

Stewardship of Nature: Haas

Ecumenical Service of Unity: Poundstone

Vital Missionary Programs: Ellis

Synod and General Assembly

Editor's Mail Box

Nearness of God: Rankin

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O LORD, our Lord,

how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained
strength because of thine enemies,

that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

what is man, that thou art mindful of him?

and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,
and hast crowned him with glory and honor.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;
thou hast put all things under his feet:

all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea,

and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

O LORD, our Lord,

how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

—Psalm 8

Stewardship of Nature

JOHN W. HAAS, JR.

Today we are bombarded with almost monotonous regularity with the problems that man faces because of the deterioration of his biological and physical environment. While fire, flood and famine are hardly new in history, a rapidly expanding population has employed the advances in technology in such a way that we face increasingly serious situations at both local and national levels.

Pollution of air, water and land; crass exploitation of natural resources; and use of technology without consideration of its effects on the surrounding environment have seriously affected the quality of life and, in the view of some, threaten the very existence of man.

Although the reader can easily provide examples of man's abuse of nature, the following may illustrate the dilemma posed by technological advance. Production of electricity through the burning of fossil fuels (coal and oil) or through nuclear reactor methods contributes a vast amount of heat which is most easily dissipated by flow into natural waters. Although the present rate of heat discharge is a problem to only a few local situations, a nine-fold expansion of the electrical power industry is planned for the near future. This coupled with an increased use of nuclear energy generating plants, which dissipate 60 percent more energy than fossil fuel plants, suggests that within thirty years about one-third of the average daily fresh water run-off in the U.S. will be required to carry off this heat.

Problem

The most serious problem is the effect of an increased temperature on the natural inhabitants of these waters. John R. Clark, writing in the March 1969 *Scientific American*, discusses this problem as he says,

Ecologists consider temperature to be the primary control of life on earth and fish, which as cold-blooded animals are unable

to regulate their body temperature, are particularly sensitive to changes in the thermal environment. Each aquatic species becomes adapted to the seasonal variations in temperature of the water in which it lives but it cannot adjust to the shock of abnormally abrupt change . . . An ecological system in dynamic balance is like a finely tuned automobile engine and damage to any component can disable or impair the efficiency of the entire mechanism. This means that if we are to expect a good harvest of fish, the temperature conditions in the water medium must strike a favorable balance for all of the components (algae and other plants, small crustaceans, bait fishes and so on) that constitute the food chain producing the harvested fish. For example, above 68 degrees estuarine eel grass does not reproduce. Above 90 degrees there is extensive loss of bottom life in river.

It is increasingly clear that the serious problems posed by thermal pollution must be considered in constructing new nuclear power plants, and industry and government must work together in the solution of the heat dissipation problem. The solution may be expensive. Clark also writes:

"Thermal pollution, of course, needs to be considered in the context of many other works of man that threaten the life and richness of our natural waters: the discharges of sewage and chemical wastes, dredging, diking, filling of wet lands and other interventions that are altering the nature, form and extent of these waters. The effects of any one of these factors might be tolerable, but the cumulative and synergistic action of all of them together seems likely to impoverish our environment drastically."

Abuses

A rapidly increasing population, with a tendency on the part of mankind for exploitation rather than conservation for a quick profit with no regard for long-term effects, has created situations which threaten the quality of our existence. A rapidly expanding technology has thrust products and services on a society which does not understand their long-term effects. In a bygone era man could pollute his environment with only local effect and not significantly bother his neighbor. If the situation became intolerable he



Dr. Haas is professor of chemistry and chairman of the division of natural sciences and mathematics at Gordon College.

could always migrate, for there was an inexhaustive amount of land awaiting his conquest. Man had little effect on the "balance of nature." Today this is not the case. We quickly reap the harvest from our abuse of nature. Improper land treatment methods are often the cause of floods, dust storms, famine, impotable water supplies and loss of an aesthetic sense and quality of life.

Who laid the foundations of the earth . . . that they turn out again to cover the earth. He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills . . . drink to every beast of the field . . . the wild asses quench their thirst . . . fowls of the heaven have their habitation . . . grass to grow for the cattle . . . the trees of the Lord are full of sap . . . where the birds make their nest . . . the young lions roar after their prey . . . the sun rises . . . He looketh on the earth (Psalm 104).

Lynn White, Jr., writing in the March 10, 1967 issue of *Science*, suggests that

Christianity bears a huge burden of guilt . . . Our science and technology have grown out of Christian attitudes towards man's relation to nature which are almost universally held not only by Christians and neo-Christians but also by those who fondly regard themselves as post-Christians . . .

(continued on page 87)

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Ecumenical Service of Unity

FRAMMIE POUNDSTONE

The air was crisp under the rain-washed and brilliant heavens as we ascended the steps of Grace Cathedral one Sunday last winter. We had come to witness a Service of Unity sponsored by the Northern California Council of Churches. Arriving a half-hour early, we entered the stately cathedral to the strains of mediaeval church music. The mellow trumpets and stirring brass of Gabrielli resounded through the cavernous stone vault, transporting us back to the times of Renaissance pomp and glory in the ancient cathedrals of Italy.

The mood is this 20th century cathedral gradually shifted into modern gear as a generation of long-haired men and mini-skirted women joined their more sedate elders in the crowded sanctuary. Soon a local, bearded and fuzzy-headed jazz troupe took its station in the choir, and with the swinging rhythms of guitar and sax and drums, Beethoven's Ninth Choral Symphony heralded the colorful procession.

A crucifer and lighted tapers borne by young boys draped in white were followed by over one hundred men and women, boys and girls, representing the clergy and laity of the sponsoring religious groups. In robes of shimmering white, blue, silver and scarlet, they walked in solemn (yet methinks, at times, swinging) step down the long center aisle as the congregation sang the words of the hymn, "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee." It was a "triumph song to life," to the Father-love reigning over all, and to the brother-love binding man to man, but not a word was whispered of the gospel. We read in our programs that the procession was led by an open Bible to symbolize that "this is a service of the Word."

Old and New

The old and the new were both juxtaposed and mingled, the new cancelling the impact of the old and the old moderating the blatant and bitter rebellion of the new. The congregation mumbled in unison the "ancient symbol

of the Christian faith," i.e., the Apostle's Creed, and then looked with rapt attention as the Old Testament reading from Ecclesiastes was interpreted in modern dance by a scantily dressed young woman. Before the steps of the altar, her lithe body acted out with sensuous movements the frenzied tempo of a pagan rite. Necks craned and flash bulbs popped to witness this modern "act of worship."

Again the congregation rose to sing the "exalting, inspiring" words of an American folk song. "Blowin' in the Wind," indeed, asks some searching questions about grave social injustices demanding our attention and answers. However, the singers' only conclusion is that "the answer is blowin' in the wind." Words and music rose with fervor and conviction to the vaulted ceiling. There was none to sing the final justice of a righteous God.

The "Now" Testament

In the New Testament lesson from Galatians 5, the reader twisted the obvious intent of the Apostle Paul to expound the doctrine of true liberty from ceremonial law won by Christ for all those who believe, to emphasize a social and personal liberty apart from any binding or absolute standard of righteousness. This false note was sounded again in the reading of the *Now* Testament, a lesson consisting of selections from the morning edition of the San Francisco Chronicle. In utter profanity, the name of Christ was united with the purposes and means of the anarchist, student revolts, and Christ was placed side by side in fellowship with the nihilists of our day. With blasphemous words, the

Miss Frances ("Frammie") Poundstone, U.C.L.A. graduate, is employed in one of the offices at Stanford University, Palo Alto. She is active in the Brentwood Orthodox Presbyterian Church and this perceptive article is taken from that church's monthly publication, "The Genevan Times."

political analysts and advocates of violent rebellion were hailed as the modern prophets of God. Our program reminded us that "this is a service of the Word."

An old Christian custom was revived in the Giving of the Peace. The clergy at the altar exchanged hearty handshakes and greetings, and then moving slowly down the nave, passed along that handshake and greeting, "The peace of the Lord be upon you." Each worshipper was asked to receive the peace and in return to pass it along to his neighbor in the same words. It must have been a beautiful and moving experience in the early church when all knew and believed that the true fellowship is "with the Father and with his son, Jesus."

Syllables of Confusion

Sermons come and sermons go, and this sermon went, mainly over our heads in faint and muffled echoes through the vault. A text of awesome beauty was read from Isaiah 6, in which the prophet, seeing a vision of the Almighty and holy God, bows in humble repentance and adoration to receive a commission to speak God's truth to a sinful people. Modern false prophets speak only in syllables of confusion. Our speaker chose to dwell on the insignificant phrases of the text and ignore the great central theme so that he could more easily manipulate the Word to fit his preconceived message.

"In the year that King Uzziah died" became the motif of the sermon, an expression of the dying of the old empires, the passing of the old orders and societies, even the death of kings, black Kings. Thus the preaching of social upheaval replaced the preaching of spiritual truths. As each sentence was spoken from the pulpit, it bounced off the hard stone walls and fell in garbled cadences upon waiting and expectant ears. God is not the author of such sinful confusion of mind; but when as at Babel men seek to exalt themselves and their own goals, God sends confusion of tongue to confound their purposes.

The service was concluded with the reading of a modern litany of the church. Though patterned after the responsive reading of older litanies, it conspicuously lacked any mention of redemption. A prayer for the ministry and clergy petitioned of the Lord to

make them "faithful in proclaiming the gospel," yet no gospel was presented in the forms nor witnessed to in the length of the entire service. Instead, man was exalted, the gospel of social unrest was extolled and Christ was reduced to mere symbol, manipulated to further man's Tower of Babel.

As we left the church that night a steady drizzle fell to dampen our bowed heads. The clouds had, once again, covered the face of the heavens. Looking back over our shoulders, we saw rising in a stormy sky only the black shell of a dark and darkened church.

Oh Lord, revive *Thy Church* to meet this hour.

Of special interest to the ladies

Vital Missionary Programs

NORMA R. ELLIS

The dictionary defines *vital* as essential, very important, living, lively, full of life and spirit. The programs which women's missionary societies present should indeed be vital in all shades of meaning of the word! If there are few who come, maybe it is because they do not feel that the programs are living and lively. Maybe they do not believe that the presentation gives the impression that the material is really important.

It is hoped that a glance at some specific programs will encourage us to go home and re-think the work of the women and stir us up to produce programs that are really worth coming to! 1. Let us consider programs generally. A good program requires first of all a *good subject*. To be good a subject not only should have intrinsic worthwhileness but should be appropriate to the occasion. A year's program on women of the Bible can be very good. But one church gave it a slant which made it much more meaningful by choosing women with problems much like ours

This material has been extracted from a report given at a meeting of the Philadelphia Presbyterial in Wilmington, Delaware on May 1. It was compiled from materials submitted by some of the churches.

Mrs. Ellis, wife of the pastor of Knox Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Silver Spring, Maryland, has contributed articles for these pages on church libraries and other topics dear to her heart. We heard of this presentation and asked for it.

and emphasizing these problems and the way they were handled.

2. While we are choosing good subjects we should be thinking of *titles* which will intrigue! A church which chooses to use "The Ten Commandments" for its year's program does not want to advertise "The Fourth Commandment"! "Two-Way Street"—with a panel cutting across the generations—will add interest and spirit and will draw more guests.

The "How" Of It

3. This takes us into the Manner of Presentation. *Panels* can be very stimulating and present a well-rounded picture. A program on the Sixth Commandment is called "Homicide by any other name . . ." and is presented by a panel including several nurses. Varied subjects such as diet, drugs, hate, etc.—subjects close to women and the home, are discussed.

A program on "The child on the mission field" turned out to be an amazing revelation! It was an *interview* of two young women raised on widely differing mission fields. Another interesting interview was one in which the customs and philosophy of Ethiopia were drawn out of the president of the Ethiopian Student Group of the Washington, D. C. area.

Visual aids are not just for children. Some speakers to adults are particularly successful using flannelgraph, charts, maps, chalk, stick-figures or symbols. The program on "The Seventh Commandment" is called "Who really teaches sex?" Incorporated in the discussion will be the Concordia filmstrip

on sex education. The American Bible Society has filmstrips on John Eliot and on translating the Bible which have been used to introduce missionary programs with some success.

But even without these secondary means or methods of presentation, if the leader really believes that her subject is important, if she herself is full of life and spirit, the chances are very good that her enthusiasm will be contagious and that her audience will be caught up with the importance of the subject and be "quickenened"!

Preparation and Materials

4. Behind all of this there is the need for adequate time for preparation. Occasionally a spur of the moment meeting turns out to be successful. But this is despite hurried planning, not because of it. God is a God of order and decency. He will give us words to say if we are brought to trial for our faith or put on the spot, we are told. But we cannot assume that we may depend on him to do this as a substitute for prayerful planning in advance. The planning of a year's program in advance has this advantage of assuring that the leaders know well ahead what their topic is and can be reading and studying and thinking and praying.

5. A good program presupposes good materials. The program on the "The Ten Commandments for Women" referred to already is in progress now in the Silver Spring church. Each month the leader passes on three source books' to the next leader. These books have such a wealth of material that they, along with the Shorter Catechism and the Bible, provide much more than would be needed for a really thought-provoking program for the year.

Every church, no matter how small, should be building up its source materials for educating its people. One fine way to do this is to purchase for use in specific programs good materials, which will thus have present use but will thereafter be available for other use. This applies mainly to books, but also to vertical file materials which should be carefully culled and organized for easy accessibility. *Guardians*, *Messengers* and mimeographed biographies of our missionaries (available

Note 1: Watson, *The Ten Commandments*: Banner of Truth Trust, 1962. Von Balen, *Our Christian Heritage*: Eerdmans, 1949. Kuiper, *Sermons on the Ten Commandments*: Zondervan, 1951.

from the Missions Committees) form an excellent start for such a vertical file.

"So Few Come"

6. Can you imagine having a fine subject, with an intriguing title, presented by an enthusiastic speaker in an interesting fashion, or programs which were the result of long preparation and the consulting of many fine sources, and then having the meeting a failure because so few women appeared? The Publicity Committee, or whatever you call your ladies who are responsible for stimulating attendance, is really very important to the program. Attractive posters, flyers, bulletin notices, and booklets for the entire year, all underscoring the alluring title or throwing out hints of what is to be discussed and how it affects the woman herself in U.S.A., 1969, are helpful.

Needed also are women who, again, believe all of this is *important* and *living*. We women—and why cannot all of us be this way?—should take it upon ourselves to invite others to "taste and see that the Lord is good." Because our programs, if they are vital, will be presenting the Lord, won't they?

Thus far we have spoken mainly of some principles of building a good program with specific ideas injected here and there. We may mention some specific individual meetings which societies have found successful in their situation. An occasional Men's Night to assure the men's inclusion in the treat of hearing a missionary speaker has been reported. And a Missionary Fellowship Pot-luck Supper for families meets this need of broadening interest, too. An exchange night with a neighboring church adds interest for some churches. Others have had showers for missionaries who are about to have or who have had a new baby.

Variety in Programs

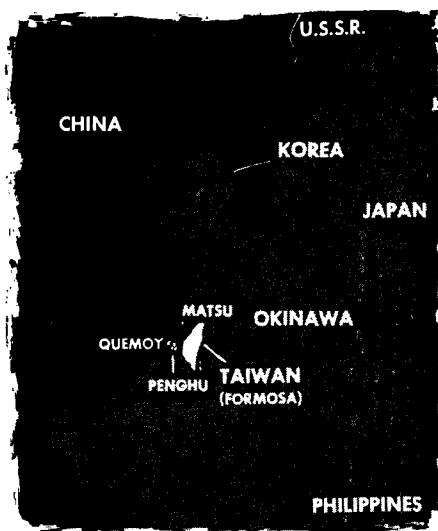
One church has had two annual spring banquets, fancy lovely affairs such as women enjoy and geared for interest and appropriateness for guests of other or no religious faith. A special speaker from out of state was invited to come and present the gospel. This was a practical means of personal missionary work, on the part of the women themselves.

The advantages of a year's program in advance have been mentioned. One

such program on "The Ten Commandments for Woman"—titled "Law and Love"—has been referred to several times. Another such program has been mentioned also, namely, "God's Mirror for Women." This was the year on Women of the Bible, viewed from the standpoint of their similarity to us and the way in which they and we can see ourselves and deal with our own situation.

Have you ever spent a whole year on one country? Call it (for example) "Japan in Depth" if you dare! Have a Japanese dinner (and invite one of our missionaries or missionary associates to help you with it and to speak, or invite a local Japanese student to come and help). Have in May a program of "Mothers and Daughter of Japan," emphasizing social customs, dress, etc. Have a color film from your public library (free) on the country itself. Have a "Story of missions in Japan," stressing our own church's work. Have an evening presenting the other religions of Japan. There are endless possibilities! An evening with some attention to Japanese flower arrangements and their significance would draw in neighbors if it were well planned and advertised.

A year on "Modern Means of Missions" proved very helpful. Included were programs on the gospel communicated by T.V., mass evangelism, special groups evangelism, the use of audio-visuals, the modern film as a media for the gospel, etc., etc. The printed word through the work of our Christian Education Committee was of course included.



Our Favorite

Probably the favorite year in Silver Spring for some time was 1968. So much effort was put into it not only by individual leaders but by the Program Committee and by our missionaries on the field, that perhaps other societies would like to try to adapt this year's program to their own situation with the help of the materials which Knox is preparing to make available.

The title of the year's program was simply a direct quote from the Apostle Paul from his letter to the church of Ephesus. He wrote to them in a personal vein in order "that ye also may know my affairs and how I do." This program was presented in order that we, as women in the United States, might know the affairs of the missionary women on the foreign field and how they do. It was an attempt to look squarely at their unique (in some ways) situation and to see how it is with them. In the course of the year we examined the problems of learning to communicate in a new language, learning to cope with strange customs and cultures, being a mother and dealing with the education of our children, facing political roadblocks, celebrating Christmas on the field, etc. The programs were warm and personal because so much of the material was gleaned from a questionnaire which was sent to all of our women missionaries and which they were so full and faithful in answering. In fact, they showed so much interest in hearing about the programs themselves and being able to hear what the other women wrote, that this is one reason we plan to organize this material and make it available.³

Are you excited? Just thinking about the possibilities of what *can* be done is something to become excited about. Pick a good program committee that is willing to dig in. Share your enthusiasm with others. And let us attempt to make our programs next year really vital—essential, important, living, lively and full of life and spirit!

Note 2: Ephesians 6:21a.

Note 3: Societies interested in receiving a booklet which includes materials for a year's program should address their request to Women's Missionary Society, Knox Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Granville Drive and Sutherland Road, Silver Spring, Maryland 20901. There will be a slight charge to cover the expense of preparing this material.

The 149th Synod Of The Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod

An Interpretative Report by RICHARD W. GRAY

"The threat is worse than the execution." This old saying often used by chess players is the best way this old chess player can epitomize The 149th Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod.

There were lots of threats in the months before synod. Reports of a snowballing antagonism to continuing the OP-RP merger talks. An overture by a local session (our Form of Government requires Presbyteries to forward overtures with or without approval) calling for a return to the Harvey Cedars type resolution on the Christian Life. This is virtually the same kind of statement that contributed to the separation of 1937. An overture asking for *carte blanche* condemnation of Dispensationalism. The Masonic question. A floor fight on taking Federal aid for Covenant College.

Delegates were greeted by the Covenant College student personnel (alive with interest in their church) with words such as: "Well, I hear you're going to have a rough synod." Women, gathering for the synodical, were trying to manipulate their program so as to be sure to be at the sederunt (a good old RP word) when someone lit the fuse.

But the fireworks never came. The synod may have proved that the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod has come of age. No strong leaders emerged to help excessively dependent younger men. The younger men have strength, vision and poise. They don't seem to blindly follow their professors or their former pastors. Strong direction was given by the moderator, Dr. Wilbur Wallis of Covenant Seminary.

Basis of Union

When Dr. Robert Rayburn read the Preamble to the Proposed Basis (not Plan) of Union, the anxieties of the reluctant seemed to subside. The statesmanlike approach to the problems which have kept the sister churches apart allayed fears that a steam-roller

had been readied. What distaste for their OP brethren remained seemed to be neutralized by the magnificent address of the fraternal delegate, the Rev. Arthur Olson. His genuine appreciation for the RP Church as well as his openness about the problems of the OP communion was completely disarming. Apparently, the Rev. Donald MacNair was the same way with the OP Assembly, for he repeated the substance of his fraternal delegate speech to our synod. Can it be said that OP's and RP's are beginning to see themselves as their brethren of the opposite communion see them? It seems so. Such church-awareness will produce fruit. The debate on sending down for study the Proposed Basis of Union was brief—perhaps because there will be ample opportunity for dialogue on the presbytery and session level.

Dr. Thomas Cross, whom many of the reluctant looked to for leadership, was elected to the Fraternal Relations Committee. This was a wholesome move, for Dr. Cross has usually shown a sense of proportion in anything he has debated.

Covenant College

Longest time at synod was spent on Covenant College. Dr. Barnes told of the three new buildings to be erected soon on Lookout Mountain, thanks to government help. Those who weren't thankful for federal aid hammered away in their questioning of him and he responded with the wisdom and wit of a Solomon.

If the union takes place Covenant College will be one of the OP's chief gains, in the opinion of this reporter. It is probably the sector of the RP cause nearest the OP in outlook and temperament. In May, the Trustees dropped the movie rule for a year's trial. The students, faculty and administration will use this as a means of discussion and education. Dr. Robert DeMoss, OP elder, was elected to the Trustees, joining OP elder Daniel McIlwaine.

Next in intensity was the discussion of the Lodge questions. After considerable debate, a study of an earlier synod was resurrected and up-dated. It handles the problem much like the study of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Thorny Questions for Study

Similar also to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was the way in which some thorny questions were handled. They were referred to a committee to produce a study, hopefully for the guidance of sessions and presbyteries. This was how the request for a denunciation of Dispensationalism was treated. The chairman of the Fraternal Relations Committee argued in debate that this might encourage the suspicions of the OP brethren about the RP's on Dispensationalism. The synod was about to overwhelmingly issue a brief denunciation (judging by the votes on amendments) when a study by a committee was moved and adopted. This was because many felt a more careful and contemporary statement was in order.

After much briefer discussion, the overture requesting a new statement on the Christian Life (so-called "worldly practices") was accorded similar treatment.

Covenant Seminary reported significant advances, including a larger student body and additions to the faculty which include Dr. Robert Reymond, an editor for a series by the Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., and Dr. George Knight (the latter will begin in the fall of 1970).

National Presbyterian Missions, through its director, presented a carefully-conceived study of Inner City Missions. The synod asked NPM to establish works on the model recommended.

CTI (Christian Training, Inc.) reported the publication of a series of officer-training booklets. CTI is not duplicating good Reformed literature now in existence.

World Presbyterian Missions reported on its vast outreach around the world, showing it is facing the peculiar problems of missions in our day.

The magazine committee presented the idea of a small-newspaper-format organ to replace *The Reporter*. Joel Belz, bristling with ideas and deeply committed to the Reformed faith, was appointed editor.

The Presbyterian
GUARDIAN

EDITOR

ROBERT E. NICHOLAS



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Highlights of the 36th OPC General Assembly

As anticipated the attention of the 36th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church focused on three major issues, although other important matters received due consideration. More than one hundred ministers were in attendance, and thirty sessions were represented in meetings that lasted five days instead of the usual four.

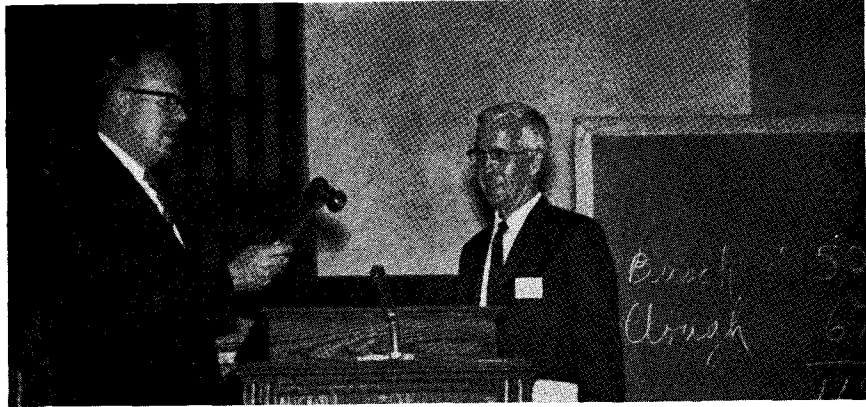
During the course of its sessions at Knox Church of Silver Spring, Maryland, commissioners heard fraternal greetings from the Rev. Messrs. Donald MacNair of the Reformed Presbyterians, Evangelical Synod; Harold Harrington of the Reformed Presbyterians (Covenanter); and Esler Shuart of the Christian Reformed Church.

The statistical report showed an increase in both membership and giving during 1968, although at a slower rate. Contributions averaged \$224 per communicant, but the report of the Stewardship Committee indicated that the 1970 budgets would have to hold the line at the 1969 level, and that no expansion could be planned despite crying needs. The Assembly urged "every congregation, in the strongest possible terms, to adopt a benevolence budget which will raise the vision and the financial stewardship of the congregation."

The Stewardship Committee was also requested to review its functions, structure, and lines of communication and report recommendations for improving its effectiveness.

Ecumenicity

Lengthy debate preceded action on the recommendations of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations looking toward eventual



Former Moderator Arthur Olson about to hand the gavel to newly elected Moderator Ralph Clough.

merger with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. The decision was to send the proposed Basis of Union to presbyteries and sessions for study, requesting these courts to give thorough consideration to such problems between the two bodies as differences in the forms of government, the force of ordination vows, the doctrines of guidance and Christian liberty, the matter of secret societies, and the propriety of the church operating educational institutions.

Suggestions and criticisms of the proposed Basis are to be submitted to the Committee not later than early 1971. Meanwhile the joint committees of the two denominations will be working on a preliminary Plan of Union, which will later be submitted for study to the lower judicatories.

A special committee of the Assembly to deal with a complaint against the Presbytery of Wisconsin (Midwest) recommended that the complaint be denied and that a committee of five be elected to study the extent to which the Standards faithfully reflect Scriptural teaching on the fourth commandment. The Assembly, however, after much debate on the ramifications of a complex issue, came to no decision except to elect such a study committee and direct it to act also as a board of inquiry on the case in question, referring the recommendation and a substitute motion to it.

The Assembly, following the recommendation of its Committee on Interchurch Relations, voted to inform the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland of its intention to terminate the longstanding sister-church relationship. This was done in the face of increasing serious differences between the

two communions and the practical difficulties of trying to fulfil the responsibilities presupposed in such a relationship.

Other Matters

A few other actions of interest may be noted:

A committee of three was appointed to cultivate the fellowship of and give assistance to people of Reformed convictions in denominations with which the OPC does not have formal relationship, for the purpose of advancing a more united Reformed fellowship and testimony.

The Trustees of the Assembly were authorized to secure legal counsel with a view to filing a brief as *amicus curiae* with the U. S. Supreme Court in the cases of two Savannah congregations *versus* the Presbytery of Savannah of the Presbyterian Church (Southern).

Resolutions of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod concerning race relations were ordered sent to presbyteries and sessions for study in the light of Scripture and for the purpose of examining their practices with respect to incorporating members of minority races in the life and witness of the church.

A theological committee of three was erected to prepare a reply to the questions on Scripture and inspiration raised by the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and requested by the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

The 37th General Assembly is to meet beginning Monday evening, July 6, 1970 at First Church of Portland, Oregon.

—R. E. N.

Note: A full report of the 36th Assembly will appear in the July-August issue.

EDITOR'S MAIL BOX

Dear Sir:

The letter of the Rev. H. Wilson Albright on "Moonlighting for Missions" has stirred me to write on another aspect of the subject. With our limited funds and the large number of men soon to enter our ministry, we must do some re-thinking of missions, not in the message, but in the method.

We must catch the spirit of the fathers of our church, many of whom lived in basements of churches, went deer hunting, not so much for sport, as necessity, were deprived of many of the luxuries of their contemporaries, and saw the wolf approach their door often.

They counted not their lives dear unto themselves to preach a clear, simple, gospel from an infallible and authoritative Bible. God supplied their needs in ways too numerous to explain here. Silver and gold had they little. What they gave to us and the world was of inestimable value. They were called by God into the ministry. They completed their training under men who had hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. They went out, not knowing many times where they went. God opened doors. Mountains were moved. The lame were made whole. Those dead in trespasses and sins came alive through the power of Jesus.

Young Men Challenged

Mr. Albright's point is well taken, that the members of the church should tighten their belts. There is also a need for these young men to be challenged as well. Mormon young men give two years of their life, at their own expense, to propagate their damnable heresies. The men in our armed forces are risking and many times losing limb, job, family stability, and their own lives to take Hamburger Hill or to defend the 38th parallel.

Could not our young men, inspired under the leadership of the Captain of their salvation, heed the call of a needy family or two in North Carolina, Texas, or Ohio? Instead of raising the salary scale of the home missionaries by such an alarming percentage, why not, like the eagle, push them out of the nest. The wonderful thing is that the young eagles usually fly!

Sincerely yours,
JONATHAN D. MALE
Ocoee, Florida

Dear Sir:

As R. B. Kuiper read a report on Secret Societies at the 17th General Assembly (1950) he did some boasting about the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. We can do what some other churches cannot. We allow sessions to complain against sessions—even in a different presbytery. We allow presbyteries to complain against presbyteries, and to appeal their differences to general assembly. He particularly recommends the avenue of complaint "if a session fails to do its duty with reference to Masons that are members of the church or apply for membership." He boasted that "a more nearly fool-proof provision would be difficult to devise."

But on page 44 of the April *Guardian* the local sessions are pictured as being final judges of such matters: "Some have acted in one way, some in another."

And in the matter of Sabbath observance, supposedly the same holds true, and the assembly should perhaps shrug its shoulders: "How far ought a general assembly to go in requiring it (a presbytery) to do what it has not judged that it must do?" (*idem*). Can we not boast with R.B. that "complaints can always be carried to the general assembly of the church"? Is it not the glory of a Jerusalem council that it can decide about Antioch?

For the *Guardian* flatly to say that the position complained about in the Wisconsin Presbytery "is essentially that of Calvin" is very debatable—as the recent Assembly will bear witness. Who can say that if Calvin had lived, and debated the issue, he would not have adopted the position of the Westminster Confession? But in any case, *we* have adopted it. We believe it practically and systematically duplicates the counsel of our true Father, and the teaching of our true Master.

"Allowable divergence" is something to drive a truck through. At one time, it was thought to allow Arianism, later, Pelagianism, later, Arminianism. The jots and tittles of Scripture have their bearing on the closing of loopholes, and we should beware lest we break one of the least of the commandments, and by our corporate witness, teach men so.

True maturity for the church is achieved by the process of hammering out its corporate witness on an anvil composed of earnest Christian hearts.

Any man who wants to change the confessional standard should be prepared for that kind of ordeal. Allowing a change to go by default may be the approved method in some churches, but surely not in a sound church, which is anxious for sound presbyteries and sessions.

Sincerely yours,
EDWARDS E. ELLIOTT
Garden Grove, Calif.

Error Corrected

A number of readers called attention to a strange lapse in the April issue. As Mr. Elliott wrote: "There is a ghost on page 49, col. 3, which needs some exorcism. For what kind of liberty is it, which allows a man to marry his widow's sister? We have renounced the religion of Rosemary's Baby." Substitute "deceased wife's sister," please.

* * *

Dear Sir:

In the March issue of the *Guardian* there appeared an article written by the Rev. Edward Kellogg entitled "Conference on New Testament Evangelism". It was an account of his recent trip to Florida where he and other Christian workers attended the Kennedy Conference on New Testament Evangelism.

In his article Mr. Kellogg asked the following question: "I wonder what would happen to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church if across the denomination pastors and laymen zealously plunged into such an effort (of evangelism)?" Speaking for Pastor Steever of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of San Francisco and myself, I wish to answer that question.

Question Answered

For five days in April our two congregations held a Missionary Conference at which Mr. Wallace Bell of San Diego was the principal speaker. Mr. Bell's exhortation to us was that if we dare to call ourselves Christians we have no option but to witness the Good News to all men, beginning with the lost right outside our church doors. His challenge was then made very practical during several training sessions in which he taught how to present the gospel using a diagrammed form for clarity and emphasis.

Actually, the diagram is but a miniature course in systematic theology including the doctrines of election and regeneration within its scope. One

member of the Brentwood congregation called it the "Magna Charta of Salvation"—and so it is. The whole story of salvation, from creation to final redemption, is told simply while it is being visualized on a single sheet of paper. Enough is shown of the central message of the Bible so that anyone, even a child, can comprehend the meaning of the gospel of Christ and grasp its glory.

After the training sessions, Mr. Bell took some of the men of the church with him into various homes where he demonstrated in true-life situations how to present the gospel in this manner. Within the week, many were able to use the same chart in their witnessing with amazing results.

Under Mr. Bell's instruction my own ministry was touched. In the past, apart from systematic preaching, my own personal witness was often characterized by lack of thoroughness and focus. Now, with the aid of Mr. Bell's diagram, I have been enabled, by God's grace, to present the Good News with greater clarity and power. Every day of the week following the Conference, I was able to speak to others using the "Salvation Map," as I call it. Within that same week both Mr. Steever and I witnessed the conversion of friends and others somehow related to our congregations.

Church Awakened

The church is being awakened. We have seen a new and lively willingness and readiness on the part of our membership to go and reach lost souls for Christ. Don't misunderstand! There is no magic or hidden power in a mere diagram—it is just that it presents "the old, old, story of Jesus and his love."

The answer to Mr. Kellogg's question is that God has graciously "opened a door, and no man can shut it," an open door of unlimited opportunity to witness the gospel here in the Bay Area. "Pastors and laymen" have "zealously plunged into such an effort." Pastor Krabbendam, also, is rejoicing with us for the Lord has worked similarly in the Sunnyvale congregation through the influence of Mr. Bell's ministry there last December. Our consciences have been so pricked and our hearts have been so encouraged in the last few weeks that Mr. Krabbendam, Mr. Steever and I have begun meeting on Mondays at 6:00 a.m. for prayer and mutual exhortation.

Perhaps your readers have never heard of nor seen this diagram. If you are interested, you may write Paradise Hills Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 6374 Potomac St., San Diego, California (92114) for further information.

This, then, is an answer to Mr. Kellogg's urgent question. We heartily concur with him that "...it seems high time that we lived up to our claim of being a Bible-Believing Church and got about this business."

Your fellow servant,
Ericus ille Clericus
CARL E. ERICKSON
South San Francisco

* * *

Dear Sir:

Perhaps you will permit a few words *a propos* of matters discussed in recent issues of *The Presbyterian Guardian*, especially in the April issue. Because of delays in surface mail the April issue did not reach me until the latter part of June. Hence the word "recent" has to be understood in the chronology of delivery at my domicile.

Space will not permit a survey of the history anent subscription to the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. But I do believe the history will show that the said Church had never officially determined the precise intent and effect of Question 2 of the formula of subscription as it was taken over by The Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The position argued by Dr. Charles Hodge in the article frequently referred to (in *The Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* for 1958) has, no doubt, been the understanding upon which many of those subscribing to the formula have proceeded for generations. And it is easy to understand how this interpretation could be construed as the true intent. It should be observed, however, that it is not accurate to speak of subscribing to the system of doctrine contained in the Confession and Catechisms. At least it is not sufficient. It is true that in these documents there is a system of doctrine and the formula implies that this system of doctrine is the same as *the* system of doctrine "taught in the holy Scriptures." Subscription is, therefore, to nothing less. But, on subscribing, we "sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms... as containing the system of doctrine taught in the holy Scriptures."

Respecting the teaching of the Confession and Catechisms on the question of the Sabbath, please allow me a few observations. When the formula refers to the system of doctrine taught in the holy Scriptures and to the Confession and Catechisms as containing this system, it will surely be granted that the system includes ethics as well as what is sometimes, more specifically, called doctrine. The space devoted to ethics in the subordinate standards, especially in the Catechisms, would permit no other conclusion. And, of course, to exclude ethics from the system of doctrine taught in Scripture would be preposterous. Now, on the assumption that the formula involves subscription to the system of doctrine contained in the Confession and Catechisms, an assumption not in question in the articles that have appeared in *The Presbyterian Guardian*, I submit that the teaching respecting the Sabbath and its continuing obligation belongs integrally to the system of doctrine set forth in these documents. More specifically, this teaching belongs to the *ethic* of these standards.

Sabbath Question

This appears, first of all, in the Confession, Chapter XIX, Section II. The implications for the Sabbath are set forth in Chapter XXI, Sections VII and VIII. In the Catechisms this position is more fully expanded (L. C. QQ. 116-121; S. C. QQ. 58-62). To maintain that this sustained and explicit block of teaching is outwith the scope of the ordination pledge in Question 2 of the formula is surely to renounce what is involved in receiving and adopting the Confession and Catechisms even on the most restricted interpretation of the intent of the Question concerned. The gravest ethical issues are here at stake. A confessional creed is a bond of fellowship as well as an instrument of witness. It is one thing to question *obiter dicta* of which Dr. Clair Davis gave an example in the April issue (p. 48, col. 3). It is another to diverge from a principal position woven into the texture of confessional documents and belonging to the system formulated.

One more word, Mr. Editor. I am convinced that Calvin's view of the Sabbath has been seriously misrepresented for lack of care in examining the totality of his teaching and proper analysis in this light of his statements

in the *Institutes*. But, in any case, one wonders what Calvin's view has to do with the adoption of standards in terms of a formula which he did not frame.

JOHN MURRAY
Badbea, Bonar Bridge
Ardgay, Ross-shire
Scotland

* * *

Darkest Moment

Dear Sir:

I feel constrained to write a comment concerning the recent General Assembly. I would term it the Assembly's darkest moment. It had to do, not with church union or the sabbath question, but with the carrying out of our Lord's Great Commission.

It began when the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension reported that unless additional funds become available *no* new fields could be opened in 1969 or 1970. It came to a climax when the Stewardship Committee reported the failure of our churches to give enough to meet the budget for Home and Foreign Missions and Christian Education in 1968, and feared we probably wouldn't meet it in 1969—and when the Assembly adopted a budget for 1970 that was \$50,000 less than what the Committees actually need.

But the most crushing part of it is that I, as a pastor, have not led my own congregation to do its fair share. My hope is that next year will be different, that our congregation, and others too, will meet their fair share; that the budget will be wonderfully over-subscribed; and that our Committees will be able to launch a great new expansion on every front—to the glory of our Triune God.

Sincerely,
WILSON ALBRIGHT
Hacienda Heights, Calif.

For young readers

Letter from Gary

After a long time, I am writing you again. Can you believe it? My last letter was March 1967. I am sorry for not writing sooner.

One day I was talking with my new Mother. I was upset in my mind about my future. Big people had put me first in one place and then in another. I asked if I could stay with my new

Mother and Dad now. Mommy said that I could stay with them for ever and ever. That made me feel good. Mother and I prayed together to God that this might be possible. The social worker tried to remove me from the Phillips home once after that but God answered our prayers. I was baptized on June 30, 1963, as my foster parents requested. They wanted me to come under God's wonderful covenant promises.

The year 1965 was quite a year for our family. Mommy and Dad went to see a lawyer. I wondered why. But I soon found out. On July 20th we went to the courthouse. We were only in the courtroom a short time when we were told to stand up as Judge Dillett was coming in to call the court to order. Can you guess why we were there? The lawyer spoke first and said some things about me and about the Phillipses. Dad was asked some questions and then all three of us were told to stand up. Then, as I hid behind Mother and Dad, the judge passed sentence: "Gary, I have considered your case and now declare you to be the legally adopted son of the Rev. and Mrs. Henry D. Phillips, etc."

Now I have a new name and a whole new family. There are two brothers, a sister, aunts and uncles, cousins—stretching all the way from Texas to New Jersey and grandparents in North Carolina. Even a cousin, David Moore, and his family way over in Tokyo.

Seven days after I was adopted our church and friends from Oostburg gave Mother and Dad a surprise Silver Anniversary party. The mock "shotgun wedding" had everyone laughing.

But we went East for a real wedding in September. My older brother, Stephen, was going to be married to Jeanne Lutz in the Pennsylvania Dutch country. From the wedding I went to stay with Aunt Louise and Uncle August in their great big stone house in the country. Then shortly after school started I stayed with Uncle John and Aunt Peg in Allentown. I attended the Franklin School there. It had to be torn down after I got through with it—if you don't believe me, ask Uncle John! (Really it was torn down because of its age.)

On the 28th of September we all drove over to New York. Mother, Dad and Susan went aboard the *S.S. United States*—the fastest passenger ship on



Two years ago by means of another letter Mr. Phillips told something of the early years of this Winnebago Indian lad who is now their adopted son.

the ocean at the time. They were going to Europe for my brother Henry's wedding to Mary Pomerene in Germany. Henry was stationed in Friedberg-Hessen. I enjoyed exploring the ship before it sailed.

Uncle John took me to the World's Fair in New York. I also had my first train ride while East.

The next summer I attended Honey Rock Camp, where Stephen and Henry had worked and where Susan works again this summer. I ran away from camp, but they knew I'd return when I got hungry. I did! There I learned to swim better. They also showed us how to swamp a canoe and right it again safely. I'm not afraid of the water anymore.

Our family had a wonderful reunion at the Presbyterian Family Week at Harvey Cedars the summer of '67. One of the speakers was Dr. Harold S. Laird, a friend of the Phillips family for over fifty years. Henry took me for a ride in his Folbot—like a Kayak. The only thing we caught when we went fishing was a blow fish. When you tickled its stomach it would blow itself up twice its size. Mother and I love to fish.

If I can get some time from fishing this summer I may write you another letter.

So long,
GARY

Nature Stewardship

(from page 78)

What we do about ecology depends on our ideas of man-nature relationship. More science and more technology are not going to get us out of our present ecologic crisis, until we find a new religion or rethink our old one.

White considers that the major source of our crisis is that science and technology are endowed with a "Christian arrogance" toward nature which is centered in the conviction that man and nature are two things, that man is master, and that "no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purposes."

Scripture

This domination of nature by man is clear in Scripture through the command to Adam in Genesis 1:28:

And God blessed them and said to them: Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

This was later repeated to Noah following the flood. He was told to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the air and upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea: into your hand they are delivered.

It is however as stewards that we have this dominion, for in the words of Psalm 24:

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and all they that dwell therein.

Space does not allow a detailed comment on the charges of White or his suggestion that we adopt the attitude of St. Francis of Assisi who "tried to depose man from his monarchy over creation and set up a democracy of all God's creatures."

Responsibility

It is true that individual Christians have in the past been among the spoilers of nature. It may be suggested that they with the non-Christian often acted from ignorance. The Christian has no more insight on science than his neighbor. It is however when a danger is recognized that the Christian should not be slow to take corrective action. Examples could be cited where organizations controlled by Christians have recognized the problem and are leaders in their industry in employing conservation methods.

However the Christian has acted in the past, the Bible clearly states his responsibility to God and toward his fellow man (and the coming generation) in the use of the resources that he has been given.

What can the individual Christian do in these complex situations which have such large-scale implications? First he can start at home by examining his own attitudes and behavior. Are his actions consistent with the desire to conserve and build up that which God has provided for man's use? Our attitudes toward our own bodies through proper dietary habits and willingness to follow good health practices such as exercise, adequate rest, etc. are important here. It is hard to follow the reasoning of Christians who smoke. That the ingestion of carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, hydrogen cyanide and a multitude of much more complex compounds is hardly beneficial to health is reflected in the high incidence of emphysema, cancer and heart disease associated with smoking. A smoker would appear to be unaware of the pollution effects of this habit on the local environment as he at times causes acute discomfort to persons in his vicinity.

The Christian has a responsibility toward his children, encouraging by word and example an appreciation for God's handiwork. We can encourage practices and attitudes which conserve rather than break down and act with good judgment on the land surrounding the family home.

The Christian must consider the effects of his employment and business activities as well. Too often the dollar sign and immediate gain have caused us to ignore the long-range effects of our activities. The problem is complex.

We must however work toward a solution. The Christian must sometimes support unpopular causes. This may involve an element of sacrifice which one does not find in one's neighbor but which nonetheless is our responsibility.

Involvement

We should be aware of local and regional problems. We should be informed on the questions and actively support those organizations which deal with these issues—offering leadership where needed. In "salting the earth" the Christian should be known and identified with those on the side of conservation rather than with those who would exploit.

The unwillingness of individuals and communities to practice proper procedures and the potent influence of big business to resist change has required government involvement at increasing levels. This has been distasteful to the Christian who is conservative in political outlook and he has tended to react against the government position and conservation because government is involved rather than on the basis of the issue itself. If we act responsibly on the local level, government intervention with its often unhappy effects will be less frequent. It is at the point that a summation of local effects becomes a national problem, that the national government must take action.

In our "enjoyment of God" let us work to conserve and build upon that which he has given in such a way as to allow future generations to enjoy that which we find in the world of nature. In so doing we will be faithful stewards of that which has for a time been put in our charge.

THE NEARNESS OF GOD

JOHN C. RANKIN

**Speak to him, then, for he hears
And Spirit with spirit can meet;
Closer is he than breathing
And nearer than hands and feet.**

The Psalmist has said, "I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4). And as for the Lord himself: "He that sent me is with me: the

Father hath not left me alone; for I speak always those things that please him" (John 8:29). What is this that is affirmed by both Master and believer? What shall we make of this "withness"?

God is, of course, everywhere—in a certain sense with everyone—the omniscient, omnipresent God. By him we exist. All are the work of his hand.

Mr. Kenneth Austin
P.O. Box 95
Oakland City, Ind. 47560

THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN

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"In him we live and move and have our being," for we are "the offspring" of God. So it is in a general sense; a nearness known or unknown as the case may be.

But there is a special sense and meaning of his nearness which is known to its possessors; known to them always and everywhere, and to them alone. This is a nearness granted only to, and strictly reserved for, his own. It is made known to them as recipients of his saving grace in Christ. Being recipients of the grace of God in Christ, these chosen ones are objects of God's special love and care, which covers everything and takes care of all their good in every way, both here and hereafter—both for time and for eternity. It is his love to his own in Christ.

Loving Care

Constant evidence of this special love and care is given in a never failing sense of his presence. "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him; to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them" (Ps. 145:18,19).

What nation is there so great who hath God so nigh into them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? (Deut. 4:7). "The Lord is nigh into them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be

of a contrite spirit" (Ps. 34:18). "Ye are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13).

While it is true that God is everywhere, there is no such thing as physical contact with him. For "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). As Jesus said to the woman of Samaria: "The hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23).

True, as used in this case, has the effect of excluding all who are not true as real worshippers at all; for both they and their worship are false. None but those who are worshippers of God in spirit and in truth are worshippers of God at all. As Jesus said: "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22).

Three things may be mentioned with regard to God's nearness. It is nearness in light, in life, and in love.

(1) It is nearness in light. It is, of course, a sense of light and of enlightenment. The eyes of the soul are opened and enlightened to see God and to discern the things of God. As the poet has said:

**Where thou art present darkness
cannot be.**

**Midnight is glorious noon, O Lord,
with thee.**

(2) It is nearness in life. If there be no such thing as physical contact or nearness with God, there is nearness in spirit. As personal beings, made in his image, we have personal contact and relation with him who is our Maker and our God.

(3) It is a nearness in love.

O Hope of every contrite heart,

O Joy of all the meek,

To those who fall, how kind thou art!

How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah this

Nor tongue nor pen can show:

The love of Jesus, what it is

None but his loved ones know.

Mr. Rankin is a retired Orthodox Presbyterian pastor. Author of *A Believer's Life of Jesus*, he resides in Worcester, New York.

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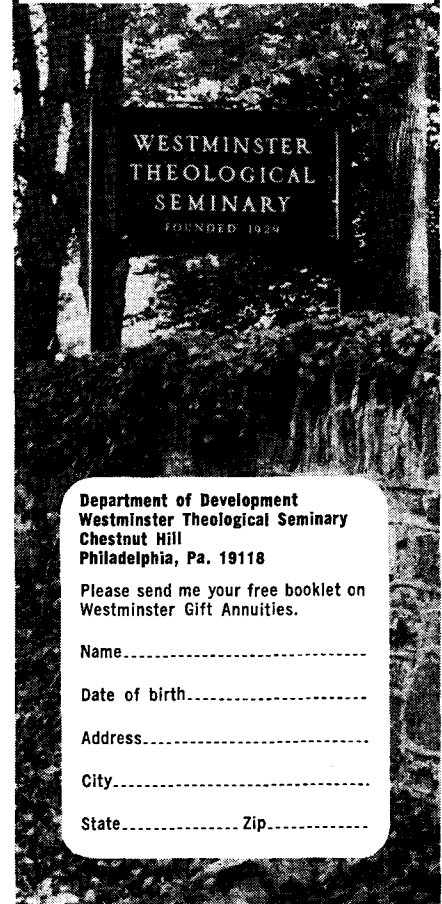
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