.

From childhood Machen was a compulsive nature lover. It came to him by heredity. In his personal sketch in *Contemporary American Theology* he refers thus to his mother:

She loved nature in its more majestic aspects, and she loved the infinite sweetness of the woods and fields. I suppose it is from her that I learned to escape sometimes from the heartless machinery of the world, and the equally heartless machinery, alas, of a church organization nominally dedicated to Christ, and refresh my soul with the friendliness of the hills.

It hurt and angered him to witness the chainsaw and the bulldozer mar and scar America's forest belts. For thirty years he summered at Mt. Desert Island in Maine, and was happy. Then under pressure from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the government ribboned the shoulders of his precious mountains and skirted his beloved lakes with rude highways. Listen to him fulminate:

When I go into that (Acadia) National Park, with its dreary regularity and its officialdom, I almost feel as though I were in some kind of penal institution. I feel somewhat as I do when I am in Los Angeles or any of the other over-regulated cities of the West, when pedestrians meekly wait around on the street corners for non-existent traffic and cross the streets only at the sound of the prison gong!

One can well imagine what anguish would have gripped his soul today could he view the systematic destruction taking place in the cathedrals of nature. President Johnson in his address to Congress in the spring of

1967 said, "The wilderness and primitive areas of this nation are a priceless heritage. That heritage is ours to preserve or to destroy."

Manifestly it is the latter course we are pursuing. Colorado state highway officials plan to run a four-lane highway through the spectacularly wild area lying between the White River and the Arapaho National Forest. In spite of the President's warning, the federal government has granted the Walt Disney Corporation the right to convert a section of California's Sequoia National Forest into a commercial project.

Dr. Machen, being dead, yet speaks, and his sometime plaintive protest against the desecration of God's wonderland is much to the point:

There are many men to whom a tree is a tree, whether artificially planted or not, and to whom a shady glen with its tangled foliage and moss-covered rocks means nothing at all. But there are also in this country some lovers of nature whose hearts are grieved. Are they altogether wrong? Must the love of nature be crushed out by government funds? Or ought it to be cherished as a sentiment without which a people is a people with a shriveled soul? Are the national parks to be used to destroy natural beauty, or are they to conserve it for the benefit of generations yet unborn?

The famous English mountain climber, George Mallory, was once asked why he wanted to conquer Mt. Everest. His laconic answer was, "Because it's there!" A great deal of speculation has attached to his statement. Had the question been addressed to Dr. Machen, undoubtedly he would have given quite a different response. Back of his passion to scale the Matterhorn and other mountain peaks lay a deeply rooted Christian philosophy. To him those jagged snow-tipped giants were spires carved out and piled up by the hand of the heavenly Architect. In his fine essay, *Mountains and*

*Why We Love Them*, he takes you up the Matterhorn and has you stand with him in quivering excitement on its summit as he surveys the world below:

You are standing there not in any ordinary country, but in the very midst of Europe, looking out from its center: Germany just beyond where you can see to the northeast; Italy to the south; France beyond those snows of Mount Blanc. There, in that glorious round spread out before you, that land of Europe, humanity has put forth its best. There it has struggled; there it has fallen; there it has looked upward to God. The history of the race seems to pass before you in an instant of time, concentrated in that fairest of all lands of earth. You think of the great men whose memories you love, the men who have struggled there in those countries below you, who have struggled for light and freedom, struggled for beauty, struggled above all for God's Word. And then you think of the present and its decadence and its slavery, and you desire to weep. It is a pathetic thing to contemplate the history of mankind.

Would it be irreverent to imagine him in Immanuel's Land now, speaking perhaps with other men of the mountains: Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Peter, James and John, and their greater Lord, who on the Mount of Transfiguration was given a preview of things to come — would it be wrong, I cannot help asking, to think of them as discussing "the chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the everlasting hills"?

#### TEACHERS NEEDED

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Write: Rev. Calvin K. Cummings,  
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15235.

# The 'Lost' Doctrine of Accommodation

## a concept in need of revival

LELAND RYKEN

When the *Westminster Confession* states that God is "a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions" (Ch. 2), it gives expression to a belief which most of us accept as a matter of course, without questioning the statement further. John 4:24, after all, tells us succinctly that "God is a spirit."

Yet, on the surface of the matter, the statements of both the Confession and the Gospel appear to be controverted by scores of Scriptural passages, especially in the Old Testament. That God is "without body" or "parts" does not seem compatible with frequent portrayals of him as possessing such human characteristics as a face (e.g., Ex. 33:11), a hand (I Sam. 5:11), ears (Neh. 1:6), eyes (Job 28:10), and feet (Nahum 1:3). Similarly, if God is truly invisible, it is not easily explainable how Isaiah, for example, could have seen "the Lord sitting upon a throne" (Is. 6:1-5). If God is not subject to bodily limitations it would seem unusual that "on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed" (Ex. 31:17).

### Troublesome

Especially troublesome are passages which state that God "repents" or changes his mind regarding earlier decisions which he had made (Jer. 26:19, Ps. 106:45), and the passage in which God states that he would destroy the people of Israel were it not for the fact that he "feared the wrath of the enemy" (Deut. 32:27), a thought which is seemingly not consonant with the idea of a sovereign God who controls all things.

There is, of course, a ready theological explanation which resolves the apparent contradictions. Yet I find that many laymen are insufficiently acquainted with the proper explanation, and there may be evidence that even among Reformed theologians the doctrine is articulated with less clarity and emphasis than at the time of the Reformation. In the discussion which follows I wish to explain briefly what people at the time of the Reformation knew as *the doctrine of accommoda-*

*tion* and to make a few observations regarding the implications of the doctrine.

Surely the person of Reformed persuasion, who accepts the Old Testament as well as the New as God's infallible Word, cannot afford to be without an adequate view of the Bible's portrayal of God in human terms at a time when the anthropomorphism of the Old Testament is cited on every hand as proof of its outdated primitivism, and when one of the first obstacles for persons newly introduced to the Bible is precisely this matter of the human description of a spiritual God.

### "Accommodation" Defined

Stated most briefly, the doctrine of accommodation teaches that the representation of God in Scripture has been accommodated to man's understanding by being reduced to language which human intelligence can comprehend. Such an accommodation is necessary because God transcends complete human understanding—because his ways are not man's ways (Is. 55:8, Rom. 11:33), nor can human understanding find God by searching him out (Job 11:7, 37:23). Man's knowledge of God is necessarily limited in this life to human comprehension and human language, and God, in revealing himself to man, has presented himself in such humanly comprehensible terms. God has stooped to man's weakness and limitations, and part of this condescension consists of the portrayal of himself in terms of human characteristics.

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*Mr. Ryken and his family are affiliated with the home mission congregation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Eugene, Oregon. A candidate for the doctorate this spring at the University of Oregon, his field is English literature with particular reference to John Milton.*

*Mr. Ryken has been offered a teaching position at Wheaton College, Illinois, for the coming year.*

The theory of accommodation is a commonplace in Calvin's writings. In commenting on Isaiah's vision of God sitting on the throne, he writes,

... we may ask how Isaiah could see God who is spirit and is therefore not visible to bodily eyes. Since the minds of men are incapable of mounting to the infinite height of God, how can man apprehend God under any visible form? But we must realize that whenever God revealed himself to be seen by the fathers, he never appeared as he is in himself but as he could be understood by human minds . . . Therefore Isaiah has shown a form of a kind which enabled him with his own understanding to taste the inconceivable majesty of God. This is the reason that he attributes a throne, a robe, and a bodily appearance to God.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin finds the necessity for God's accommodation to man's understanding to lie in the universal human condition:

By this means he has consideration upon our weakness. For if we were wholly spiritual like the angels, we should be able to see both him and his gifts. But as we are surrounded by this gross earthly body, we need symbols or mirrors, to exhibit to us the appearance of spiritual and heavenly things in a kind of earthly way.<sup>2</sup>

While Catholic commentators had used the doctrine of accommodation as a rationale for interpreting such accommodated passages allegorically, Calvin, writing in the Reformed tradition of Biblical exegesis which stressed literal interpretation, emphasized that the accommodated revelation of God is not to be taken lightly, and that it exists precisely for the reason that we might have a definite conception of God. He writes that God has given us

a description, not of what he is in himself, but of what he is to us, that our knowledge of him may consist rather in a lively perception than in vain and airy speculation.<sup>3</sup>

### John Milton

John Milton, also writing in the Reformed tradition, likewise asserts the necessity of resting content with the representation of God given in Scripture and avoiding any attempt to dissolve the concrete images in which God has revealed himself in favor of allegorical interpretations:

*The doctrine of accommodation teaches that the representation of God in Scripture has been accommodated to man's understanding by being reduced to language which human intelligence can comprehend.*

... we ought to entertain such a conception of him, as he, in condescending to accommodate himself to our capacities, has shown that he desires we should conceive. For it is on this very account that he has lowered himself to our level, lest in our flights above the reach of human understanding, and beyond the written word of Scripture, we should be tempted to indulge in vague cogitations and subtleties.<sup>4</sup>

The statements of the doctrine made by Calvin can be supplemented by writings of many other theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The currency of the doctrine at the time of the Reformation is suggested by the fact that John Milton, writing his epic *Paradise Lost* not for theologians but for the ordinary informed Christian of his day, makes the doctrine of accommodation the basis for his portrayal of the supernatural parts of his poem and makes numerous allusions to the doctrine during the course of it.

### **A Reformation Teaching**

The purpose of the foregoing historical note has been not only to offer an explanation of what the doctrine of accommodation teaches, but also to suggest that it was a well-known doctrine in the Reformation era. Somewhere between the time of the Reformation and the twentieth century the theory of accommodation largely dropped out of theological vocabulary, and I believe that Christians of Reformed persuasion are the poorer because of it. Not only has it been my experience that laymen tend to be unacquainted with the doctrine in any definite form, but also that the doctrine is not accessible in the sources with which they are likely to have contact.

Such a comprehensive treatment of Presbyterian belief as Charles Hodge's *Systematic Theology* does not take up the doctrine. Biblical passages which prompt Calvin in his commentary to make a clear statement of the theory of accommodation are infrequently accompanied by any statement approximating the doctrine in the standard modern commentaries. Standard handbooks of Reformed theology, such as Berkhof's *Manual of Reformed Doctrine*, bypass the matters of accommodation and anthropomorphism. While

a series of Bible study lessons prepared by one of our own ministers and used in some of our churches stresses very adequately that God has no body, it makes no mention at all of the many passages in which God is portrayed in human terms.

I cite these matters, not in a spirit of criticism, but as evidence that we have largely lost sight of the doctrine of accommodation with its insistence that God has, in his revelation of himself, presented his transcendent qualities in human terms. There is, of course, nothing sacred about the name we give a doctrine, and it is possible to speak of the belief without naming it as an earlier age did. But the decline of the term "accommodation" seems to be symptomatic of a failure to attach much importance to the doctrine in our day. The advantage of reviving the term "accommodation" lies, I believe, in the fact that such a designation emphasizes that the accommodated images are part of the revelation which God himself has given to man—they do not constitute man's feeble, more or less accurate attempts to understand God.

### **Anthropomorphism**

The doctrine of accommodation and the question of the anthropomorphism which we find in the Bible are matters which assume very great importance today. In the first place, we live in a day when the unity of the Old and New Testaments is denied by most people. Our young people are subjected to this view in both high school and college. I have seen the view perpetuated in a dozen subtle ways in secular classrooms and the portrayal of God in human terms in the Old Testament is commonly adduced as evidence of the primitivism of the Old Testament. Unless our young people are equipped with an adequate view of the whole question

of God's accommodated revelation of himself, I do not see how their belief that God, despite the fact that human traits are attributed to him, is truly a spirit can escape looking ridiculous to others and perhaps to them.

Seen in the light of the doctrine of accommodation, the anthropomorphic depiction of God (in the Old Testament especially) affords a sound rationale for seeing unity between the Old and New Testaments, for the principle underlying the anthropomorphic portrayal of God in the Old Testament and the incarnation of Christ in the New Testament is the same: the transcendent God makes himself known to his people in a form which is understandable and immediate.

### **Solution to Perplexity**

Although most of us are so familiar with the Bible that we hardly notice when God is described in human terms, people who have not grown up in the faith are sometimes genuinely perplexed by the apparent contradiction between the representation of God in human images and the statement of the *Westminster Confession* that God is "without body, parts, or passions." The question is especially likely to arise when one is working with recent converts or, as in common in a home mission work, when people are in a process of inquiring about our church's beliefs.

People who are getting their first real taste of theology and who are perhaps reading the Bible seriously for the first time tend to be very conscious of the physical characteristics attached to a God who, they are told, is a pure spirit, lifted high above human understanding. With a firm grasp of the idea that this transcendent God has in his mercy for mankind revealed himself in a form intelligible to human beings, the problem is readily solved.

The Bible's representation of God in human terms has caused a good deal of difficulty in our century. It has led liberals and skeptics to discount the revelation contained in the Old Testament. Evangelicals apparently prefer to remain silent on the question

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whenever possible. We tend to feel somewhat embarrassed by the necessity to explain passages which speak of God's fearing his enemies and changing his mind, and at best we conclude that since such passages are in God's infallible Word, they must be true.

It seems to me that the anthropomorphism of Scripture calls for a more positive attitude than it currently holds, and that this attitude is possible only if we understand the accommodated nature of God's revelation. There should be no doubt that the reason God has revealed himself in human images is that he wishes us to have a clear and intelligible conception

of him. That God should condescend to reveal himself in such a way that even children can know him is a cause for joy and gratitude on the part of every believer.

\* \* \*

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> *Calvin: Commentaries*, trans. and ed. Joseph Haroutunian (Philadelphia, 1958), p. 120. Parallel statements of the doctrine of accommodation can be found in Calvin's comments on Ez. 9:3-4, Gen. 3:8, and Ex. 3:2, 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Theological Treatises*, trans. and ed. J. K. S. Reid (Philadelphia, 1954), p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. I, trans. John Allen (Philadelphia, 1930), 95.

<sup>4</sup> *The Christian Doctrine*, Ch. 2.

## A Letter from Korea

Pusan, Korea

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

When Gregory, Nelson and I went to our Korean church this morning, we were in for a surprise. Just inside the gate to the church property, we were led to a narrow plank with strips of wood nailed crosswise on it (such as I've seen leading out of chicken houses on some American farms). This plank led down to the "worship hall" which today was the dirt and rubble of a building destroyed.

Our seats were straw mats on the partly dried concrete of a strip of foundation. Our feet rested on rods of building steel and we had to be careful in shifting positions to avoid the nails sticking out of the rough forms. We "jumped" instinctively when a choir member going to the front of the church to sing stepped on a loose plank and one end sprang up like the end of a seesaw. Old boards from what had been the church building were stacked around the edge of the property, and the only decoration was a small vase of flowers on the rude table that served as the pulpit.

### Torn Down

What had happened? Had the church building burned down and were we sitting in its ashes? Had the building been condemned to make room for a new superhighway? Had some angry mob stormed the gates of this house of God in hatred against his people? Praise the Lord, it was none of these. No, the people had just looked at their small, inadequate

building on a site about 30 by 50 feet and figured that the only way to build was up.

So they had said to themselves, "We will tear down our church building and build us a bigger one." They were not like the foolish man in the Bible seeking to display their greatness and power, but having "counted the cost" sought to build bigger for the greater glory of God, and the better to serve him.

There were no fire stations to meet in, or funeral parlors to rent, or school rooms to use while the work went on, as there might have been if they were in an American community. But mercifully this Thanksgiving Sunday was mild, and there in the midst of an empty building lot in the middle of a busy downtown section, about fifty worshippers gathered while the "sidewalk superintendents" peered in curiosity through the gaps in the fence and neighbors hung out of nearby windows listening and watching.

### Text

Part of the text for the sermon was appropriate both for Thanksgiving and for their situation: "He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God; for the rendering of this service not only supplies the wants of the saints but also overflows in many thanksgivings to God" (II Cor. 9:10-12 RSV).

The people gathered in that little Korean church today very much needed the encouragement of the promise that God would "multiply their resources." There is no committee for church extension ready to make loans at reasonable rates, no missionary handout or mission-administered loan to be had, no rich patron to make things easier. But when that church is built, it will be something that *they* have done in dedication to the Lord. It will be a testimony of *their* desire to serve him better, a monument to *their* sacrifices. The community that looks on in puzzlement, wondering why they are willing to endure the hardships, will come to know that it is because Christ means something to them, and that a testimony to his grace is the aim of their endeavors.

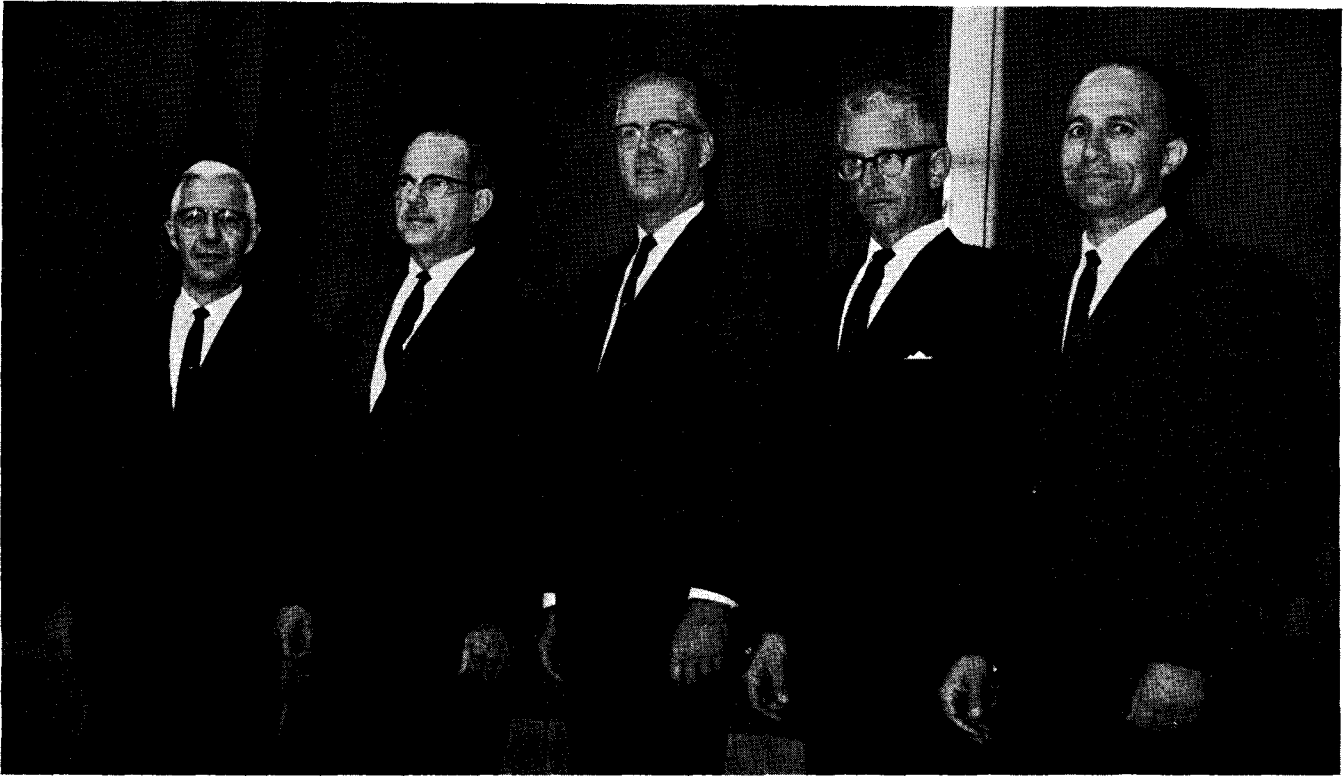
### Tithes and Offerings

The "pep talk" of the elder at announcement time gave some idea of what they were up against. "With the cold weather coming and the main beam to be raised this week, there is only the equivalent of \$110 in hand. Expected pledges of about \$1,100 have not been paid yet," he went on, "and if we want to keep our word to the contractor we will need about \$920 by the end of the week. Please remember this in prayer." (What faith!) "I know this is a 'hungry time,'" he continued, "but don't let anything deter you from keeping faith with what you have promised the Lord. Our tithes and promised offerings to the Lord should come first." He continued on in this vein to people who must put out about half of their income just to eat and who have to pay for their children's schooling from first grade on up!

But don't feel sorry for these "poor" Koreans, for as the minister's text said, they "will be enriched in every way" that is important and desirable. I hope their story "overflows in many thanksgivings to God" on the part of Christians back in America. Hearing it, I hope you take new courage in God's ability to provide for his people and also thank him for working faith in the hearts of those who are the objects of the church's missionary endeavor.

Sincerely in Christ,  
GRACE HARD

Cover photo: *The Sheboygan News*



The Rev. Messrs. Clough, Kellogg, Poundstone, Graham, and Solis.

## Pastor of El Camino Church Installed

On the evening of November 30, 1967, the Rev. Dwight H. Poundstone was formally installed as the first pastor of the newly organized El Camino Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Goleta, California.

Since the congregation does not have a building of its own (they still meet in The Timbers Restaurant) the service was held in an Episcopal Church. Practically every family in the congregation was represented in the service, along with a few visitors from the community.

Representing the Presbytery of Southern California were the Rev. Edward Kellogg, who preached the sermon; the Rev. Robert Graham and the Rev. Ralph Clough, who delivered the charges to the pastor and congregation, and the Rev. Salvador Solis, who presided as moderator. The presbytery is sponsoring this work.

The Goleta Church is somewhat isolated from the rest of the presbytery, being about 100 miles away from the nearest Orthodox Presbyterian Church. This made it difficult for the other churches to be represented, but the

members of the congregation were delighted to meet and hear the participating ministers, some of whom they had not previously met.

El Camino Church, which began as a chapel with regular services in March 1966, is the youngest church in the Presbytery of Southern California, having been received on May 19, 1967. It was on October 8, 1967 that the congregation voted unanimously to call Mr. Poundstone as their pastor.

The name "El Camino" was chosen at this same congregational meeting. The name seemed appropriate for several reasons. The church property, on which the congregation hopes to build very soon, is situated just off "El Camino Real" (now U.S. 101), the historic highway that joins the early California missions. "El Camino" (in Spanish) means "the way" — an expression frequently used in referring to the early Christians. (See Acts 9:2, 19:23, 22:4, and 24:14.) Also our Lord used this term when speaking of himself (John 14:6). "Finally, it's different. We don't know of any

other Orthodox Presbyterian Church with this name," the announcement stated.

El Camino Church now has a membership of 46 (32 communicants and 14 baptized children). Attendance averages reached their highest point in October (Sunday school, 54, and morning worship, 64). New tracts of homes are being built in the vicinity of the church property so that the growth potential is very good. It is the earnest prayer of the congregation that they will be in their own building by this time next year, reports the pastor.

Earlier in the fall a weekend missionary conference including the church's first harvest dinner featured the Rev. and Mrs. Egbert Andrews as guests. Last summer a SAVE team — three young people from Oostburg, Wisconsin and two from southern California — spent five weeks in Goleta, assisting in a VBS with an average attendance of 84. A half-dozen students from the University of California at Santa Barbara and about a dozen from Westmont College have been attending services of El Camino Church.

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The Presbyterian  
**GUARDIAN**

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EDITOR

ROBERT E. NICHOLAS



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

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## A Strange Trial

On a national television newscast the other evening a five-minute segment was given over to the decision reached at the end of a three-week trial in the Presbytery of Southeast Iowa (UPUSA). The presiding clergyman pronounced the judgment of the seven-man judicial commission, that the two defendants were guilty of "the sin of the disruption of the peace and unity of the First Presbyterian Church of Iowa City." They were indefinitely suspended from partaking of communion until true repentance becomes evident. The sentence is to be appealed.

And what was the "sin" of the elder (an English professor in the University of Iowa) and his wife, both in their sixties and members of the congregation for over thirty years? It seems that they had actively protested a decision of the congregation to tear down the century-old church building and replace it with a new structure.

Now it is not our purpose to enter into the merits of the case as such. The protest had taken such forms as running an ad in a local newspaper, writing allegedly derogatory letters, and fastening to the front door of the church on Reformation Sunday a petition seeking signatures. It may be that all of this was disruptive and inappropriate — though we admit it shows some imagination and historical perspective!

The thing that sticks in the mind and pierces the heart, however, is that a church should expend such time and energy — and get so much publicity — over such a matter. Where are the judicial commissions sitting to examine the real issues that disturb the United Presbyterian Church? Where are the

heretics on trial—the men who dissent from the faith itself? What of a whole church that has shattered even its professed unity by adopting the ambiguous and contradictory Confession of 1967? Here there is naught but silence—a silence that gives consent to the subversion of Scripture, to the denial of Christ, and to all manner of false gospels.

One recalls the second Psalm and feels that there must be angry laughter in heaven: "the Lord shall have them in derision." Would that the church might heed the later words of that Psalm: "Be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

— R. E. N.

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## EDITOR'S MAIL BOX

Dear Sir:

Permit me to comment on Mr. Sterling Hard's letter in the December issue, for enlightenment in Christian love. I want to thank God and commend Sterling for his genuine concern for the gospel of Christ.

Simply because the defeat of Communism in Asia would mean freer course for the gospel, that does not mean that our involvement in Vietnam is justified in the eyes of Christians. This kind of thinking could justify taking the initiative in wiping out Communism everywhere for the sake of the gospel; it could support the use of the sword to promote the gospel as has been shamefully done in the history of the church.

Mr. Hard is in danger of almost identifying the cause of America with the cause of God; this is a fundamental mistake of much fundamentalism.

Mr. Hard's views of Vietnam are not the only ones held by Christians even of Reformed persuasion. With just as much sincerity and deep conviction in line with Scriptural principles, I (and many other believers) completely and vigorously oppose U.S. involvement in Vietnam. I consider it a horrible mistake which our nation tries to justify by changing reasons. I am not alone in believing that there isn't one good reason, Christian or American, for supporting this war effort. I am not a pacifist, do not be-

lieve in aggression, but do believe in the legitimacy of self-defense of which Vietnam is not an example.

In taking his stand, Mr. Hard should not lump opponents of the war together with name-calling. Not all opponents are "vietniks" or unpatriotic cowards. Many of us are thoughtful, intelligent, concerned Christian Americans who vigorously oppose the warfare we are in because we *are* patriotic; we are behind our boys by wanting to bring them home where they belong. It is no more fair for Mr. Hard to call all opponents of the war a disparaging name than it would be for me to call him, my friend and former student, a warmonger. I am sure he is not. I am happy the Lord spared him. I believe Sterling has been blinded by a false view of what America's cause and role in the world is, and of how its activity is related to the gospel.

Sincerely in Christ,  
C. RALPH VERNO  
West Chester, Pa.

\* \* \*

Dear Sir:

Articles in the *Guardian* in the past year, especially those quoting Dr. J. Gresham Machen's words and describing his work, on the relevancy of all life to the Scriptures, are a long way from some of the things finding their way into print only a couple of years ago.

Anyone raising his head to suggest that the Scriptures had a relevance to all of life was met with the very real truth but irrelevant (to the suggestion) cry that "politics has no place in the pulpit." By implication, the Christian was not obliged or free to recognize truth with regard to civil government.

J. Gresham Machen is in good company, as are the more recent writers who waited so very long to be blunt and brazen with the truth on this aspect of God's sovereignty.

Yours in Christ,  
RICHARD G. DEEMER  
Springfield, Va.

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## A NEW PULPIT IS DEDICATED

C. VAN TIL

We dedicate this pulpit to the memory of Dr. Ned Bernard Stonehouse, who, together with his family, worshipped with this congregation from its inception and who worshipped here on the morning of the very last day of his life.

Of course, we dedicate this pulpit first of all to Christ, the king of his church. At the same time it is fitting that as we do so we keep in thankful remembrance the name of his servant. Dr. Stonehouse loved and labored with diligence in Westminster Theological Seminary. He also labored with love and devotion in this congregation, in the Presbytery of Philadelphia, in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and in the church of Christ universal. But in and through it all he loved and labored to the praise of his Savior.

God made Dr. Stonehouse an able minister of the New Testament. When I say this I am not thinking of the gifts of heart and mind with which his Creator-Redeemer had endowed him. He did have these gifts in large measure. His professors in the New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary, Dr. William Park Armstrong and Dr. J. Gresham Machen as well as the professor supervising his doctoral work at the Free University of Amsterdam, Dr. F. H. Grosheide, all spoke with glowing terms of these his extraordinary gifts.

But he knew from his earliest days as a student that if he were to become an able minister of the New Testament then he must say with Paul: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor. 3:5).

If the first of modern philosophers said: "I think, therefore, I am," Dr. Stonehouse said: "I think the church of the New Testament, therefore I am." In a profound sense his personality was identical with his office and his task.

### New Testament Teacher

Immediately upon his graduation from Amsterdam he was inducted into New Testament teaching at Westminster Seminary. This was in September

1929. What a marvelous prospect now opened up to him, the prospect of serving in almost daily companionship with his great teacher and friend, Dr. Machen. Even as a student Dr. Stonehouse had learned of the struggle going on in the church. He knew that Dr. Machen was right in the center of that struggle. He knew that if he were to work with joy then he must, like Dr. Machen, be valiant for truth.

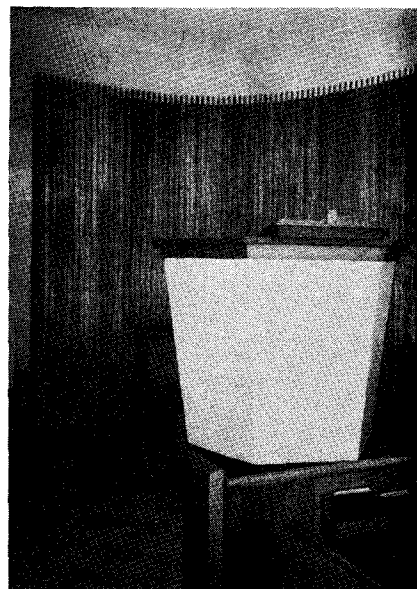
Ere long it became clear to Dr. Machen that he had made no mistake in choosing his assistant for the teaching and the defense of the New Testament. He gave eloquent expression to his conviction on this point when he preached the ordination sermon for Dr. Stonehouse in February of 1932.

To make men to be "specialists in the Bible" — that, said Dr. Machen, was the work to which Westminster Seminary was dedicated. Dr. Machen did not mean this in any narrow sense. For him systematic theology was at the center of the curriculum. But systematic theology too came from the Bible. "What a world in itself the Bible is, my friends! Happy are those who in the providence of God can make the study of it very specifically the business of their lives; but happy also is every Christian who has it open before him and seeks by daily study to penetrate somewhat into the wonderful richness of what it contains" (*Christian Scholarship and Building Up, in the Church in What is Christianity?*, p. 141).

But it was not to be for long. The period of companionship in arms for the defense and the confirmation of the gospel between the two men was terminated by the sudden death of Dr. Machen on January 1, 1937.

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*It was five years ago in November 1962 that Dr. Stonehouse went to be with the Lord. On December 17, 1967 Dr. Van Til spoke these words on the occasion of the dedication of a new pulpit in memory of Dr. Stonehouse in the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Glenside, Pennsylvania.*



Suddenly the burden borne by two men rested upon one, the younger one. Moreover, the enemies of the gospel of God's redeeming grace through the miraculous birth, the life, the death and resurrection of Christ fought with new weapons now.

In the days of Machen the enemy denied then one and then another or even several doctrines of the Christian faith. In the days of Stonehouse the enemy affirmed all the doctrines of the Christian faith but gave them all a new meaning. Thus, for instance, Karl Barth said he believed the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of Christ, but that neither of these must be identified directly with anything that happened in history.

A time of great trial and strain was now in store for Stonehouse. If ever in his life he felt the necessity of saying with Paul, "Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves," it was at this time when the mantle of Elijah was on Elisha cast.

### The Inaugural Address

"Rudolph Bultmann's Jesus" was the title of his inaugural address as Professor of the New Testament. But why choose Rudolph Bultmann's view of Jesus for his inaugural address? Because Bultmann was the greatest expert in the use of the newest weapons discovered by which one can affirm in word but deny in fact the Christ of the New Testament.

Stonehouse knew that in defending his historic Christian faith against



Bultmann he was, at the same time, also defending it against Karl Barth. If Bultmann was more "extreme" in his historical skepticism, Barth was "essentially in agreement" with Bultmann "on the all-determinative matter of the doctrine of God, including the philosophy of nature and of history" (*Ibid.*, p. 111).

At the end of his address Stonehouse made a final reference to his beloved teacher and friend: "That Christianity stands or falls with the historicity of certain foundational events was preeminently the message which Dr. Machen proclaimed to this generation." A "new face has been put upon life by the blessed thing that God did when he offered up his only begotten Son." With these words of Machen's Stonehouse concluded his address.

Rudolph Bultmann's Jesus had no power to "put a new face upon life" for this Jesus is a myth. Bultmann's Jesus leaves men in utter despair. For those who follow this Jesus there is *no exit* from death, from *eternal* death. Bultmann's Jesus does not set men free; he gives them no hope. Those who follow Bultmann's Jesus follow a mirage in the desert; they never drink of the water of life.

Dr. Stonehouse lectured at a number of institutions in other lands as well as in this. He wrote several books dealing with New Testament truth and a biography of Dr. Machen worthy of the man.

### Relation to his Church

To new responsibility at Westminster Seminary there was added new responsibility in the church. By force of circumstances Dr. Machen and his associates were compelled to organize what is now the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Absorbed as he was in his teaching and writing for the defense of the faith, Dr. Stonehouse found time to give leadership in the local church, in Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Glenside, in the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and in the various General Assemblies of the Church as a whole.

Opposed to all false ecumenism, the ecumenism that centers around the Christ-myth of neo-orthodox theology of such men as Bultmann and Barth, Stonehouse advocated a true ecumenism. In the interest of such an ecumenism he represented his church at the Reformed Ecumenical Synods held in Amsterdam (1949); in Edinburgh

(1953); and in Potchefstroom (1959).

But once more, it was not to be for long. On October 23, 1962 he gave the charge to Professor Skilton upon the latter's inauguration to the professorship of New Testament Language and Literature. Addressing Dr. Skilton, Stonehouse said: "We have been friends for some thirty years and colleagues and co-workers for well over twenty" (*The Presbyterian Guardian*, Dec. 1962, p. 163). Then he added that "basic to our whole enterprise is our concern to be faithful to the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God. This is, as you know, a part of our Princeton heritage." "But in closing, I desire to express with all emphasis that, as your colleague and friend, my deepest hope is that in the coming years you may be able to carry forward your great central task as Professor of New Testament Language and Literature with the very minimum of distraction and with the utmost measure of single-minded commitment, enthusiasm and liberty" (*Ibid.*, p. 164).

To teach and preach with single-minded commitment, enthusiasm and liberty, the Christ of the New Testament for the salvation of all men everywhere, this was Dr. Stonehouse's lifelong passion.

### A Colleague's Tribute

At the funeral service in this church Dr. Skilton paid tribute to Dr. Stonehouse as Dr. Stonehouse had once paid tribute to Dr. Machen. "His exceptional gifts of comprehensiveness of view, perception, analysis, and precision of judgment and expression were applied not only to the major problems of administrative and academic work and the extension of the witness and usefulness of the Seminary, but also to minor routine and unspectacular matters. He so closely identified himself with the work of our Seminary and so freely spent himself for our benefit that we may say that he truly belonged to us." But finally and above all "he belonged to his Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He rejoiced in the efficacy for his sins of the sacrifice which the Son of God made for him on the cross. He was united to his Redeemer, and he sought to exalt his name and to confront men with the whole counsel of God which is given to us in the unerrant Scriptures."

Many of us have heard Dr. Stonehouse proclaim the gospel of sovereign grace from the old pulpit of this

church. How fitting that as we this day dedicate this new pulpit to Christ, the king of the church, we should do so in grateful remembrance of Dr. Ned Bernard Stonehouse, whose highest degree was not that of Th.D. (Doctor of Theology) but that of V.D.M. (*Verbum Dei Minister*), Minister of the Word of God.

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Amos was a "home" missionary. He had to walk only about twenty miles to reach his mission field. What little we know about him comes from the man himself: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophecy to my people Israel.'" Thus Amos left Tekoa in Judah and went forth to Bethel to answer God's call.

A contemporary of Isaiah, Amos lived during the reign of Jeroboam II, a period of great prosperity. The rich tended to become richer and the poor poorer. It was the luxury, the injustice, and the oppression of the poor that this prophet denounced so effectively. He also tore to bits the sham religious practices of the people. Israel went through the motions of worship, but with what contempt for God! Her only thought was, "When will this service be over, that we may be our own masters again?"

To such a people Amos brought the Word of the Lord, through the vision of a basket of summer fruit. The last of the summer harvest, the fruit was symbolic of completeness and ripeness. It was God's way of saying that his people's harvest time had come. The whole cycle was completed of God's providences, mercies, chastenings, instructions, and warnings. As God asked through Isaiah: "What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done to it?" And the answer has to be: no more.

And so God will be silent where this people is concerned. No more will his message be heralded to Israel. "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord God, when I will send a famine on the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it" (Amos 8:11-12).

### The Word Unheeded

But why should God thus judge his people? Why judgment on a people still flocking in great numbers to the house of God? Wasn't there a religious revival on? We know, of course, that such appearances were deceiving. By and large the people hated every minute they spent in church. They continually lamented: "When

There's a famine in the land.

## When God Is Silent

THEODORE J. GEORGIAN

will the Sabbath be over, so that we may again practice our profitable frauds?" God was actually a hindrance to them. How different the Psalmist's longing: "When shall I come to appear before the presence of the Lord?"

Today church membership and attendance continue at a high level. No end is in sight to the church building boom. The churches of America never had it so good. But what does it mean? Where is the pure truth of the Word of God heard? Perversions of the gospel run the gamut from superstition to sentimental tripe, from ignoring God to manhandling him, from the reconstruction of a Bultmann to the prattle of a Malcolm Boyd.

### When Silence Is Judgment

In ancient Israel judgment took the form of silence. That was the supreme tragedy. When the Word of God no more confronts a people, they are to be pitied above all men. For what are we, if we do not hear and respond to the preaching of the Word of our God? We are derelicts, doomed to drift aimlessly from sea to sea, without hope of making the harbor.

This was the fate of the church in Ephesus (Rev. 2). How exemplary this church was in many respects! Full of good works. So intolerant of evil and error that she tested those in her midst who paraded as apostles. Yet what does Christ say to this church? "But I have this against you, that you have abandoned your first love." A wife may be very faithful to her husband and slave away from dawn to dusk in household duties. But her love may have decayed. She remains faithful only from a sense of duty. And so with a church. To such churches our Lord says: "Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your

lampstand from its place, unless you repent." And that was the fate of Ephesus. God became silent, sending a famine of hearing his Word.

May not such a judgment be falling on many churches today? When the truth of God's infallible Word is undermined for generations — and from the pulpit at that — Biblical illiteracy is fostered to the point where many church members can no longer discern between truth and error. I believe this accounts in a significant measure for the existence and success of the Confession of 1967. And it is from the womb of such ignorance and confusion that the modern ecumenical movement was born. Not that I am against ecumenicity. How can I be, when the Bible teaches it? But it is fair, isn't it, to ask that our ecumenicity fulfill the Bible's requirements?

### Twisting the Truth

Now the modern ecumenical movement may be said to have a fine doctrinal basis. As far as its brief confession goes, it cannot be unduly criticized. But when the World Council of Churches explicitly says that it "does not concern itself with the manner in which the churches interpret these truths," we must demur. The Lutheran scholar, Herman Sasse, has asked the very good question, Why cannot the World Council of Churches in full assembly confess the great Nicene Creed, and he replies: "The simple, though terribly sad answer is: These two hundred churches and sects (in the World Council) have no longer a common creed, because they have no common faith . . . How out of this chaos of churches, sects, theological schools, and personal opinions can the voice of the *Una Sancta* be heard — which until the end of the world will confess what the Nicene Creed confesses about the one God the Father, the one Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the one Church, and the one Baptism? This is impossible."

But what is so terrible about God being silent? Just this: the divine presence is then no more with that people to whom his Word does not

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Mr. Georgian is the pastor of the Covenanted Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Rochester, New York. This article is condensed from a recent radio talk.

come. And here lies the tragedy of being in a church that does not receive the Scriptures as God's infallible Word. Can you imagine what it means to be cut off from the blessing of the living God, as such blessing comes through his Word? Think what this means for the indifferent Christian who profanes the Sabbath day, insensitive to his spiritual loss.

However, even in a famine of the hearing of the Word of God there may be hope. Sometimes it takes such a famine to make people realize how they have spurned the gospel and offended a gracious God. And if this results in their repentance and in their hungering once again for the blessed gospel of the Son of God, all is not lost.

### Warning and Mercy

In all of this, notice the great honor God places on his Word. On the surface, it would seem that God did not match sin with punishment in taking his Word away from Israel. A bit like a mother depriving her child of food because the child refused to eat. What kind of punishment is that? So here is Israel. They despise God's Word; God becomes silent. Isn't that what Israel wanted all along? Yes, but don't you see that sin can so blind one, that he does not see his danger? When God is silent, his people are in danger of spiritual death. For "man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from God."

But, you say, does God want to cut his own people off from himself? No. He is ever merciful and patient. However, there comes a time when a people's cup of iniquity is full. Then God will not cast his pearls before swine. Hence he will create a famine of the hearing of his Word. But not out of vindictiveness. God forbid! Rather, in order that the willful and careless might be brought up short and appreciate anew the wonderful treasure they had when God's Word was still coming to them.

To know the holy Scriptures is to be made wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. For the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. God will not be silent for us if we heed the words of our Lord: "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst."

## here and there in the orthodox presbyterian church

Rev. Glenn Black,  
charge to pastor.

Elder Laurence Bourland,  
Newberg.

Rev. Richard Lewis,  
sermon.

Elder S. E. York of  
Bend moderator.

Rev. David A. Hitt,  
pastor of Westminster Church Bend.

Rev. Albert Edwards  
charge to congregation.



### David Hitt Ordained

**Bend, Oregon** — October 25 was the date of the ordination and installation of David Arnold Hitt as the seventh pastor of Westminster Church, under the auspices of the Presbytery of the West Coast. Mr. Hitt, a 1966 graduate of Westminster Seminary, was brought up among the Plymouth Brethren in Chicago until he was 12, and then his family became members of the Bala Cynwyd UP Church, Philadelphia. He joined Calvary OPC of Glenside in 1964 and was later licensed by the Presbytery of Philadelphia. David and his wife, Pamela, have a son, Jonathan.

**Kirkwood, Pa.** — Pastor Lester Bachman reports the mailing of 200 copies of the special OPC issue of the *Guardian* throughout the area as a testimony to the continuing stand of the local church. An insert called attention to their "witness, in our confused and troubled day, to the historic Christian faith once delivered unto the saints and expressed so plainly and fully in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms." "We are strongly opposed to the pronouncements of the NCC and the WCC," the statement went on, "policies consistently hostile to the moral, spiritual, social and political heritage of our nation and our cherished liberties. We believe that the winning of individual men and women to faith in and obedience to Jesus Christ is the solution to the moral and spiritual problems of our generation."

**Silver Spring, Md.** — Among guest speakers at Knox Church's an-

nual missionary conference in November were Westminster Seminary students Samuel Kau of Taiwan and Ralph English, candidate for Korea, and President Edmund Clowney.

**East Lewisburg, Pa.** — Tri-County Church continues its live broadcast of morning worship held in the Farmer's Best Restaurant over station WPGM, with Dr. Luther Craig Long preaching. Evening services are at the Youth for Christ Building.

**Middletown, Del.** — A fellowship dinner on October 21 celebrated the final payment on the mortgage on the manse of Grace Church. The Rev. F. Clarke Evans has been pastor since 1954.

**Stockton, Calif.** — Recent deaths have included Jacob Preszler, in whose memory Bibles were placed in the pews of Bethany Church; Caspar DeLange, who had served the congregation well as an elder for a year, after leaving his former association of many years in witness against the then proposed new Confession of 1967; and Edward Latal, 91 year old father of Dr. Gerald Latal, pastor of Bethany Church.

**Wenham, Mass.** — The Rev. Charles G. Schaufele was installed as Professor of Christian Education at a November convocation of Gordon Divinity School. Coming to Gordon College in 1949 from an Orthodox Presbyterian pastorate in San Diego, Professor Schaufele had taught one or two courses also in the Divinity School each year until he became a full-time member of its staff in 1963. All requirements except a thesis have been

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completed toward a Th.D. degree at Boston University. Dean David Kerr presided at the installation and other participants were Dr. Burton Goddard, Dr. Roger Nicole, and President James Forrester. Mr. Schaufele is a member of the denomination's Committee on Christian Education.

### John Bettler Ordained

**Hatboro, Pa.** — On October 6 John Frank Bettler, a 1967 graduate of Westminster Seminary, was ordained and installed as pastor of Trinity Church by the Presbytery of Philadelphia. The Rev. John Mitchell presided with the Rev. Jay Adams preaching a sermon. Others who took part were the Rev. Messrs. Norman Shepherd, LeRoy Oliver, and George Knight. The latter, now ministering in Naples, Florida, was formerly pastor of Mr. Bettler's home church, Immanuel of West Collingswood.

**Santee, Calif.** — Valley Church Machen Leaguers have had winter outings in the snow in the Laguna Mountains. Pastor Bruce Coie reports that the first Sunday of the month is Missionary Day in the Sunday school. Larry Conard, who grew up in this congregation, was licensed to preach the gospel in September by the Presbytery of the Dakotas. He is pastor-elect of the Park Hill Church of Denver.

**Pittsburgh, Pa.**—Covenant Church was host for the fall meeting of the Women's Auxiliary of the Presbytery of Ohio. Mrs. D. L. Shields of Grace Chapel, Sewickley, spoke on "Sewickley's Need for a Reformed Witness." After lunch the ladies visited the new classrooms of the Wilksburg Christian School. The Rev. LeRoy Oliver later told the group of present opportunities in home missions, and an offering was received for the newest church in the denomination in Caney, Kansas.

**West Collingswood, N. J.** — Immanuel Church was saddened by the death from a heart attack on December 27 of long-time elder David Smith.

**Pittsgrove, N. J.** — The Reformed Men's Fellowship of Faith Church is sponsoring a course in Prophetic Studies taught by the Rev. Jay Adams of the Westminster Seminary faculty. The 13 sessions are being held on alternate Tuesdays through April 30. Pastor Andrew Wikholm is heard on the "Grace and Truth Hour" every Sunday at 12:45 p.m.

### Presbyterian Family Bible Conference at Cedar Lake, Indiana, in July

Through the combined efforts of interested persons from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Evangelical Synod), the first Presbyterian Family Bible Conference at Cedar Lake, Indiana, will be held the week of July 7 to 12. Since there are 59 churches of these two denominations within a day's drive of Cedar Lake, it is expected that a real need will be met among the families of this area.

The Rev. John C. Hills of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Franklin Square, New York, and Dr. Robert G. Rayburn, President of Covenant Theological Seminary, will be the speakers. Mr. John Frame, recently appointed instructor in Systematic Theology at Westminster Seminary, will be at the organ, and will lead a discussion group for teenagers. Mrs. John Werner, a teacher from the Chicago area, will instruct the young children.

The evening service, at which the Rev. Mr. Hills will be speaking, will be broadcast into the Chicago metropolitan area—bringing the word of God in its fullness to a large listening audience.

Facilities include swimming, sailing, motor-boating, soft ball, tennis, volley ball, shuffle board, play equipment for the little folk and nearby golf courses for the duffers. The cost will be within the financial reach of most of our families.

For further information you may contact the Rev. Calvin K. Cummings, 1608 Graham Blvd., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15235.

### TOUR THE BIBLE LANDS WITH ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIANS AND FRIENDS IN SEPTEMBER

*The Bob Grahams of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Chula Vista, Calif., will host a 15-day tour, via KLM, to Palestine, Nazareth, Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Athens, Corinth, Rome and Amsterdam, leaving New York City, September 5th. All expense total \$898. Write for folder and information to:*

Rev. Robert H. Graham  
775 Monserate Avenue  
Chula Vista, Calif. 92010



### IDENTIFICATION OF COVER MONTAGE

Special Issue on the OPC

(Left to right, top to bottom) Rev. Clarence Duff at Compassion of Jesus Hospital; 7401 Old York Road; Second Parish Church, Portland, Maine; First Church, Long Beach, entrance; First Church, Baltimore, worshippers; Oostburg Machen League rally; Mrs. Roberts and Messrs. Taylor and Jarvis in shipping room at 7401 Old York Road; Bethel Church, Grand Junction; Bayview Church, Chula Vista, fellowship dinner; Calvary Church, Cedar Grove; Winner Church; Calvary Church, Glenside, participants in installation of Rev. Henry Coray — Messrs. Young, DeVelde, Nicholas, Coray, Galbraith, and Mitchell; Rev. Albert Edwards, First Church, Portland, Oregon; Rev. Wallace Bell, Paradise Hills Bible class; West Hills Church, Harriman, Tennessee; El Camino Church, Goleta, VBS; Great Commission convention display.