

# The Presbyterian Guardian

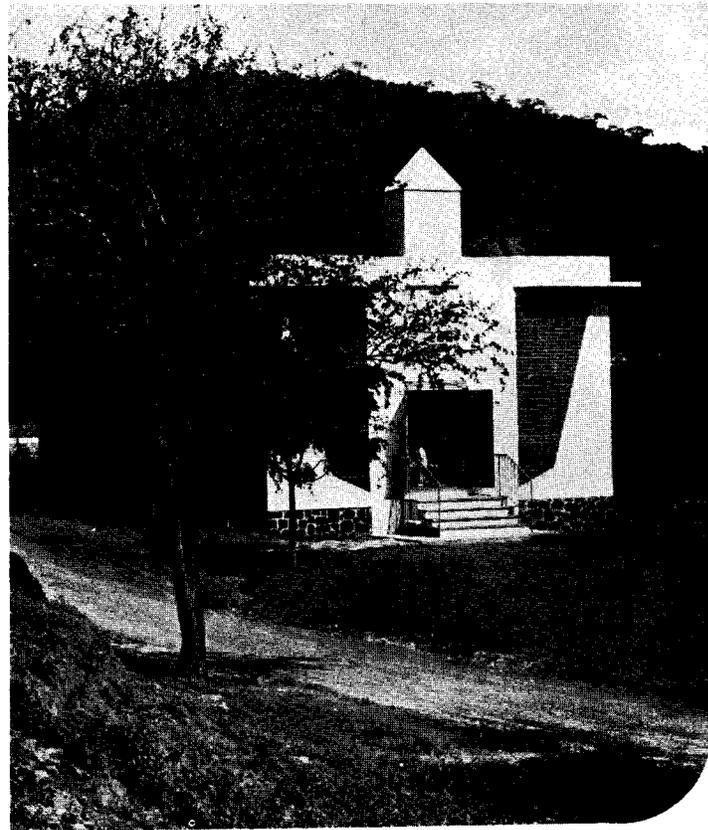


Vol. 4, No. 1, 1974

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## Letters

### Don't tempt the women

I don't know what was bothering the women during the Apostle Paul's day, but maybe my sisters today would not be "tempted" to preach if they received more spiritual food from the men in their congregations.

But then, two wrongs never make a right, do they?

Kathryn M. Hunsberger  
Meadville, Penna.

### Thanks for Ellen's devotionals

All of us here want to express our appreciation of the *Guardian*. It has been a great blessing. In our day when so many words are being used in theological circles with so little content, it is a delight to turn to the *Guardian* that is usually clear and meaningful in its every sentence and totally loyal to the Bible as being indeed the infallible Word of God.

We are also happy that you are using the poems and devotional thoughts of Ellen Obed. Children and young people make up a large part of our membership. Including these articles of Ellen's will and can give the children the feeling that the *Guardian* is for them also. To us this seems very important. Children need to feel that there is something especially designed for them.

As you may know, Ellen just came home from the hospital with their second baby, Enoch Nathanael, born February 25. When I went over to New Brunswick to visit her, she showed me the layout for "The Maple Tree." Jesus used so many illustrations from nature, and these are to be found all through the Bible. In our preaching and teaching, our writing and conversation, we really seem to be quite deficient in this respect. Thanks again for

using the poems and articles by Ellen Obed.

Charles Stanton, pastor  
Fort Fairfield, Maine

*Ed. note:* We received Mr. Stanton's letter and immediately prepared it for inclusion in the "Letters" section. But to our surprise, we also received several others from the same part of Maine. It seems that Mr. Stanton had suggested to his congregation that they write in about these devotional poems and thoughts by Mrs. Obed. They did! Among those from whom we've heard are Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Cooke of Fort Fairfield, Mrs. Esther Haskell of Presque Isle, Mrs. Katharine L. Clark of Houlton (we think), and Mrs. Charles (Fern) Stanton also. We get the point! And we have a supply of Ellen's material on hand and expect to have it for you regularly; we are still looking for a better arrangement for the illustrations, though, and any help there would be appreciated. — J. J. M.

### God's language

It is wonderful to know that we have a God who understands us in whatever language we pray to him. When I was in seminary I got the impression that Dr. E. J. Young thought we might be speaking Hebrew in heaven. But I'm sure the Lord understands when we say "thee" or "thou" or "you." Through Jesus Christ we are brought nigh to the Almighty God, but we still need to recognize him as Creator and approach him in godly fear.

Raymond M. Meiners, pastor  
Schenectady, N.Y.

I do not wish to prolong the controversy relative to the use of words in addressing God in prayer. But I do believe that a distinction should be made in addressing our sovereign God and our fellow man. As a senior citizen, I will continue to use the words I have always used — "thee" and "thou."

John Garland, elder  
Rochester, N. Y.

The Presbyterian Guardian is published eleven times each year, every month except for a combined issue in July-August, by the Presbyterian Guardian Publishing Corporation, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia, PA 19126, at the following rates, payable in advance, postage prepaid: \$4.25 per year (\$3.75 in clubs of ten or more; special rate for "every-family churches" on request). Second class mail privileges authorized at the Post Office, Philadelphia, Pa.

# Tribute to OSMAN

Arthur J. Steltzer

Why write a tribute to a man bearing the name Osman Adem Muhammed? Obviously, he was a Muslim who followed the teaching of the false prophet, Muhammed. . . . or, was he? Let me tell you what I know about him; then, you may draw your own conclusions.

The Eritrean Mission of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was already fifteen years old in 1960 when a small primary school boy knocked at the door of the Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Duff's home. The little boy introduced himself as Osman. He came from a poor Muslim family in Ghinda that didn't have enough money to provide for his primary education.

"Would Mr. Duff please hire me as a

house boy or gardner?" the young man inquired. In a missionary's lifetime, he receives many such requests. Yet, Mr. Duff noticed that Osman was somehow different from other boys who had come requesting work. This little boy had a very eager and bright look about him. Yes, Mr. Duff would hire him as a house boy. He could help Mrs. Duff with the work around the house, perhaps learn some cooking, and run errands when necessary.

Osman proved to be a very clever boy. In a short time, he learned to use Mr. Duff's tools and repaired many mechanical breakdowns. When the mission decided to build a hospital, Osman was hired as a laborer. He learned how to mix cement, lay bricks, and do some electrical wiring and plumbing.

Because he was a very likable young man, Osman had many friends. Mr. Duff would take him to Asmara whenever he had to purchase supplies for the mission. If Mr. Duff couldn't find a particular item, Osman always had a suggestion as to where it might be found.

When the hospital was finally completed, Osman became a hospital dresser, the Ethiopian equivalent of a nurse's aide. Because he could understand and speak



Osman working with Jim Miner at the hospital.

English very well, he was chosen to assist Dr. Den Hartog in the operating room. Even though he proved to be an able assistant, Osman was not satisfied with this kind of work. He enjoyed mechanical work and became maintenance supervisor for the hospital.

Eventually, Osman learned to drive hospital vehicles. It was no longer necessary for Mr. Duff or Dr. Den Hartog to go to Asmara to purchase equipment. Osman could do it. Furthermore, he was reliable. When he returned from a trip, he gave a complete accounting of every Ethiopian dollar he had received.

At one point in the hospital's history—the year 1968 — two nurses, Yvonne DeBlaey and Anna Strikwerda, ran the hospital. During this time, Osman proved invaluable. He supervised hospital maintenance, drove the ambulance, and purchased all hospital supplies.

## A spiritual journey

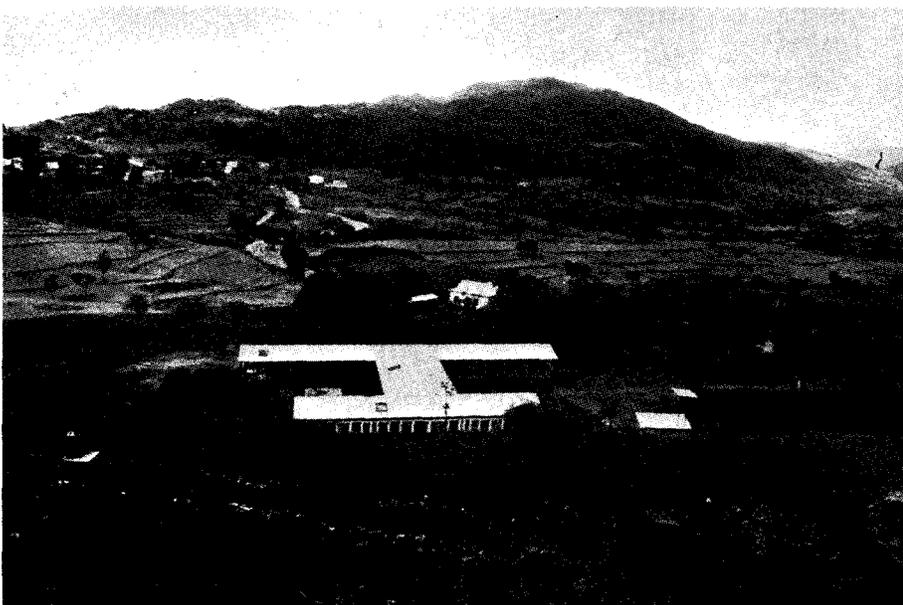
Osman came to the Christian services very faithfully. This surprised no one. There are many "rice Christians" in this world. They attend Christian services or make a show of Christian living in order to gain certain benefits.

But when the Billy Graham team came

(Continued on next page.)

## Compassion of Jesus Hospital

(picture taken shortly after completion of initial construction)



to Asmara, Osman accompanied a group of Christian hospital workers to the meetings. At the end of the service, when the invitation was given, he went forward. Was he truly converted? No one could say with certainty.

When my family and I arrived in Eritrea, Osman was working under the supervision of Jim Miner. Though I wasn't well acquainted with him, I could see that he was clever and that he knew his way around. This became very apparent when the Eritrean Liberation Front visited the hospital, killing Anna Strikwerda and taking Debbie Dortzbach captive. "Who can be trusted enough to carry messages to and from the ELF?" we wondered. Osman volunteered. He knew only too well what would happen to him if the army caught him delivering messages addressed to rebel leaders. Apparently, the Lord did protect him.

At the time of Debbie's seizure and Anna's murder, all mission medical work in Eritrea Province was closed in protest over the incident. One month after Debbie was released unharmed, we reopened the hospital. At this time, Osman was indispensable. He supervised hospital maintenance, cared for the vehicles, and did the purchasing.

It was at this time that Emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown. The ELF intensified its attacks; bars were bombed in As-



Victim of famine during 1973 drought.

mara, a bus was blown up, trucks were set on fire, trains blown up. In February 1975, the ELF attacked Asmara, Keren, and Massawa simultaneously, but were finally driven off by the army. By bringing in large numbers of reinforcements, the army turned Eritrea into a huge military base.

In order to get medical and food sup-

plies, we had to go to army headquarters in Asmara with lists in triplicate and get approval. On our first such attempt, Osman and I spent all morning and part of the afternoon traveling from one military installation to another seeking someone to give official approval. While we were driving, Osman turned to me and said, "You are very brave to stay here with all of this trouble."

I quickly replied, "No, I'm not really very brave. I am trusting in Christ and I know that God is caring for me. You know, Osman, God will also care for you if you trust in his Son."

To this Osman replied, "I am trusting in Christ and I know God watches over me."

Then word came that Osman had been shot and killed, sometime during the last week of February 1976. This was indeed a shock to us. While I could not judge Osman's heart, I can give this assurance: If he sincerely trusted Christ as he said he did, then we will meet again in the resurrection of the just (John 5:28, 29).

*The Rev. Mr. Steltzer, formerly a missionary to Eritrea, is now the pastor of Emmanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, Delaware. This tribute to Osman was written for the congregation's newsletter.*

Eritrean villagers gathered to hear missionary.



# Truth in LABELLING

William H. Smith

Imagine walking into a grocery store and picking up a box of corn flakes. . . .

"What have you got there?" inquires the clerk.

"Why, corn flakes," you answer.

"How do you know?" he asks.

"Because this label says they're corn flakes."

Labels, rightly used, can be a great help to us. The strength of labels is their ability to identify briefly and quickly. But if labels are to be useful, they must tell the truth and they must distinguish one thing from another.

## People labels

While labels on things we purchase are usually accurate, such is not the case with other types of labels, particularly those that apply to people. We are not speaking of prejudicial labels which people sometimes apply to other people.

Take for instance the political labels, "Democrat" and "Republican." These labels do not communicate much information because individuals of diametrically opposed views may claim the same label. George McGovern and George Wallace. Ronald Reagan and Nelson Rockefeller. When people wear the same label while holding and practicing different principles, the label becomes useless.

The same problem is found in the spiritual realm. Think about the label "Christian." It is often assumed by people who are not Christians. A person who claims to be a Christian may yet deny the Trinity or the death of Christ in the place of sinners. Or he may profess orthodox beliefs yet live a wicked life. Because the label "Christian" has been so often misapplied, we find it necessary to ask questions when a person claims the name: What do you really believe? What sort of life do you live?

## Ecclesiastical labels

A similar difficulty may surface in ecclesiastical relationships. Our Lord said to the church at Sardis, "I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, and you are dead" (Revelation 3:1).

People in Reformed churches know from experience that ecclesiastical labels may become meaningless. A church may claim the label "evangelical" but not be true to the gospel message. Just such a situation led to the formation of the Presbyterian Church in America. When basic evangelical truths were not clearly proclaimed from many pulpits, doubts were raised. When a decreasing emphasis on evangelism and missions became apparent, questions were asked. This questioning eventually led to separation from life-time ecclesiastical connections. The old labels seemed to be no longer trustworthy.

One more label faces a weakening of its meaning; the label "Reformed." Many observers believe that a revival of the Reformed faith is occurring in our day. Indeed, the Reformed faith is being rediscovered and enthusiastically embraced by increasing numbers of believers. But a potential danger attaches to the name because of its renewed popularity. Because the word "Reformed" is heard repeatedly, because it is increasing in acceptability, because Reformed doctrines are being enthusiastically espoused, some well-meaning persons may adopt the label too quickly, assuming they understand its meaning. They may, however, have no genuine understanding of its doctrinal and practical implications and this great term, used too loosely, may lose its meaning.

## The "Reformed" label

If the label "Reformed" is to mean anything, it must point to certain distinctives. When the subject of "Reformed" doctrine arises, it is sometimes asserted that the list of distinctive doctrines may be made so long and so detailed that only a tiny minority, a "remnant," can qualify for the label. That is a possibility. Yet there are distinctive Reformed doctrines.

The word "Reformed" points to distinctive views of man's totally depraved

*If a person chooses to call himself "Reformed," let him do so because he wholeheartedly subscribes to the Reformed distinctives.*

condition, God's covenantal dealing with men, unconditional grace effectually applied to the elect sinners, the shedding of Christ's blood for the elect only, and the Spirit's work of regeneration which precedes faith and repentance. One may be "infra" or "supra" and still be Reformed. But may one hold to a hypothetically universal atonement and still be Reformed? One may be post-, pre-, or amillennial and still be Reformed. But may one hold that the new birth follows faith and still be Reformed? The label must be accurate or it will not convey the truth.

Reformed practice also has its distinctives. Doctrines always have concrete applications. If Reformed doctrines are held with mind and heart, those doctrines will affect practice. Reformed doctrine inevitably leads to Reformed preaching, Reformed evangelism, and Reformed piety.

What is the point? Is the goal to have fewer people who are Reformed? Certainly not! But let the meaning of the label be preserved in its purity.

When terms are used loosely, they begin to lose meaning, and people soon attach strengthening adjectives: "He's a born-again Christian." "He's truly Reformed."

How much better to maintain the integrity of the term itself. If a person chooses to use the label "Reformed" to describe himself and his programs, let him do so because he wholeheartedly subscribes to the Reformed distinctives. Let the word be a strong testimony to those glorious truths that summarize faithfully the teaching of the Bible.

*The Rev. Mr. Smith is the pastor of the Frist Presbyterian Church of Union, Mississippi.*

# HOW TO, or WHO?

Dennis J. Prutow

"In our church, the ~~pastors~~ are Reformed but the people, by and large, are not." This was a comment made by a pastor's wife at a recent dinner party. She was speaking about the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, but the comment probably applies to most of the conservative Presbyterian churches today.

Whether we agree or disagree, this assessment does point to a disparity existing in at least some churches between pastor and congregation. There is a two-sided reason for this apparent disparity: on the one side, many have a pejorative attitude toward biblical doctrine; on the other, there is a strong leaning toward "do-it-yourself" Christianity.

## Doctrine, or "How to"

Today there is a definite looking down the nose by many at biblical doctrine. Doctrine is in disrepute. Yet it is precisely biblical doctrine that we need most desperately to hear.

The main concern of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem after Pentecost was that the apostles were filling the city with their doctrine (Acts 5:28). Their doctrine concerning Christ and the resurrection, their building of a sound doctrinal base for the advancement of the gospel, was upsetting the "Establishment" appletart. And for that reason efforts were made to silence the apostles.

This aversion to doctrine, together with a preoccupation with do-it-yourself Christianity, has raised the desire of many to have their ears tickled with lessons on *how to*: how to pray, how to lead people to Christ, how to live a victorious Christian life, how to make the church grow. But our need is not for *how to* sermons and studies so much as it is to hear more on the subject of *Who?* that is, Who God is.

## Who is in control?

The Westminster Standards do not present a *how to* Christianity. "What do the Scriptures principally teach?" asks the Catechism; and the answer comes, "The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duties God requires of man." And the rest of the catechism is organized around those two main divisions: what man is to believe about God, and what God requires of man.

In both these divisions of the Catechism, God is central and the whole thrust of the Catechism is Godward. The reason the Standards do not present a do-it-yourself Christianity is that they, like Scripture, are God-centered and not man-centered.

On the other hand, *how to* lessons tend to be man-centered, and a do-it-yourself Christianity teaches that man can do it all himself, if he only has the right gimmicks to use. Or to put it another way, what the Bible and the Westminster Standards teach is Reformed Christianity; the *how to* school is basically Arminianism.

The real question here is simply, "Who is in control?" The *how to* school would leave man in control when it teaches that we are to "yield" to the Spirit or "appropriate" to ourselves the gifts of God. God is often pictured as holding forth a blank check of blessings so that man only needs to reach out, take the check, and fill in the amount.

Thus man is invited to write his own ticket. He is seen as the determining factor when God's blessings are received. He is in control. Of course, he must be shown *how to*; but he is the one to "appropriate" God's gifts. And where is God in all this? Is he not sovereign? May he not dispense his gifts as he wishes to whom he will (1 Corinthians 12:11)?

## The Arminian heresy

The teachings of the *how to* school are not new. They were propounded by a Dutch theological professor named Jacobus Arminius. And his teachings were dealt with by the Synod of Dort in 1618-19. Out of this great synod came the Canons that state the biblical and Reformed understanding of the absolute sovereignty of God in the salvation and

life of men.

For example: "The Synod rejects the errors of those . . . who use the difference between meriting and appropriating, to the end that they may instil into the minds of the imprudent and inexperienced this teaching that God, as far as He is concerned, has been minded to apply to all equally the benefits gained by the death of Christ; but that, while some obtain the pardon of sin and eternal life, and others do not, this difference depends on their own free will, which joins itself to the grace that is offered without exception, and that it is not dependent on the special gift of mercy, which powerfully works in them, that they rather than others should appropriate unto themselves this grace."

In other words, the blank-check theory of appropriating the blessings of God, as set forth by the *how to* school was specifically rejected. Why? The Synod found that Scripture does not teach a do-it-yourself Christianity. Instead, it sets forth a

## *The Westminster Standards do not present a how-to Christianity.*

sovereign God who rules the universe he has created and saves men by his almighty power and merciful grace.

Why then this preoccupation with *how to*? Men are men, bound in sin, and they would feign pat themselves on the back for being in control of their own situation as they decide how and whether to "appropriate" the gifts of God.

## The God who

The biblical response to *how to* is *who*. What man needs is the preaching of the great doctrines of Scripture—what man should believe concerning God and what duties God requires of man.

In this there is no *how to*, but rather the simple proclamation of God and what he has done. Understanding who God is and what he has done evokes the ready desire to fulfill those duties required of man by God, and knowing the duties required drives man to seek the God who alone can save him.

And where then is the *how to*? It follows as God by his grace, through the faithful proclamation of his Word, and the Spirit's effective application of the death and resurrection of Christ, renews men in their whole being after the image of God. It is God who, having planted the grace of repentance and faith, stirs the heart more and more to die unto sin and rise to newness of life.

### Knowing the God who

The trinitarian confession of the Apostles' Creed begins, "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, maker of heaven and earth." It is not sufficient to say only, "I believe in God." After all, "the demons also believe, and shudder" (James 2:19).

We need to know *who* God is. We need to know that he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We need know that it is through Christ that we may have a covenantal relationship with the Father. We need to know that God is the Almighty, capable of doing all things consistent with his own nature, capable of creating all things in the space of six days and all very good.

Those who truly know God the Father Almighty as he really is do not need lessons in *how to* pray. They fall on their faces like Isaiah when he saw the Lord high and lifted up. They come with prayers of confession, adoration, and petition. Those who know the *who* of the doctrine of God do not need lessons in *how to* live a victorious Christian life. They know in their hearts that their sovereign Lord is in control, that Satan is defeated, that all things work for good to those who love God, and that nothing can separate them from the love of Christ.

Office-bearers in the church who have a sense of call from the Creator do not need lessons in *how to* build a church; they know that God will build his church using those who are faithful to his commands. They are hungry to fulfill the Scripture mandate to disciple all nations. They have confidence in God's Word and believe with assurance that Christ will use it to draw men to himself.

When a small group of believers is gathered together, they are anxious to be organized not in accordance with the latest *how to* prescription, but according to scriptural—which is to say, Presbyterian—order so that there might be an ade-

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## *What we need is more preaching and teaching of the great doctrines of the Word.*

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quate supply of all the means of grace as Christ intended for his people.

*How to* lessons put the cart before the horse. In assuming too much of man, they attempt to establish man as in control. The approach is man-centered, not God-centered. It is Arminian, not Reformed and biblical. And the propagation of this biblical faith demands the preaching and teaching of the great doctrines of Scripture.

All this is in keeping with the apostolic church and requires an abandoning of the methods of the *how to* school and the hankering after a do-it-yourself Christianity. What we need is more preaching and teaching of the great doctrines of the Word. And as a result, we will find both pastors and congregations becoming more thoroughly Reformed, truly biblical in their faith and lives.

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*The Rev. Mr. Prutow is pastor of the Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.*

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The college of the Christian Reformed Church celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1976.

**\*CHRIST TRIUMPHANT**

With a grand flourish, Galen Meyer concludes our study of Revelation.

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A story for anyone who is, or ever was a daydreamer.

**\*GOOD FRIDAY**

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(and WAIT til you see what we've got coming in May!)

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## Biblical STEWARDSHIP

*Robert A. Kramm*

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What is a "good steward"? What is "stewardship"?

We often hear these expressions and they suggest something to us that everyone favors, like motherhood or apple pie. But just what do they mean? More to the point, what does the Bible mean by them?

The dictionary defines a "steward" as a person who is employed to manage the affairs of an estate, supervising its servants, collecting rents, and keeping the accounts. Stewardship is the managing of what belongs to someone else.

Biblical stewardship could be thought of as the management of that which God has entrusted to us, as a management carried out according to the patterns and instructions set forth in the Scriptures. Everyone, from this point of view, is a steward — some relatively good, some bad, most of us somewhere in between.

The Lord has given each of us some measure of material wealth, some abilities, talents, and spiritual gifts. He has also given each of us a certain number of days to be here on this earth. And the Bible has a good deal to say about our use of these things, our stewardship of these "talents" from God.

### Basic biblical stewardship

We are commanded to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind," and to "love thy neighbor as thyself." Just to the extent that we do these two great commandments are we fulfilling our responsi-

bility as stewards of God.

Can I hate or despise my neighbor and still claim that I am using my time and talents to God's glory? Am I a good steward if my prayer life is hit-or-miss or even mere ritual routine? Can I be considered a good steward if evil thoughts are allowed a place in my mind when Scripture commands me to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ?

We are commanded to bring all the tithes into the Lord's storehouse. Can a person withhold material wealth and be a good steward? Can he misuse the Sabbath time and be a good steward? If there is anything of talent, time, or wealth that is not employed to bring glory to the Lord, we have failed to be good stewards. Each of these areas must be developed for a proper Christian stewardship.

What follows are four general principles of stewardship derived from Scripture. They are general in that they do not set forth specific details of stewardship, but are basic principles that may be applied throughout our stewardship.

### Need for union with Christ

The first principle of good stewardship practice is the necessity for union with Christ. That is, only a Christian can be a good steward; the unbeliever simply cannot exercise good biblical stewardship.

The Christian is one who claims Christ as his Savior and submits to him as Lord, willing to alter his lifestyle and habits if to bring them into conformity to Christ. Jesus is vehemently critical of the hypocrites who professed one thing and lived in a contrary style.

Individuals uniting with a true Presbyterian church are asked to make a public profession of their faith that includes a commitment in words like these: "Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your sovereign Lord and do you promise, in reliance on the grace of God, to serve Him with all that is in you, to forsake the world, to put off your old nature, and to lead a godly life?"

The one who makes such a pledge before God is indeed making a serious and solemn vow that cannot be taken lightly. This is the first and basic step toward good stewardship; to acknowledge the lordship of Christ. So we read that we are bought with a price, even the price

of Christ's own blood, and we are not our own, but belong to our faithful Savior, body and soul (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

### **A particular grace of God**

A second principle of good stewardship is the truth that a particular grace of God is involved in our faithful use of means, time, and talents. All true Christians are being sanctified. And the degree of sanctification has much to say about the degree of faithfulness we have attained in stewardship.

There is a progress in this grace, as in most others: "Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness" (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q. 35).

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### *A particular grace of God is involved in our faithful use of means, time, and talents.*

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In 2 Corinthians 8 we find an illustration of this truth. Paul is talking about the particular grace of God given to the churches in Macedonia. These people had taken the first step in good stewardship by giving themselves to the Lord. And by the further grace of God they were not only able to give generously, but to do so out of severe poverty.

The grace of stewardship is like that graciousness of our Lord who, "though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, that you through his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). This grace is to be sought after; the Corinthians needed to be exhorted concerning it; and we too need instruction and exhortation.

So Paul says to us all, "See that you abound in this gracious work also" (verse 7). Though he was talking about the stewardship of our money, does not the principle apply to our use of all that God has given, including time and talents?

### **An attitude of willingness**

The third principle has to do with our

attitude toward giving to God. Since we ourselves and all that we have belong to God and have been entrusted to us to use for our Lord's glory, we should have an eagerness and willingness of heart to use them all for him.

When the Lord instructed Moses to collect an offering in order to build the tabernacle, he said, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering." Would you have responded to such a request? And the Lord specified that it was only to be received from those who gave willingly.

But it was an offering sought from those who had been redeemed from the bondage of Egypt, led forth by the outstretched arm of God, and shown the loving concern of the covenant Lord. If God had demanded it, who would have dared refuse to give and to give generously? Yet the Lord was very clear: "Of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering" (Exodus 25:2). And the people responded, bringing more than enough, "and too much"!

The patience, love, and long-suffering of God to his people is truly amazing! Later on when God provided for the offering of atonement, his instructions were that it be an offering from the believer's free will (Leviticus 1:3). Similarly, Paul tells us that God loveth a cheerful (the Greek word suggests "hilarious") giver.

And what is our response? When the Lord called, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah replies, "Here am I; send me." The response was given promptly and willingly. How pleased God is when we willingly and lovingly give of ourselves in his service.

### **Going on to glory**

As we are "enabled to die more and more unto sin, and live unto righteousness," we are assured that there is a glorious future. That future is seen even in this present world, though especially when we go to be with the Lord.

The believer lives now in a time of preparation, of progress toward perfection, of growing up to the pattern of the example of Christ. Peter speaks of Christian virtues, saying, "If these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the

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*If there is anything of talent, time, or wealth that is not employed to bring glory to the Lord, we have failed to be good stewards.*

---

true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The whole aim and purpose of the good steward is to bring glory to his Lord through the use of the time, means, and talents given to him. On the basis of our faithfulness in the use of all God's gifts to us we will be judged at the last day. So let a Christian now examine himself in the light of God's word, but let him also take comfort in knowing that the Spirit of Christ is working his sanctification day by day.

What a great joy it is for the believer to see a loved one, friend or relative, grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, and in the faithful stewardship of all that he is and has in this present life. And the joy is simply in knowing that sanctification is taking place as we see it displayed through the fruitful use of means, time, and talents for the Lord's glory here and now.

And there is a final climax of joy yet to be received. For when our Lord and Master reviews the records of our stewardship, to those whom he finds faithful in that stewardship, the heart of the reward is the lovingly gracious words, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Our Lord will rejoice in us, and his faithful stewards will share in that infinite joy of the redeeming Lord. May our whole life be an eager anticipation of present stewardship and future perfect joy!

---

*Mr. Kramm is a ruling elder and a member of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church's Committee on Stewardship. That committee is concerned with budgets and figures and allocations, but all these are but tools to be used in advancing the faithful stewardship of God's people, and in using the gifts of those people to the work of their Lord.*

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## Presbytery deals with appeal

The Presbytery of Southern California, by large majorities, upheld the appeal of Dr. Norman F. Byer against the session of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Manhattan Beach, Calif.

The case grew out of tensions within the presbytery over the ordination of a candidate to the ministry. It became involved in informal and formal charges that finally culminated in presbytery's actions upholding Dr. Byer, formerly an elder in the Manhattan Beach congregation.

The essence of Dr. Byer's appeal was against the session's having censured him without formal judicial process, and as a result of the censure refusing to issue him a letter of transfer as a member in good standing. The presbytery judged that the session had erred in pronouncing the censure without formal trial, though the session based its decision on a provision in the Book of Discipline. Presbytery's decision in effect says that the session misinterpreted this provision.

Though the session still feels there are

unresolved problems in the affair, it has accepted the decision of presbytery. Dr. Byer, meanwhile, has united with Grace O. P. Church in Carson, Calif.

## Patterson in British Isles

The Rev. Sam. C. Patterson, president of Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, spent three weeks in March and early April on a speaking and preaching tour in England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Among the groups visited were the Evangelical Fellowship Conference and the Irish Reformed Fellowship Conference, both in the Belfast area; the Leicester (England) Ministers' Conference; and a preaching engagement at Westminster Chapel in London. During part of his tour, Mr. Patterson was joined by Dr. John R. deWitt, a professor of church history at the seminary.

Mr. Patterson was one of the founders of Reformed Theological Seminary and served as chairman of its Board of Trustees before being named the institution's first president. He is presently active in evangelistic preaching besides his administrative duties.

## Schaeffer challenges NAE-NRB Convention

At the closing banquet of the Joint Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals and the National Religious Broadcasters, Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer challenged the 2000 church leaders to choose which view of Scripture they would accept: that which sees much of Scripture as culturally oriented, and that which sees it as inerrant and absolute in all matters. Schaeffer noted that the growing "watershed" in evangelical circles over the doctrine of Scripture may force a cleavage in the ranks, and he urged those holding the inerrancy position to draw the line with gentleness and charity.

The NAE is a loose association of moderately conservative churches, and serves its constituent groups through various service agencies. The NRB was formed some years ago to resist attempts by the National Council of Churches to dominate all religious broadcasting.

## Karen's "Right to Die"

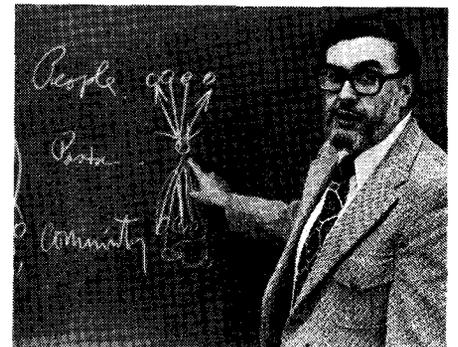
In the December 1975 issue of the *Guardian*, the editor commented on a decision by a New Jersey judge refusing permission to disconnect life-support machines from the apparently hopeless comatose body of Karen Quinlan. The

decision was appealed and the New Jersey Supreme Court has issued its decision in the case.

To the surprise of many observers, the court declared that the life-support equipment may be disconnected if Karen's legal guardian (the court named Karen's father who had been removed as her guardian by the lower court and who had sought the "right" to let Karen "die with dignity"), together with competent medical personnel, agree that further effort to keep her alive is meaningless. The court ruled that the act of disconnecting the machines could not be prosecuted as a crime, but added that the decision should not be viewed as a precedent for other situations.

The essential feature of the court's ruling is to leave the decision to those most responsible, the girl's guardian and the medical and hospital authorities who have been caring for her. Despite the court's plea that the case be seen as limited solely to Karen's situation, it will certainly be viewed as a precedent by others.

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## Decision in "Kress Case"

At a meeting on April 2, 3, 1976, in Harrisville, Pa., the Presbytery of Ohio of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church sat as a trial judiciary to consider charges of error in doctrine brought by a committee of the presbytery against the Rev. Arnold S. Kress. The charges focused on views of Mr. Kress concerning the possibility of "speaking in tongues and prophecy" today.

The situation grew out of "tongues-speaking" experiences by Mr. Kress while he was serving as a missionary in Japan. In order to confer with him about it and give him time to consider his own position, the Committee on Foreign Missions had brought Mr. Kress home for a special furlough. Since coming home, Mr. Kress has been engaged in much study and discussion concerning his views. The charges themselves grew out of statements prepared by Mr. Kress for his presbytery and the missions committee. Mr. Kress is presently serving as stated supply for Hope Reformed Church in Clifton, N.J.

Though the presbytery had agreed that proof of the charges and specifications would show the commission of an offense in doctrine contrary to the Word of God, it was not able to agree that Mr. Kress was actually guilty on the charges adjudicated. Voting by secret ballot, presbytery did not have a majority either for a guilty or a not-guilty decision. As a result, it was recorded that the trial judi-

catory "had not found Mr. Kress guilty" on three of the four charges brought against him. The fourth charge, having to do with another area of concern, has yet to be adjudicated.

Though not found guilty, Mr. Kress was not acquitted on the first three charges. The trial ended in a "hung jury," and as a result Mr. Kress remains in good standing. The decision — or lack of one — may well be misunderstood. Presbytery was not convinced that Mr. Kress was guilty as charged. Neither was it convinced that he was not guilty. It leaves Mr. Kress with his credentials in good standing, so far as these three charges are concerned, but the issues are not resolved.

It is expected that a complaint against the failure to reach a guilty verdict will be presented to the coming General Assembly to be held late in May.

### Editorial Comment:

The Presbytery of Ohio is to be commended for pursuing a doctrinal question through formal judicial process. Too often the church has tried to resolve such disputes by means of resolutions or administrative edicts. But when the possibility of an error in doctrine is to be considered, the regular judicial trial procedure is the only fair way to deal with it.

Mr. Kress is to be commended for having submitted to the strenuous and often painful judicial process. Too often the mere threat of a judicial proceeding has

been enough to persuade an office-bearer to leave the church rather than submit to his brethren through such a proceeding. Mr. Kress instead has made his views public and sought a resolution in the constitutional method of judicial trial.

Unfortunately, the issues raised by Mr. Kress have not been resolved. Many people are likely to misunderstand presbytery's votes to mean that "charismatic" views and practices are now permitted. The votes mean no such thing. All that is fairly to be taken from presbytery's actions is that, in the particular case brought against Mr. Kress, this particular presbytery was unable to reach a verdict on the actual charges as presented.

It should also be noted that Mr. Kress at no time endorsed some of the views prevalent among "charismatics." He has rejected the idea of a "second blessing," and he has insisted that Scripture alone is God's infallible revelation to us today. Mr. Kress does hold that the New Testament gift of tongues and prophecy may be found in the church today, but not in the form — through which the Spirit gave new infallible revelation — that it had in the apostolic church.

Whether the case reaches the General Assembly or not, the issues raised will continue to be debated. And though Mr. Kress remains a minister in good standing of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, even his rather mild "charismatic" views have yet to receive any sort of endorsement or official toleration in the church.

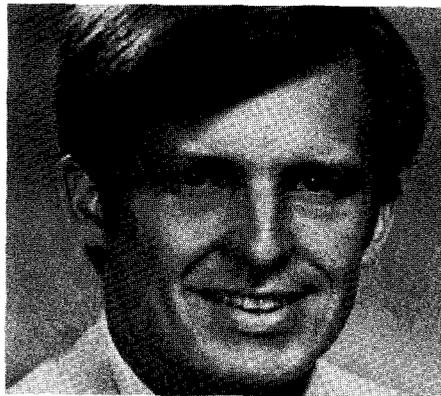
## Special lectures at Westminster

Westminster Seminary hosted a special series of lectures on "Biblical, Medical and Legal Aspects of the Right to Life" on April 13, 1976, held in the Rust Auditorium of Van Til Hall on the campus in Glenside, Pa.

Dr. C. Everett Koop, Surgeon-in-chief of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and an active Presbyterian elder, was one of the two principal speakers. Dr. Koop is also a Professor of Pediatric Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania.

The other featured speaker was Dr. Harold O. J. Brown, Associate Editor of *The Human Life Review*, and Chairman of the Christian Action Council, a pro-life organization in Washington, D.C. Dr. Brown is a former Associate Editor of *Christianity Today*.

Following the lectures, a question and answer period was held in which Professor John M. Frame joined the two



Dr. Harold O. J. Brown

speakers. These special lectures are sponsored by the James Rustand Lecture series.

Dr. Douglas Vickers, Professor of Economics at the University of Western Australia, delivered two lectures on "Economics in Christian Theological



Dr. C. Everett Koop

Perspective" at Westminster Seminary on April 6 and 8, 1976. Dr. Vickers was for some years Professor of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania and is the author of *Man in the Maelstrom of Modern Thought* (Presbytery and Reformed Pub. Co.) and *Economics and Man: Prelude to a Christian Critique* (just released by Craig Press).

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God is my defence (Psalm 59:17)

For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12).

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## Porcupine

Porcupine, prince of ambling and ease;  
Heavy one in the sapling trees;  
Slow one in the fast wind's meanness;  
Fat one in long winter's leanness—

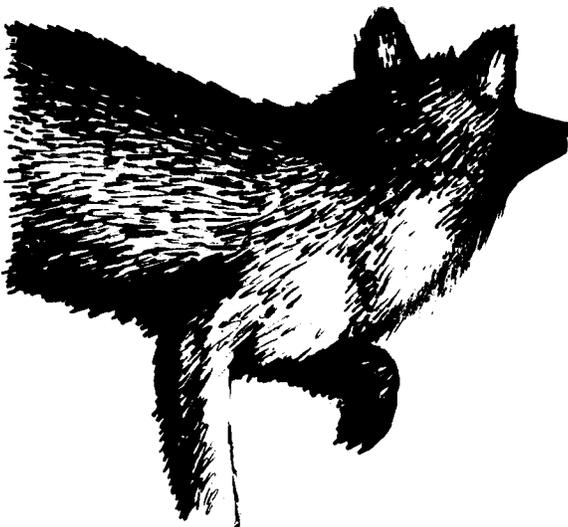
I, King Fox, though blind or lame,  
Could not miss this easy game!

I can sit and plan the chase—  
Hide and seek, or open race;  
Playful pounce, or tag and tease—  
I am victor in all of these.

Audience of day or at night alone,  
Feast of porcupine meat and bone!

At first glance, the slow and clumsy porcupine appears to be easy prey for the larger, more agile creatures of the forest. When closely watched, it continues to feed upon bud and leaf as if unaware or careless of danger. And when molested, it escapes in a bulky amble through the thicket. The boast of the fox seems legitimate.

Yet this rodent of the North Woods has an effective defense—so total, that no enemy can succeed in its attack without feeling the consequences. The average adult porcupine is armed with approximately 36,000 quills that



cover its entire body except for the belly and nose. At the end of each quill is a band of microscopic barbs that expand when imbedded in warm, moist flesh. The quills then work themselves inward, piercing the vital organs and bringing eventual death to the enemy.

Like the porcupine, the child of God appears to be weak and vulnerable, unable to defend himself against the powerful forces of this world. And like the fox, Satan makes many boastful attempts to overcome the Christian. He seeks to use the methods of sickness and discouragement, of opposition and fear, of death itself. But the child of God has a defense even against this roaring lion that seeks whom he may devour.

The Christian's defense is God himself! Paul ask triumphantly, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31). The Christian's weapon is the Word of God, "which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." And we are urged to "take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God" (Ephesians 6:17).

As you read and memorize Scripture, you will not fear the Enemy who seeks to destroy the Christian's relationship to God through his Lord Jesus Christ. Instead, you will grow to repeat this confident song of the psalmist:

**But I will sing of thy power;  
yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy  
in the morning;  
for thou hast been my defence and refuge  
in the day of trouble.  
Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing:  
for God is my defence,  
and the God of my mercy.**

Psalm 59:16, 17

*Ellen Bryan Obed*

# 90% off!

... that's a lot! But statistics reveal that people forget 90% of everything they hear! Hearing something a second time actually **DOUBLES** retention.

## Coffee Hour Spills Over



In last month's issue of the *Guardian*, we read about an effort of women in Westfield, N.J., to reach others in the community with the gospel through a special coffee hour at the church. Since then we've received pictures of the group "At the Coffeepot," some of which we share with you here, and also news of a further outgrowth from the coffee hour.

In her article last month, Mrs. Judy Griffin mentioned that means of following up on the coffee hour were being discussed. Now one such follow-up is being carried out. A home Bible study group is being organized as a result of (1) the request for more frequent sessions by a

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few of the women who have come to "Meet Us at the Coffeepot," and (2) the desire of the women in the church to be of more help in opening up the Scriptures to those who seem to be searching for answers to important questions.

The home Bible study group will study the Gospel of Mark (in contrast to the more topical subjects presented at the coffee hour). The group will be kept purposely small so that the "self-discovery method" can be utilized successfully. If the group becomes larger than twelve, another group will be formed. These would meet weekly (possibly skipping the week when the coffee hour is held).

The pastor, the Rev. Albert G. Ed-

wards, recently conducted a course for leaders of such home Bible study groups, and urged that such groups be formed. As a result, one group began with four women last fall and has since divided; there are now four daytime groups, two evening groups, all meeting in various homes. Mrs. Griffin adds, "We are so enthusiastic about the opportunity to share our faith and so highly gratified that so many women have come month by month, that we'd like to get across to others something of our enthusiasm."

*Ed. note:* If you have found some other effective means of reaching out with the gospel into your community, write it up and let us all share in it.

— J. J. M.



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# Genesis 2:22

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## My DIRTY FEET

Barbara Vanderwalk

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*Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou has no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith unto him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his*

*feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean . . . (John 13: 8-10).*

Recently while working barefoot in the yard, I fell and broke my leg. At the hospital the pain in my knee was almost blotted out by embarrassment as I—and I was sure the doctor and nurses—stared at my dirty feet. I had had a shower that morning. I wasn't *really* dirty. But oh, those feet!

In the days since, as my daughter has faithfully bent to wash those dirty toes just out of my reach at the end of a seemingly endless cast, I have had cause to reflect often on the meaning of the scene depicted in John 13:8-10.

I have been washed in Jesus' precious

blood. For all eternity I am clean. But my feet still walk in this world. Do I become so entranced with the all-covering robe of righteousness laid out for me in heaven that I forget what my dirty feet look like now?

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Any real Christian is sorry when he realizes he has offended his Lord. He is quick to confess what he has done and to ask God's forgiveness. Yet all too often we stand like Peter and say, "Thou shalt never wash my feet!" when it comes to the cleansing Jesus offers here and now.

### Prayer without cleansing

The Christian's prayers may go something like this: "Forgive me, Lord, for shouting at that man who cut me off in traffic this morning. Help me to hold my temper." "Forgive me, Lord, for repeating that gossip. Help me to hold my tongue." "Forgive me, Lord, for being envious and covetous of my neighbor's beautiful house. Help me to rejoice with them in their blessings."

Sound like pretty good prayers, don't they? He confesses his sin. He asks to be forgiven. He doesn't want to repeat the sin.

But, no way was he going to submit to cleansing! Thank you, but he'll just hold onto his temper and his self-righteousness that made gossip so delightful, and if he rejoices enough with his neighbor, perhaps no one will notice his dissatisfaction with his own lot.

Jesus said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." How much of our part with Jesus in this world do we miss because we refuse to be cleansed? A Christian's feet do become soiled as he walks in this world. His praise and thanksgiving and joy are marred by anger, jealousy, fear, hatred, bitterness, resentment, rebellion, envy, covetousness, lust—just the beginning of a discouragingly long list.

### Forgiving and for-giving

If we are to reflect the joy of our Lord here and now, we simply must have those dirty feet washed. When Peter realized this, he submitted gladly and so must we.

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## Nothing to WEAR!?

You've nothing suitable to wear?  
—nothing??

Have I not said  
it's useless to worry about clothes?  
that such thoughts are pagan?  
What are plaids or tweeds,  
gingham or polyesters to me?  
Observe—  
the lily clad in satin,  
the velvety rose,  
the poppy in its organdy,  
the lacy lilac—

Do they look anxious? or dowdy?  
Trust me!

You wish to be suitably clothed?  
Then dress yourself in good works:  
With compassion  
feed the hungry;  
In kindness  
entertain strangers;  
With humility  
clothe the needy;  
In gentleness  
tend the sick;  
With patience  
visit those in bonds;

And so bear one another's burdens!  
Tie all your actions together with LOVE  
Spend your time blessing—  
and you will be blessed.

Adorn yourself attractively  
with a gentle, quiet disposition.  
This manifests peace and contentment —  
a sign of your trust in me,  
a jewel rare,  
in my sight, of surpassing value.

Take Sarah as your example:  
tender and obedient to her husband,  
she did not give way to fear and worry.

Wrap yourself in joy. Only,  
to be wrapped in joy you must  
control your tongue!

Quit your malicious gossip  
and fault-finding;  
Rid yourself of deceitful conversation.  
Be kind to one another!

To insure a perfect fit  
render to me songs of praise.  
This delights the soul—and me.

Be thankful!

Finally, no fragrance excels that which  
results from knowing me.

Sit at my feet,  
be saturated with my love;  
then meet your appointments  
with grace and courage, and  
the white flowing robe of Christ.

—Kathryn Beckham

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*Reprinted from "Share Time," the newsletter of the Women's Missionary Society of the Garden Grove (Calif.) Orthodox Presbyterian Church.*

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## Dear Sarah:

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When we pray for forgiveness, we must seek not only the "givenness" that the Lord promises. We must be ready to *give up*, to be cleansed of the "for" which makes it necessary.

To show what I mean, let us revise the prayers this way: "Lord, forgive me for shouting. I have allowed this man to make me angry. *For* my anger *give* me your love for this man." "Lord, forgive me for repeating that gossip. I am proud and self-righteous. *For* my self-righteousness *give* me a true knowledge of my guilt that I may stand solely on your merit. *For* my pride *give* me your humility that seeks only the good of a brother." "Lord, I am envious and covetous. Forgive me. *For* my envy and covetousness *give* me your joyous trust in and thanksgiving for the wisdom of the Father's will for my life."

Did you notice something? While we may have been thinking we were dirtied by the world in which we walked, we see that in truth the world was simply drawing to the surface the soil of the old nature hidden still within us.

Every housewife knows that some stains are removed only by repeated washings, but they fade noticeably each time until they are no longer visible.

How much greater part with Jesus we have here on earth when we submit to his washing! How wonderful, how marvelous, how awesome it is to experience the joy of Jesus' cleansing! Oh, the miracle of feeling confessed rage drain away to be replaced by Jesus' loving spirit! the peace when worry and fear are surrendered and replaced by Jesus' absolute trust in the Father! the sweetness that our human relationships assume when bitterness and resentment are confessed and washed away!

Indeed our Savior is faithful! Are we? Nothing can equal the joy of one's first knowledge of the once-for-all cleansing of the Lord. But this joy can never be maintained without constantly submitting to the washing of our dirty feet as they walk in this world.

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*Mrs. W. J. Vanderwalk and her family have returned to the Northwest and now live in The Dalles, Oregon, after spending several years in the Sharon Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Hialeah, Florida.*

In the past months in our church there has been an undercurrent of bad feelings over the marriage of one of our Christian young people to an unbeliever. Some people in the church want the session to take disciplinary action. I think our church is suffering because of factions forming over this matter.

I know that the Bible says not to be unequally yoked, but if they are already married and both are coming to church sometimes, don't you think that "church discipline" will just push them both away from the church? After all, the Bible says we are to love one another even if we sin.

Many of us have prayed a lot about this matter and feel the Lord would have us forgive and forget. Some people in the church don't seem to want to let it go, though. How can we get them to see that they must forget it so there can be peace and unity again?

—Heartsick

### Dear Heartsick:

I have heard of several such situations and they are distressing. I share your concern for peace and unity in the church at all times. But what seems so clear and desirable to us is not always what God says is desirable and wise. "The wisdom that is from above is *first* pure, *then* peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated" (James 3:17).

You seem to recognize the action you spoke of as sin, as indeed it is. A public sin (one which is known to all in the church and obviously has created such an upset as you describe) cannot be ignored. You and others feel the Lord wants you to "forgive and forget." I can sympathize with your desire to solve the problem on the basis of what you *feel* God's will is, rather than on what the Bible *says*, because I can imagine how I would feel in the same situation.

Nevertheless, as a mother I've had to learn that real love requires discipline in my home. Likewise, as a church member I see that real love requires discipline in the church. I am convinced that hard problems must be dealt with for what they are and not swept under the rug.

You must also remember that the vows that you, as well as this wayward young person, took when you were received into communicant membership included one in which you vowed to be

subject to the government of the church and, in case you should be found delinquent in doctrine or life, to heed its discipline.

I think the whole area of church discipline is one in which all Christians need more instruction. I feel the need for more preaching about it from the pulpit and I also hope the editor of the *Guardian* might in the future help us with articles on the subject. It seems to be one that is shied away from as though it were an embarrassing subject. If God is not embarrassed to set forth requirements that to us may seem hard, why should the church be embarrassed to talk about these things when they are, with all other biblical teachings, for our good? Along with "Heartsick," I earnestly look to our pastors and teachers to help us better understand this teaching.

—Sarah

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## Life in the MANSE

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Here's a true, short, short story to give my fellow wives of pastors a lift. It not only made me laugh, but also made me grateful to God for a new perspective on what sometimes bogs me down.

One Sunday recently we had invited one of our church families to the manse for dinner. The oldest daughter, a high school senior, and her mother were in the kitchen helping me. My calendar hangs on the wall in the kitchen and almost every square is pretty fully written in.

The daughter said to her mother, "Oh! It must be *wonderful* to be a minister's wife. You'd *always* have something to do!"

Polly Edwards  
Westfield, N. J.

P. S.: Would you like to read more about what happens in the manse? How about it, Preachers-'n'-Wives? Would you care to share humorous or inspirational bits from the manse comparable to "Life in These United States" in *Readers' Digest*? This one by Polly Edwards sets the tone.

Lay people, you may have made a manse-observation worth sharing, too.

Send contributions for "Life in the Manse" or "Dear Sarah" or other materials for "Genesis 2:22" to Juanita Rolph, Rt. 2, Box 9, Glenwood, WA 98619.

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## Eritrea Mission Departure

### Army operating hospital

On March 5, 1976, the Eritrea Mission of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church left the town of Ghinda and the Mihireta Yesus (Compassion of Jesus) Hospital, thus ending thirty-two years of evangelistic effort in the Eritrea Province of Ethiopia and nearly ten years of hospital service. At the time of its closing, the mission included the Rev. John S. Mason, Dr. Greet S. Rietkerk, and nurses Corrie Van Galen and Sandra Campbell.

Increasing tension and violence in the largely stalemated struggle between the Eritrean Liberation Front and a greatly enlarged Ethiopian Army presence had already led some mission personnel to leave for the sake of their families. Other mission groups in Eritrea have either reduced their staffs or in some cases closed all their work. But the mission in Ghinda strongly desired to stay and had agreed to leave only if the local people warned them to do so. The shooting death of the hospital's maintenance supervisor, and the mission's trusted agent in purchasing supplies, persuaded the mission to leave at once. (See the "Tribute to Osman" elsewhere in this issue.)

After closing the hospital and being required to turn over the keys to army personnel in order to receive travel permits, the mission journeyed to Asmara, the provincial capital. They are presently winding up mission affairs, completing final pay arrangements for native workers, and applying for exit and reentry permits (with a continuing desire to return to the field if possible). They plan to leave as soon as these details are completed, spend some time in Egypt and Greece, and arrive at home (the Nether-

lands for Dr. Rietkerk and Miss Van Galen, the United States for Mr. Mason and Miss Campbell), probably some time in May.

The hospital and mission had already been involved in the trauma of a "war of liberation," when the ELF seized two nurses, killing Anna Strikwerda and holding Debbie Dortzbach for a month before releasing her, and her unborn child, unharmed. The threat to personal safety had been apparent in frequent shootings, explosions of land mines, and general unrest in a land under seige from all sides. Where once the effective radius of outreach and service was 120 miles and included a million people, that had shrunk to the immediate area and some 10,000 souls.

On learning of the mission's departure, army authorities indicated their intention to assume control of the hospital. After consultation with the Rev. John P. Galbraith, General Secretary of the Committee on Foreign Missions, who had flown to Asmara, the army agreed to take over the facilities on an "interim" basis.

There can be no definite plans at present for any resumption of the work in Eritrea, though all four missionaries want to return. Dr. Rietkerk plans a year of further study. The two nurses will probably seek employment at home for the time being. Future assignment for Mr. Mason will be determined when he returns home and can consider the possible fields open to him.

Eritrea has not been an encouraging land for missions. The people are either Muslim or Coptic Christian and antag-

onism to biblical Christianity is strong. Nevertheless, the efforts over the years have produced fruit and there are small groups of believers in Ghinda and nearby villages. At least three strong leaders have been ordained as elders and the church is established in the area. Not only the dangers of war but ostracism by unconverted family members add up to severe persecution for these believers.

The needs of Eritrea are greater than ever. Famine, little or no medical assistance in many areas, abject poverty, and a culture dominated by false faiths, all cry aloud for the relief of Christian compassion and gospel preaching. Prayer for the returning missionaries and for the believers left behind, as well as for the war-torn people of Eritrea, should be a burden on all our hearts.

— J. J. M.

