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IN THIS ISSUE:

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Letters

Correction on PCA Missions

Seldom, if ever, have I written a "letter to the editor" and hesitate to do so now, but I dare not sit silently while erroneous material is fed out in the name of honest reporting. I am sure that you will not mind a bit of correction.

Your review of the Fourth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America [October issue] was read with interest, and I am grateful to you for its factual presentation. My concern must be expressed, however, regarding your reporting of the material on the Mission to the World, which seems to combine editorializing with reporting. Your description of the Foreign Mission Program of the PCA as being "haphazard" appears to me to be a matter of your opinion rather than a fact gained from a careful study of that program.

Perhaps your opinion is seen most obviously when you seek to describe how the Mission to the World got into its practice which is "judged to be considerably less than distinctively Presbyterian in its basic thrust." You state that "many present PCA congregations, while still in the PCUS, had withheld support from PCUS missions and supported faithful missionaries under a wide variety of independent agencies." This is true, but then you go on to state that "many of these missionaries have now aligned themselves with the MTW committee," and this simply is not true. You then state, "in other words, the PCA simply inherited a large number of missionaries involved in a wide variety of evangelical mission work under many non-Reformed mission boards."

The fact of the matter is that of the 80 missionaries on the field or in various stages of preparation, two families came to the MTW from the PCUS; one family came from Wycliffe Bible Translators, and one family from the South American Mission. This would hardly qualify for the term "many." When the Executive Committee on Overseas Evangelism became the Committee on the Mission to the World, there were two families on the

field and two more couples and one single person on the verge of going. All of these, with the exception of one couple, are in "distinctively Presbyterian work."

The Mission to the World has been privileged to see a large response of young and older, of ordained men and unordained. Your statement that the "PCA simply inherited a large number of missionaries" is without basis and seems to cast a shadow on a ministry that has been blessed by a sovereign God.

The Mission to the World has been "free to plan" since its inception and has moved ahead in an aggressive and innovative manner. While it has had its critics (considerably less than distinctively Presbyterian), it has demonstrated to the world that its desire is to reach the whole world for Jesus Christ with every legitimate means possible. It has sought to give leadership in overseas evangelism to the whole church, realizing that it is a serving committee that works with those candidates and funds sent to it from the churches and presbyteries in the denomination. I am grateful that you recognize the fact that the Committee on Mission to the World has responded to concerns expressed to it by interested people.

Although I no longer serve as chairman of the Committee on Mission to the World, I am sure that the "open policy" of the committee will continue, and thus any interested party may attend the meetings. I would urge you to attend these meetings whenever possible if you have a sincere desire to really understand the program and direction of the Committee on the Mission to the World. It is my opinion that you could render a great service in correcting misunderstandings that have arisen simply because of the uniqueness of the program.

Thank you for whatever you can do to correct the story.

Donald B. Patterson, pastor
First Presbyterian Church
Jackson, Mississippi

Ed. note: We appreciate this letter from the former chairman of the PCA's Committee on the Mission to the World. The quote about MTW's practice being "considerably less than distinctively Presbyterian" was not our judgment, but a judgment expressed by some PCA commissioners at previous general assemblies.

J. J. M.

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The Sin of USURY

An editorial

Usury is wrong (Exodus 22:25-27). It is a grievous sin (Jeremiah 5:10). It is a sin equal to the sin of idolatry (Ezekiel 18:8-13). Very clear. Very pointed. Every child of God should pray that the Lord would keep him from such a sin.

Of course, it would help to know just what this sin is. What is the Bible talking about when it condemns usury? At least, that is the word in the King James Version. In the American Standard Version, it's called "lending on interest." In the Revised Standard Version, it's "exacting interest." And in the New American Standard Bible, they translate it as "charging interest."

If you look up "usury" in the dictionary, you'll find several definitions, both legal and otherwise. But the only question that really concerns us is to know precisely what is the Bible condemning? Under what conditions and circumstances is "usury" a sin? And, you might ask, just why consider the subject at all?

A current concern

The answer to the last question is simply that I have received several concerned inquiries about the subject. Is it sinful to lend money at interest to churches or other Christian organizations? Apparently many sincere Christians have gotten the idea that this rather common practice is sinful.

Perhaps the clearest statement of this view comes from Gary North, Ph.D., in his *An Economic Commentary on the Bible*. (Whether Dr. North's views are the source of the others I've heard or not, he is certainly a student of biblical law and its relations to economics. He is associated with a group of scholars and writers called "Chalcedon," who seek to derive and apply biblical principles to various social concerns.) In commenting on Exodus 22:25-27, Dr. North says:

"... The Bible does prohibit any return from *charitable* loans to the poor neighbor or brother. It does not prohibit interest payments on business loans, as Jesus' parable of the talents indicates (Mt.

25:27)." I can readily agree with both of these statements, except that the parable of talents no more reveals God's will about business loans than the parable of the good Samaritan reveals God's will for the approved medical treatment of cuts and bruises. A parable is an illustration from everyday life used to teach nothing about the details of the everyday situation, but rather to explain a spiritual truth. One would suppose Dr. North should be aware of this rather basic understanding of parables.

Even so, there is no argument with these first two statements. Dr. North goes on to discuss present-day lending and interest practices. Then he says:

"The prohibition on usury clearly and absolutely prohibits interest payments on all charitable loans to Christians from Christians. This includes loans to churches and other non-profit institutions that come to Christians in the name of Christ. The church is not a business. The man who loans the church anything, at any time, for which he requires an extra amount in repayment is violating the law against usury. Any leader in a church or non-profit Christian organization who encourages Christians to make loans to it on this basis is involving its supporters in the sin of usury. . . ."

In other words, Dr. North begins with the clear Scripture prohibition against charging interest (or "usury") on a loan to a brother in need. From this he infers a total prohibition of interest on "all charitable loans to Christians from Christians." And from that he further infers a prohibition of interest-bearing loans to churches or other Christian organizations for whatever purpose.

The fallacy

It is certainly proper to draw out "good and necessary inferences" from Scripture teachings. But are Dr. North's inferences actually "good and necessary"?

What Scripture forbids (in Exodus 22:25-27) is the exacting of interest on loans to a brother in dire need. (And the Hebrew word for "need" refers to a serious hardship, not the brother's "need" for a newer model car.) A good and necessary inference would extend this prohibition to loans made to a church or group of believers that had suffered some severe loss, such as by fire, flood, or famine. Relief of such hardship needs, either to a single brother or a group, should be through outright gifts or interest-free loans.

Dr. North calls these "charitable loans," and certainly true Christian charity is involved here. And it is true that the

world, and the Internal Revenue Service, refers to churches or Christian organizations as "charitable" institutions. But the loose use of that term certainly does not warrant *our* categorizing all loans to such organizations as "charitable loans." Even less are we warranted in applying the restrictions of Exodus 22:25-27 to *every* sort of loan among Christians.

The prohibition of usury has to do with loans to relieve a hardship. That prohibition has nothing to do with loans to Christian individuals, churches or organizations for other purposes. Loans to finance a capital program — purchase of real estate, erection of a building, or acquisition of major equipment — are simply not in the category of the "charitable loans" in view in Exodus 22:25-27.

In seeking to make his point, Dr. North asserts that a church is not a business and a Christian should not make an interest-bearing, business-type loan to it. Again, this is a fallacious inference and is, moreover, based on a fallacious assumption.

A church is certainly not a business-for-profit. But it is a business — in part at least — designed to provide certain services to its members and the cause of Christ. A church engages in business affairs — managing a property, contracting for utilities, handling contributions, paying salaries and taxes. It is involved in business, and may well seek business-type loans from a mortgage company or interested Christians.

Even if you want to insist that a church is not a business, there is no necessary inference that a church may not engage in business practices as need be. Any church so other-worldly as to refuse to conduct its affairs in a business-like way will soon run into trouble with the law even if it manages to avoid serious misuse of God's money.

To say that a loan to a church for a building program is necessarily in the category of a loan to a Christian brother in dire need of relief is totally unwarranted by any logic of "good and necessary inference." To say that a prohibition of interest on a loan to a truly needy brother implies a similar prohibition on *all* loans among Christians or to Christian organizations is simply fallacious reasoning. Dr. North's illogical and irresponsible assertions would add a totally unwarranted and unbiblical burden to the Christian who desires to use his God-given means in the most effective and responsible way possible in full obedience to his Lord.

— John J. Mitchell

Hebrews 2:6-10

Image of God, NOT YET, BUT . . .

Leslie W. Sloat

Are you the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness? Do you have authority over all of creation?

At the beginning of human history, when God created the world and all things in it, he also determined to create man. The decree was, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26).

This was to be man's glory, and man's destiny—that he was the image of God. Exactly what that image involves has always been a subject of debate, and we do not expect to solve the question here. But at least this was involved: Man was to be characterized by true knowledge and holiness, and he was to have dominion over the earth. Knowledge, righteousness, and absolute sovereignty over creation—these were certainly to be attributed to God. And in making man in his image, God decreed that they should also—on the creature level—characterize man.

Because he was a creature, not the Creator, these characteristics in man had a derivative character. His knowledge was derived from God's knowledge. His righteousness was a perfect response to the will of God. And his dominion was under the limitations imposed by God's sovereignty. Man was not to replace God,

but to image him.

To remind man of his limited, image character, God gave him a restriction. There was one tree in the garden of which he was not to eat. Over everything else, including the animals, man had authority. But he must recognize that God had the final say, and when God's word was "No," man's response was to be instant and utter obedience.

The image defaced

It was at this point that the beautiful situation of the original creation was destroyed. For one of the creatures over which man was to have dominion came along with the suggestion that man ought not submit to even that single limitation God had placed on him. There was no valid reason for disobedience, since man had all things in the garden except this at his disposal and under his control. But in a manner that is beyond our understanding, but nevertheless a fact of history, man chose to follow the suggestion of the serpent creature and to rebel and revolt against the word and command of his Creator.

The consequences of this disobedience were varied and extensive, but they may be brought under two main heads. Man's disobedience was a repudiation of the authority of his sovereign God. It was an insult against the majesty of the Ruler of the universe. In terms of the holiness and justice of God, man became guilty and subject to punishment. The only punishment suitable for the crime of rebelling against the sovereign God was destruction. Man by his crime became liable to the punishment of everlasting death.

But in the second place, man also yielded up his position of dominion and authority over all of creation. He had yielded that dominion to the serpent, or to Satan who had used the serpent. Thus Satan instead of man became the one with dominion. And in his hands the whole creation became rebellious. Nature, which should have been subject to man's control, became hostile to man. The harmony of all things was destroyed. Instead of yielding fruit, the earth would yield briars and thorns. Animals would be neither friendly nor submissive, and only a few have been tamed for man's use. Nature itself in earthquake, hurricane,

and tornado would trouble man.

In the words of our Confession, man by his sin was brought into "an estate of sin and misery"—sin instead of righteousness in his own character, and misery represented by the open hostility of an unfriendly environment.

What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. . . . But now we see not yet all things put under him.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews is talking about this situation. First he cites the words of the psalmist who, thinking back to the creation ordinance, declares, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4). The psalmist sees man with full dominion over that original creation.

But then the writer of Hebrews says, in what can only be described as the classic understatement of all time, "But now we see not yet all things placed in subjection under him" (Hebrews 2:8).

These words were written nearly two thousand years ago. In the intervening period, and especially in the last few hundred years, man has made long strides toward mastering the earth. With his airplanes he flies farther and faster than any birds of the air. He travels on and under the seas and mines the wealth of the earth. And he destroys or preserves almost at will animals and creeping things.

Yet the more he seems to rule, the more frustrated and helpless he becomes. In ruling his environment he destroys it and it rebels in open hostility. He finds means to control disease and then discovers, too late, that the very means come back to haunt him. Cyclone and earthquake destroy him and what he has made. Hunger stalks the earth and tragedy the human experience.

Most of all man is at enmity with himself. Nations rise against nations and wars rage. Crime abounds. And there is the

last enemy, death. And because underneath it all there still remains a consciousness of a holy and just God, man faces death with fear and trembling. Regardless of how bold a face he may put on, he is afraid.

As Hebrews says, man is, all his lifetime through fear of death, subject to bondage. Created to rule all things, and with the possibility of living forever, man is instead a prisoner, a slave to the creation he was destined to rule, living in constant fear of its open hostility and his own demise.

Yes, indeed, the writer of this letter is wonderfully correct and perceptive when he says that we do not yet see all things put in subjection under man's feet.

Is there then no hope? Yes, there is. For in the very process of describing man's servitude, the writer says "not yet." "Not yet" do we see all things put under his feet. That very expression assures us that the present situation is not the final situation.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

What then is the ground of this confidence? Is there something specific we can look at? Yes, there is, and the writer immediately turns our attention to it.

We do not yet see all things in subjection under man, but we do see Jesus. And we see him already crowned with glory and honor. It is not said that all things are already under his feet, but he has received that crown of honor and glory promised to man. And with this first stage, the full reality is certain to follow.

And so we turn our attention away from man in his estate of sin and misery and we look to Jesus. Who is this Jesus, and what is his part in the matter?

He too, says the writer, was made a little lower than the angels. But in the

first part of the letter the writer has hailed him as the Son of God, the one who supports all things, the one who is the perfect image and representation of the Father. It is this one, with a name more excellent than that of angels, who has been made a little lower than they.

Again we must go back to the beginning of history. For when the first man sinned and defaced the image of God, God made promise that there would be a second man, a son of the woman, who would defeat and destroy Satan and re-establish that rule over creation that had been appointed to man.

But this promised deliverer could not be a mere son of the woman, for such a mere son of the woman would himself be under the guilt and condemnation that hung over man because of that first transgression. Though he would be son of the woman, he must be something far more.

So Scripture makes it abundantly clear that this second man, this last Adam, would in fact be the very Son of God, in all things equal in power and glory with the Father himself. But this Son of God would, for the purpose of bringing about the deliverance of men, become himself also a true man—he would be born of a woman, would grow as a man, live as a man, and would as a man exhibit perfectly that image of God that man was to be, exhibiting it by manifesting perfect knowledge, perfect holiness, and perfect dominion over creation.

I say, he allowed himself to undergo these experiences. At the time of his arrest he told Peter that he could have summoned hosts of angels to his help; but he did not. I am not sure even that he was *put* to death. He was certainly nailed to the cross. He certainly suffered the pain and anguish of death, even the very pains of hell. He felt abandoned of the Father. But when the account comes to speak of his actual dying, it uses a verb in the active form. Jesus dismissed his spirit. He died, but he died in accordance with his own will and choice. No one took his life from him; he laid it down of himself.

This is what happened that Friday afternoon outside the walls of Jerusalem. The Son of God, incarnate, suffered the pains of death. But not for himself. He had not sinned. He did not deserve to die. He held dominion over all things. No

***That he was the image of God—
this was to be man's glory,
and man's destiny.***

power on earth could have touched him without his own willing consent.

But he was acting as the substitute for his people before a holy God. He was undergoing the punishment due to sin for man's rebellion and sin against God. He satisfied the justice of God. This was no exhibition, no example designed to rouse our emotions so that we too would be concerned for others. This was punishment, justice in action, the holy God inflicting the judicial penalty due to us, but inflicting it on one who stood and died in our stead.

The sacrifice accepted

As we look again at this passage from Hebrews, we see that this death was not the end. For us, who deserved it, it would have been. But here we read that we are to look at this Jesus, this Son of God made a little lower than angels. So we look at him. And what do we see? A corpse? Not at all. We see him crowned with glory and honor, crowned with glory and honor just because of that suffering of death. Because by the grace of God he had willingly humbled himself to this experience of death, God had exalted him to the place of honor and glory.

Moreover, the fact that we see him thus exalted showed that God had approved and accepted his sacrificial death. The punishment had been meted out. Justice had been satisfied. The ones to whom that punishment was due were therefore freed forever from its threat.

So at the appointed time this Deliverer actually came, born into the world of the virgin Mary. Angels sang at his birth and hailed him as the Messiah, the Savior. But he did not publicly manifest himself until he was grown.

Thus the Son of God was made a little lower than angels. At the start of his

*At the appointed time,
the Deliverer actually came,
born of the virgin Mary.*

public career he was tempted by the same Satan who had overpowered the first Adam. But this second Adam did not yield. Instead he resisted and overcame Satan, destroyed the "strong man," and proceeded to show what it meant for man to have dominion over all things.

This second Adam proceeded to raid Satan's kingdom, casting out demons, healing the sick and lame and blind, providing food for the multitudes, rebuking the winds and the waves. Here was the true man, in the image of God and with dominion over all the creation.

The guilt removed

But we said earlier that the result of that first transgression was two-fold. Not only did man yield up dominion, but he also became guilty before God and subject to the punishment that guilt deserved, the punishment of death. Jesus had overcome Satan and restored, in his own person, that dominion first given to man. But what of this other problem of guilt and punishment? This too the second man, the last Adam, must deal with.

The only way it could be dealt with was for this last Adam himself to submit to the very punishment that the first Adam and all his descendants deserved. Only so could he satisfy the justice of God and turn away the wrath and restore the favor of God toward man. Because he was not only man but also Son of God, if he were to suffer a man's death it would be sufficient to satisfy the justice of God and so remove the sentence of eternal death.

This is what happened. Though he was Son of God, though again and again he demonstrated his absolute and utter dominion over all things, even to the extent of summoning from the grave Lazarus who had for four days lain dead, yet he allowed himself to be arrested, tried by

a Jewish court, sentenced to death, and hung on the cross.

But the fact that we see him crowned with glory and honor also shows us that he has gained the victory over that death of which we were all so terrified. Through his own death, and resurrection, he has destroyed the one who had the power of death, the devil himself. And so he has delivered those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He has set the captives free.

Union with Christ

This was Jesus, the Son of God indeed. But his earthly life was lived many years ago and far away in Palestine. What can this possibly mean for me today in twentieth-century depressed America?

Well, what does the writer of the letter say? He says that we are to look upon Jesus, now crowned with glory and honor, and we are to understand that he had tasted of death, by the grace of God, for every man.

Had Jesus remained dead, had his body rotted in the tomb as our liberal but misguided friends would have us believe, there would be no point in my telling you about him. His death would have been meaningless. But he did not remain in the tomb. The third day he was again walking about on the earth, eating food, allowing himself to be touched and handled, and explaining from the Scriptures that all of the Word of God, the Old Testament, Moses and the prophets, had said that the Christ would have to and would suffer and rise again, thus showing that he himself was that promised Redeemer. And in due course he departed this earth in bodily form, and sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high.

So we are to look at this Jesus, now crowned with honor and glory, and know that his dying was, by the undeserved favor of God, an effective death that he had experienced for every man.

But still we ask, what does this mean to man today? And here we come to think briefly of that concept contained in Scripture, what I believe to be the most important single concept in the whole of the Word of God. It is the concept of union with Christ.

In the Lord's Supper we eat and drink

Christ has told us to think of the bread and wine as his own body and blood. In far stronger language he declared during his ministry that his flesh was meat indeed and his blood was drink indeed, and that unless we eat his flesh and drink his blood we have no life in us. This language is too strong for us, but what he meant was simply that through faith in him we become so intimately united with him that what is true of him is true of us, and what is true of us is true of him.

It is by virtue of that union that he could bear *our* sins in *his* body on the tree. It is by virtue of that union that Paul tells us we have been crucified together with him, buried with him, raised up together with him, and even seated in heavenly places with him. As Jesus said, he is the vine and we are the branches. He prayed the Father that his own might be with him that they might see his glory. And he says in a letter in the Revelation that his people will sit with him in his throne, as he sat down with his Father in his throne.

So when Hebrews says, almost in disappointment, that we do not yet see all things subject to man, it immediately tells us to look at Jesus, crowned with glory and honor, in that position of dominion that was from the beginning man's destiny. But we are not told this simply because it was true of Jesus *individually*. Rather, since it is true of Jesus, it is already now *in principle* true for his people, and therefore will also in fact be true for his people at the time determined of God. For we are in him, united to him, and he to us.

In other words, what God purposed and promised at the beginning, that man should be in the image of God, and that he should have dominion over all of creation—that is certain to come to pass, for it is already true of Christ, and we are in him.

This is what the writer of Hebrews means when he describes Jesus as the "captain" of our salvation. The term means leader, the one who goes at the head as the first of a great procession. Thus Paul also describes Christ as the first fruits of them that slept—his resurrection is the first, and it is the guarantee

*It is by virtue of our union
with Christ that he could
bear our sins in his body.*

of the resurrection of his people. Paul in another place speaks of Christ as leading us in triumph. So here his exaltation to power and honor and glory is the guarantee that his people will be exalted to the like position of honor and glory—the image of God, with dominion over the creation.

This means that we need not fear death. For Jesus has destroyed the one that had the power of death, and has freed those who were in bondage to its fear. Here too man has in Christ moved from a position of slavery to one of lordship. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. And the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ.

You say, This is all very interesting; but what does it mean to me? My friend, Jesus invites you to turn from looking at the world in all its disarray, and from looking at yourself in all your frustrations, your sin and guilt, your fears of the present and future. He invites you to look at him, to trust in him, to accept him as your Savior as he is offered to you in this glorious good news. He invites you to find your rest in him.

The promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord your God shall call. Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but shall have eternal life. Among the benefits of that eternal life are restoration to the perfect image of God, and participation in that dominion man is destined to exercise over all things. For, as Daniel said, the kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high God.

A former editor of the Guardian, the Rev. Mr. Sloat is presently an instructor in Greek at Westminster Theological Seminary.

Still send MISSIONARIES to Korea?

Theodore S. Hard

The Rev. and Mrs. Ted Hard are missionaries of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to Korea. They were recently home on furlough, having returned to the field in late May.

In the course of my furlough this past year, many have asked me why missionaries are still needed in Korea. They point to the relatively large number of Christians in Korea at present (perhaps 13% of the total population), and to the vigor and rapid growth of the churches there as well as their largely conservative stance in theology.

Why continue?

The following considerations argue strongly, I believe, for continued and even increased missionary involvement in Korea. I would call for men and women, born again, convinced of the Reformed faith ("Christianity come into its own"), and with strong gifts for service and witness, to come to Korea while there is yet time.

1. Though perhaps 13% are Christian, some 750,000 professing Christians are Roman Catholic. Well over a million are from main-line Protestant groups whose leadership is liberal and often committed to the World Council of Churches. Also included as Christian are many sects or cults such as the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Seventh Day Adventists, all of which are exceedingly active and growing rapidly.

2. Some 600 missionaries to Korea are not a large number when you consider that there are perhaps 2700 in Japan.

3. The missionaries clearly committed to the Reformed faith, and separated

from the W.C.C. and similar ecumenical liberal movements, are very few—9 ordained men, 8 of them with their wives, for a total of 17 missionaries plus one other couple not in directly evangelistic missionary work.

Missionaries of the United Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church, U. S., and the Australian Presbyterian Church working in Korea, who are in the W.C.C. orbit, and missionaries of the United Church of Canada, work with a Korean constituency of 820,000 Christians. These missionaries number about 220, or some twelve times as many as the Orthodox Presbyterian, Reformed Presbyterian, and Presbyterian Church in America missionaries put together—who in turn work with a Korean constituency of 720,000.

4. Though church growth is comparatively rapid in terms of rates in many other countries, the rapid growth often leaves much strengthening work to be done. I would mention theological education, literature work, relief work, and the development and training of sufficient leaders for the new churches. In the 720,000 member constituency with which the OPC, RPCES, and PCA work, this is particularly true because of the limited number of missionaries and the very small financial assistance given in comparison to those in the W.C.C. orbit. Also, within this constituency the recent splits from the large W.C.C.-allied church have deprived the departing conservative bodies of access to the vast resources in the church they left—books, broadcast facilities, publishing concerns, hospitals, foundations, etc., not to mention local church buildings.

5. Korean churches are sending missionaries themselves, with both the liberal and conservative churches now doing this. Korean missionaries can be received by other countries without fear of imperialistic motives, and Koreans are a friendly, highly literate, hard-working group that have stood strong for democracy and against Communism. It behooves us to support the sending of missionaries from the theologically biblical churches in Korea—and a stronger missionary presence from us to Korea will help foster that end.

6. As one of the very few countries in Asia where the gospel can be freely preached, and with that freedom attacked and threatened in these days, it is important to work while there is yet time.

Come and join us!

WHO

will go for us?

Bruce F. Hunt

Some time ago, I received a letter from an elder of a local church saying that their session was concerned about the methods being used in selecting people for foreign mission fields. Particularly, the concern was about those who desire to serve but are found inadequate for the task. This elder had been asked by his session to correspond with me to get my thoughts on the matter.

What I sent to him was largely what I had written earlier in response to some inquiries from a member of the Committee on Foreign Missions of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church about that church's over-all missionary program. I offer it here in the hopes that by setting forth what I consider to be the qualifications to be looked for in missionaries, Christian readers may be stimulated to think and pray about their individual responsibility in either going themselves or in sending out those representatives of the church who will help the church most properly to carry out the Lord's commission.

Qualifications of a missionary

Of course, we should never forget that all true Christians are "witnesses" (Acts 1:8), "sent ones" by Christ (Matt. 28:19), and so "missionaries" in a general unspecialized sense. The first qualification applies to all and is certainly the first requisite for the more formal "sent ones" or "missionaries" (Acts 13:3) sent out by the church—which I think the session was thinking of and which most of us think of when we use the term "missionary."

1. A missionary, whether formal or in-

formal, should be one who is converted (Luke 22:32), who has experienced the joy of salvation (Psalm 51:12, 13), who is himself saved and believes God has raised Jesus from the dead and confesses Christ to be Lord (Rom. 10:10), one who has heard what we call the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19), and one who says, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16).

2. A missionary should be one who has looked on the fields (John 4:35), which is the whole world, and while knowledge and circumstances may lead him to one portion of the whole field, still believe that the field is *the world* (Matt. 13:38) including the uttermost part (Acts 1:8), beginning from whatever "Jerusalem" he starts. He should be one who works with the church, normally going to almost any field that the church, or a committee of the church acting as its representative (Acts 13:3; Eph. 3:10), as part of God's providential leading, determines to send him.

3. A missionary should love the Lord and be constrained by the love of Christ (2 Cor. 5:14).

4. A missionary should be one who has denied himself, taken up his cross to follow Christ (Matt. 16:24, 25), and in principle loses himself, leaves house and brethren, sisters, father, mother, children, lands for the Lord's sake, and is no lover of money (Matt. 10:37-39; 1 Tim. 3:3).

5. A missionary should be one who is willing to hazard his life for the name of the Lord (Acts 15:26).

6. A missionary should be "chief among the brethren" (Acts 15:22), well reported by the brethren (Acts 16:2), beloved by the brethren (Acts 15:25). He should be able to take a responsible teaching (1 Tim. 3:2) and leading (1 Pet. 5:2) position on the field, if given one.

7. Yet a missionary should also be willing to feed the lambs (John 21:15) as well as tend and feed the sheep (John 21:16, 17), being willing to take the servant's position (John 13:14), submitting himself to the brethren in the Lord (1 Pet. 5:3). In other words, he should be

ready and content to do the grassroots work, the humble work, if that's what is open for him to do.

8. A missionary should be experienced, not a novice (1 Tim. 3:6); he should be apt to teach (1 Tim. 3:2), which of course implies adequate training.

9. The missionary's personality, family, and social life, should all be without reproach (1 Tim. 3:7). He should be one who rules well his own house (1 Tim. 3:4, 5).

10. The missionary should have good health, and the good health of his wife and children is helpful (Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 6:12-20).

I realize that measuring up to all these requirements perfectly is nigh to impossible—humanly speaking. But these seem to be the qualifications that God's Word sets before us. Shouldn't those volunteering and those who must choose whom to send for the church seek the best by God's standards?

Other things could be added, of course. But I think that special talents, such as language ability, have too often been overemphasized. Moses (Exodus 4:10-12), Jeremiah (Jer. 1:6), and Ezekiel (Ezek. 3:26-27), all seemed concerned about their language abilities, as most missionary candidates are; but they were sent nevertheless. Young Timothy may not have been "chief among the brethren" like Silas, but he was "well reported of by the brethren" (Acts 16:2).

One just graduating from seminary is likely to be somewhat of a "novice," and for this reason our own Korea Mission, in setting down our ideas of missionary qualifications, said we thought it advisable that a new missionary have at least a year's experience in Christian work in the home country before being sent. This would not be a *rule* in our thinking, but "advisable"; after all, we also have God's word to "let no man despise thy youth" (1 Tim. 4:12). And by the time one has finished seminary he may well be a fairly mature Christian.

Still, the difficulty often is, however, that when a man gets out of seminary and goes into a church for a year and proves himself a good minister, that the

A Letter from Aunt Polly

Dear young friends,

In your home, in igloos, adobes, cabins, cottages, apartment buildings and mansions, folks are preparing to celebrate Christmas. From Orient to Occident, from North Pole to South Pole, folks in every clime and nation are preparing.

Mysterious, isn't it?

See them! Serious and thoughtful, joyful and gay. Mothers, fathers, grandparents, young folks, children, wee tots, all going their ways, preparing. For what? Some don't really know.

Mysterious, isn't it?

Two hundred years ago William Cowper hitched a horse to a carriage and drove away into the darkness of a foggy night. He was intending to end his life by leaping from a cliff on the coast of England. But the horse lost its way and weary Cowper fell asleep. At daybreak, horse, carriage and driver were safe at home. The experience inspired his famous hymn that begins —

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.

God's mysterious ways are legion.
But none so superbly mysterious, none

so filled with wonder as his inscrutable moving to bring about Christmas. The event was planned, "before the stars sung in glory"; initiated in creation; man, made in the image of God, sinned and made Christmas necessary.

Then Abraham was called and fathered a family from which a nation sprang. The Christ of Christmas came from that nation. He came as you and I have come, born of flesh and blood. Came to be Emmanuel, God with us in the flesh.

Mysterious, isn't it?

God humbled himself to come down to you.

O sinner, humble yourself to come up to Him.

Thus comes the unfolding of the mysteries of Christmas.

"Aunt Polly"

Originally written for the Morrison Christian Academy Echo, Christmas 1963, and translated by Teena Ch'eng for the Taichung Presbyterian College Students Union Christmas bulletin. Aunt Polly is Mrs. Pauline (Richard B.) Gaffin, Sr., recently returned from missionary service in Taiwan.

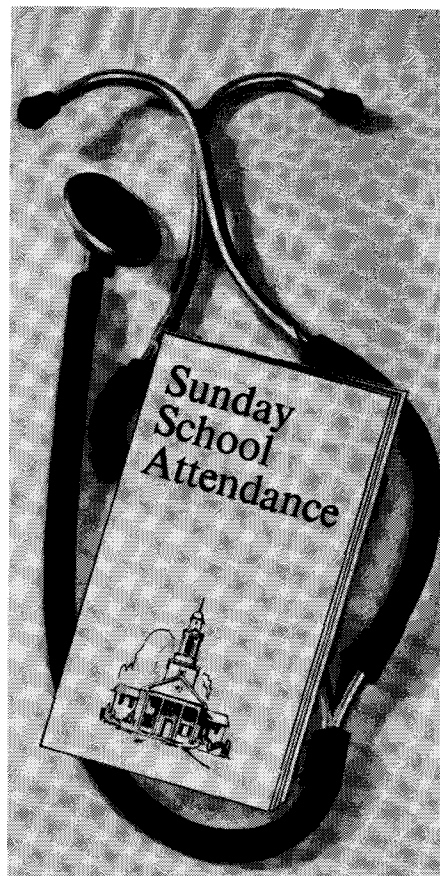
church may not want to release him. This is where a church with a missionary vision and a real sense of its missionary responsibility, by prayerfully and cheerfully releasing and sending its pastor forth, will show the sincerity of its profession and obedience to its Lord's commands.

Where practical we think it is better for a missionary to come when he is still fairly young and not yet cumbered with a large family. There are two reasons for this: (1) It seems easier to learn a language when one is young — though this again is not an absolute rule, for some older people have been able to master a language and become most fruitful missionaries. (2) The mere logistics of getting settled in a strange place takes a lot of time for anyone on the mission field,

especially one with a large family; this detracts from the time that is necessary for language study at the beginning.

To us as individuals, the Lord says, "Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure" (2 Pet. 1:10). And Christ asks the church as it ministers to him, to separate unto him those whom he has called for the work whereunto he has called them (Acts 13:2). May he open our ears to hear him saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8). And may our lips be purified with the coals from off the altar as we answer, "Here am I, send me"!

The Rev. and Mrs. Bruce F. Hunt have retired after some forty years of missionary service in Korea.



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Jonathan Edwards on

Christ's MARRIAGE to the sinner

Carl W. Bogue

Jonathan Edwards, the great New England Puritan, was a covenant theologian and a consistent Calvinist. He provided future generations with valuable insights into the way the sovereign God relates to fallen man.

From the divine perspective, there is essentially one covenant, the covenant of redemption "that God the Father makes with Christ . . . wherein believers are looked upon as in Christ."¹ There is another covenant, however, between Christ and believers that is seen as an expression of the eternal covenant of redemption between the Father and Christ and that is manifested in history. Edwards says this "is what is properly called the covenant of grace" and in Scripture is "symbolized as a marriage covenant."²

The marriage figure

The analogy of marriage is of historical value in understanding Edwards' views. To the extent that it illumines Scripture teaching its value need not be limited to historical investigation. In Ephesians 5:32 marriage is the primary analogy for the union between Christ and his church. And since the union of the believer with Christ is the relation designated by the covenant of grace, it is most appropriate as an illustration used by Edwards to explain the covenantal relation.

It is this "marriage" between Christ and the elect sinner that bridges the gap between God offended and man offend-

ing. The primary covenant is between God the Father and Christ, but it is with Christ as he is united with his church. Thus the eternal decree of redemption is manifested in time only when the members of that church become united with Christ. To be outside of the "marriage covenant," the covenant of grace, is to be outside the covenant of redemption.

God the Father makes no covenant and enters into no treaty with fallen men distinctly by themselves. He will transact with them in such a friendly way no other way than by and in Christ Jesus as members and as it were parts of him. The friendliness and favour shall not be to them in their own name, but it shall be to Christ and all acts of friendship and favour shall all be to him and all promises made to him and the fulfilment of promises also shall be to him and to believers only as being in him and under the covert of his name and as being beheld and reckoned as parts of him.³

From man's perspective all the covenant promises are contingent upon his being in Christ, and to be in Christ is to be in the covenant of grace.

Two covenants

Edwards elaborates on this in a sermon on Hebrews 9:15-16 where he uses the illustration of a king covenanting with his son and his son's wife together as one party with the promise contingent upon the son's fulfilling a certain condition.⁴ Note here that the covenant, from Christ's perspective, is a covenant of works. He must fulfill a meritorious condition on behalf of his bride.

This distinguishing of covenants is illustrated also by the father who "gives an estate to his son and his future wife" and by the son who in turn "in the marriage covenant gives himself and his estate to her that he takes [as his wife], yet the covenants are entirely different."⁵

The union between Christ and his bride, with each party sharing with the other all they possess, has tremendous implications for our salvation. If the righteousness of Christ with its merited blessings belongs to believers by means of this covenant, it is also true that the believers' sin with its merited punishment belongs to Christ. That is why

Marriage is the primary analogy for the union between Christ and his church.

Christ took our sins upon himself. The sinner's debt became Christ's debt in their marriage, and the cross was where Christ paid off the debt in full.

Uniting with Christ

Edwards insists that the "offer of the gospel is not properly called a covenant till it is consented to," even as an offer of marriage is only an offer and not the covenant of marriage itself.⁶ The promise of the covenant of grace is thus conditional, though Edwards is not totally pleased with that word and is careful to affirm man's lack of power autonomously to fulfill "conditions" for salvation.

The marriage analogy as union with Christ illustrates the nature of faith more clearly than the traditional use of such terms as "conditional" or "instrumental." Edwards expresses this in his great work, "Justification by Faith Alone."

It is certain that there is some union or relation that the people of Christ stand

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in to him, that is expressed in Scripture, from time to time, by being *in Christ*, and is represented frequently by those metaphors of being members of Christ, or being united to him as members to the head, and branches to the stock, and is compared to a marriage union between husband and wife.⁷ The marriage union thus illustrates the non-meritorious nature of faith: We are not united to Christ as a reward of our faith, but have union with him by faith, only as faith is the very act of uniting or closing *on our part*. As when a man offers himself to a woman in marriage, he does not give himself to her as a *reward* of her receiving him in marriage. Her receiving him is not considered as a worthy deed in her for which he rewards her by giving himself to her; but it is by her receiving him that the union is made, by which she hath him for her husband. It is *on her part* the union [act of uniting] itself. . . . It appears how contrary to the gospel of Christ their scheme is, who say that faith justifies as a principle of obedience. . . .⁸

Faith then is our nonmeritorious uniting with Christ and is attributed to the grace of God.

The marriage covenant is no abstraction but a vivid biblical truth. "The covenant . . . between God and a professing people is like a marriage covenant" where they "profess and oblige themselves to renounce all others" and to belong to each other forever.⁹ When Christ performs the condition of his covenant with the Father, says Edwards, "the condition is as if it were performed by them."¹⁰ One recognizes in this critical "as if" a parallel with the "as if" involved in the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer "as if" it were his own.

Justification is by faith alone precisely because justification is by works. Edwards, as a Puritan defender of *solus fidei*, believed that the only ground for justification is actual righteousness without which no one will inherit eternal life. Justification by (through) faith is really justification by (on the basis of) the works Christ did for us. In that context Edwards writes, "God will neither look on Christ's merits as ours, nor adjudge his benefits to us, till we be in Christ; nor will he

look upon us as being in Him, without an active union of our hearts and souls to him."¹¹

Apart from union with Christ in the covenant of grace by which the sinner and Christ are looked upon as one person, there would be no righteousness in any creature, and none would ever be justified. Justification is by faith alone because faith alone unites the sinner to Christ.

The blessing of the covenant of grace, analogous to the marriage covenant, is that all our sins and unrighteousness are Christ's, and all his blessings and righteousness are ours. Those who have fulfilled the "condition" of the covenant of grace, who by faith are united with Jesus Christ, know with the certainty of God's Word, which cannot lie, that they shall inherit eternal life.

¹ Sermon on Hebrews 9:15-16, Yale MSS, pp. 3f. The manuscript sermons and "Miscellanies" notebook entries identified as Yale MSS are located in Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and are

used with their kind permission.

² Sermon on Psalm 111:5, Yale MSS, p. 7.

³ "Miscellanies," No. 1091, Yale MSS.

⁴ Sermon on Hebrews 9:15-16, Yale MSS, pp. 4-6.

⁵ "Miscellanies," No. 617, Yale MSS.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ "Justification by Faith Alone," *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Edward Hickman, 2 volumes (London, 1879 and recently reprinted by The Banner of Truth Trust) (hereafter cited as *Works*), I, p. 624.

⁸ "Justification by Faith Alone," *Works*, I, p. 640.

⁹ Sermon on Hosea 3:1-3, Yale MSS, pp. 1-3.

¹⁰ "Miscellanies," No. 2, Yale MSS.

¹¹ "Justification by Faith Alone," *Works*, I, p. 627.

The Rev. Mr. Bogue is pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Akron, Ohio. His dissertation for the doctoral degree at the Free University of Amsterdam was on "Jonathan Edwards and the Covenant of Grace."

Here & There

Follow-up on ASA

Readers interested in more background on the American Scientific Affiliation (see the report in the October *Guardian*) may obtain a free copy of the December 1976 issue of the *Journal ASA* on the theme, "What Is Man?" by writing to the Executive Secretary, ASA, Suite 450, 5 Douglas Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.

Items

Whippany, N.J.—After almost twenty years of service as pastor, the Rev. Calvin A. Busch resigned that post at Emmanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Church here. The resignation is effective December 31, 1976.

When Mr. Busch began his ministry, the congregation was meeting in a large home in Morristown, N.J. In 1970 the move was made to a spacious new build-

ing in Whippany. Mr. Busch was ordained in 1938, serving a church in Aurora, Nebraska. In 1943 he moved to Steamboat Springs, Colorado, and from there to the Second Parish Church in Portland, Maine. He and his family plan to reside at 10 Park Avenue, Convent Station, NJ 07961. He hopes to keep busy as a substitute preacher and Bible conference speaker as the Lord cares to use him.

Stratford, N.J.—On October 29, 1976, the Presbytery of New Jersey ordained Mr. Stephen Hohenberger to the gospel ministry and installed him as pastor of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church here.

Oxnard, Calif.—Mr. Stephen Doe has been called as an associate pastor of El Camino Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Santa Barbara to serve the branch work here. The Oxnard mission has been served by the "retired" Rev. Henry W. Coray.

Philadelphia, Pa.—On December 12, 1976,

the Presbytery of Philadelphia of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church ordained Mr. Thomas Corey as an evangelist to serve the Church of the City in organizing a new congregation in the southwest Philadelphia area. The group has already purchased a store which it is renovating as a place of worship.

Hamden, Conn.—On November 5, 1976, the Rev. Ronald E. Jenkins was installed as pastor of Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church here. Participants in the service included the Rev. Wendell L. Rockey, Professor John M. Frame, Dr. Elmer M. Dortzbach, and ruling elders Frank Emley, Bertram R. Robinson, and Henry K. Bacon. Mr. Jenkins had previously been pastor of the Community O. P. Church in Center Square, Pa.

Reformation Day in Washington

A truly ecumenical gathering of at least 650 people took place on the evening of Reformation Day (October 31) at the beautiful auditorium of Northwood High School in Silver Spring, Maryland. From Baltimore and Washington area churches and beyond, people of Reformed congregations came in commemoration of the launching of the great sixteenth century Protestant Reformation.

The meeting was sponsored by congregations of the Christian Reformed Church, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in America, and Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. Guest speaker was Dr. Robert Godfrey, a professor of church history at Westminster Theological Seminary. A sixty-voice choir, under the direction of Dr. Donald Olson, sang — and sang impressively with very little time for practice together.

It was generally felt that this was a

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celebration indeed when God's people of several Reformed communities could come together in worship, fellowship, and witness.

Contacts Desired

If you know anyone in the vicinities of Medford, Grants Pass, or Roseburg, Oregon; Pocatello, Idaho; or Kalispell, Montana, who may be interested in worshipping an Orthodox Presbyterian Church, please notify the Northwest Presbytery Missions Committee, 118 N.W. Newport, Bend, OR 97701. Phone: 503-389-7040.

"This is the Way the Lord Will Come"

A new pamphlet-tract on Christ's second coming by the Rev. Calvin A. Busch, pastor of Emmanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Whippany, New Jersey. Available at 60¢ postage paid from Mr. Busch, 120 Park Ave., Convent Station, NJ 07961.

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Genesis 2:22

Dear Sarah:

I am troubled with a problem that has been on my mind for some time and won't leave me. I was convicted by a sermon our pastor preached about the importance of family devotions. But apparently I'm the only one in our family who seems to have been reached.

We are a Christian family and my husband is even an officer in our church. But our habit for sixteen years of marriage has been *not* to have family devotions. I suggested to my husband that we start reading the Bible after dinner; he said we probably should, but has done nothing about it. Our children are so used to eating and running that when I mentioned it to them, they only groaned and said, "No way, 'cause no time!"

I know we can never retrieve the lost years when our children were very young and could have benefited so greatly from family devotions. But I don't want to lose the rest of the years of our Christian influence on our children by neglecting this. I don't know what to do since I am not the spiritual head of our home. Have you any suggestions?

—M. A.

Dear M. A.:

Your attitude is encouraging because first you have listened to the Holy Spirit's conviction on a very important matter and, secondly, you recognize your proper relationship in your marriage partnership.

One thing you may have overlooked is that, although your husband is indeed the spiritual head of the home, you as his wife are meant to be a help suited to his needs (Genesis 2:18). So if your husband needs help in his spiritual leadership and you see this, it is your duty to help and encourage him in this very thing.

Take time to talk with him about this when just the two of you are alone and not rushed. Have concrete suggestions as

to what you think would be helpful in the family devotion time. Don't push or shame him into leadership. Volunteer to lead if he would like you to. After you have led for a while and established a pattern, suggest that your children take turns sharing in leading or at least in reading. Then let your husband take his turn too.

There are many excellent devotional guides, memory verse plans, hymns to sing, etc. And be careful never to *substitute* a devotional writing for Bible reading. Another thing: children as well as

adults always listen better and learn more if they know some questions will be asked!

When you have your talk with your husband, be sure to have practical suggestions that will best suit your family's needs in putting this new plan into action. Of course there will have to be adjustments in schedule, but work these out in your own mind before your talk.

I'm with you — and don't let any more time go by without the benefits this will bring to all of your lives.

—Sarah.

I Lost My Lord

Barbara Blietz

Being preoccupied with my task — for Him! — I just didn't listen. One minute my Lord was there and the next he was gone!

He must have said, "Come, child, sit with me on the porch. We will commune together, putting aside our cares long enough to be refreshed."

I guess I was too busy to listen, for I did not hear.

I looked up suddenly to find myself alone. Dropping everything (even the assurance that he would not leave me), I dashed from room to room looking for my Lord.

The kitchen sparkled with the knowledge that I was fully prepared to feed the world. (I had spent ten minutes at devotions only that morning!)

The living room likewise was ready for company. I always took great pride at being able to entertain without fanfare and still put everyone at ease.

But, my Lord was not there!

Quickly I dashed upstairs. He might be resting. Panic began to set in as I called out in fear, "Where are you, Lord? I need you!"

At the end of the hall I looked out the window to see if maybe he was in the garden of my soul. He loved gardens. Mine was well manicured, not a weed or thistle anywhere. It was perfect — well, better than any others I had seen recently. But, alas, my Lord was not there.

As I turned to go from my garden, a horrid thought crept over me. Oh, no! He'd found the cellar closet! the place where I hide the most ghastly me! All that junk, and petty trash — if he opens the door he will surely be suffocated by the mess.

O Lord, no! I ran from my fear. Down the stairs I bolted, tears streaming. I had killed my Lord. He was gone and I hadn't even said goodbye. He'd left me alone with my closet. Weeping, I collapsed at the kitchen table. There was no purpose left in all that I might do. My Lord was nowhere, and I could not bear to look beside the closet door.

"My child, why are you weeping?" he asked gently.

In disbelief I turned. Tears still fresh, I sighed.

"My Lord, I thought you were gone from me, that I had surely killed you at the closet door in the cellar of my soul. O Lord, I am so ashamed!"

And my Lord said,

"My child, you were too busy to hear.

Guarding Our TREASURES

Evelyn Lauxstermann

With the nationwide spiraling rate of crimes committed against property (even church property), which includes theft and vandalism, most homeowners are nor-

It was time to put aside your care. It was time we talked, but you were too busy to listen. I've been waiting on the porch where we talk and pray. But, child, you were too busy.

"You see, it was not I who left, but you in your pride who lost sight of me. You cannot work for me and exclude our talks. What good would it be if we ordered all of mankind if we were not together?"

"Come with me, now. Let us talk and pray. There'll be time for work once we know what to do today."

Alas, we are so foolish. We run through life exulting ourselves in every work and petty care. We call it God's work. But, is he really there?

Where is the place of prayer? What priority do we give for time with our Lord?

God's work springs forth from God. Man's work comes with the morning sun. The difference is in knowing which work is spiritual. And spiritual work is found with prayer.

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing (John 15:4, 5).

Mrs. Blietz is a member of Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Hanover Park, Ill.

mally conscious of some necessity to lock windows and doors. Business owners not only carry theft insurance but some have found it necessary to install expensive security systems to protect their property. Churches now carry insurance. Vandalism is all too common.

Although believers in Christ ought not to live in fear of intruders who would rob or destroy, they are nevertheless obligated, as good stewards, to take some responsible and reasonable measures to protect and guard their possessions from lawless persons.

More important, every Christian needs to become thoroughly conscious of his responsibility under God to guard one particular *non-material* possession. He has a possession that is of far greater value than any temporal thing, a possession that is his for eternity, a possession that is presently endangered by evil invaders and forces that seek to rob it of its worth and to pull it down to destruction. To guard this possession, the Christian ought to be prepared to suffer the pain of self-denial and self-discipline while submitting to God's discipline.

This priceless possession is our heart — our inner life or soul. It must be kept right before God and guarded from God's enemies at all cost. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

The "heart" in Scripture includes the faculties of our mind, understanding, will, desires, and affections — the whole of our inner life with its struggles, strivings, and yearnings. The heart is the spring of our actions whether they be good or evil. The heart must be guarded against the ungodly spirit of this age, Satan — and against our own fleshly self, the heart's worst enemy.

How can we keep the heart pure and right before God and guard it against its enemies? The heart can be guarded only under the discipline of God's Word and his Holy Spirit. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11).

One specific thing we must do (and God requires it) is to keep the Lord's Day and to worship with the people of God where the Holy Scriptures are faithfully taught and preached, and the Holy Spirit is present to enlighten, correct,

purify, and guard our hearts.

The most precious treasure we could own is a heart that is filled with God's Word and Spirit, a heart that yearns for God and his righteousness, a heart that selflessly loves others even as God has loved us in Christ Jesus.

Mrs. Lauxstermann is a member of Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Vienna, Virginia, and editor of its newsletter "Grace Notes," where this first appeared.

"How Free Is Free?"

I feel that I must take exception to the article, "How Free Is Free?" in the October issue of the *Guardian*.

The freedom modern women search for is the freedom to be treated as equals in *matters of civil government*, the right to equal pay for equal work, and the freedom to choose between working or not working.

After college, I worked for five years and am now home working at my new job: motherhood. I am home by choice. I am not forced to stay home against my will, nor am I forced to work at an outside job. This is the freedom women need: freedom of choice.

Contrary to Mrs. Stukeley's article, I, like many other working Christian women, always volunteered for church programs (even while working). I enjoy many girl friends and do not feel work impeded this. In addition, I have never brought Kentucky Fried Chicken to a church supper!

One last thing: The generation gap is by no means an outcome of the "liberated woman." The generation gap has been around for a long time. Remember Romeo and Juliet?

The Lord has richly blessed our lives. We have tried to follow the course we believe he has set for us. He has taught us a respect for the homemaker as well as for the working woman.

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Springboro, Ohio

Ed. note: This letter also represents several other similar comments delivered to the editor orally.

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A BORN LOSER

He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:7, 8).

He was a born loser. Even in a destitute country, his birth in a stable placed him in the most humbled class.

He was a born loser. Despite such a humbled birth, he became the object of the murderous paranoia of a petty despot named Herod.

He was a born loser. He lived in poverty. He spent the last three years of his life with no place to call his own. His countrymen rejected him, turning him over to the cruelty of the foreign oppressors. He heard a mob howling for his blood. He was condemned to death by a judge who knew he was innocent. He was beaten, cut by thorns, spit upon, reviled, and ridiculed. He was executed, nailed to a cross and hung between two miserable thieves.

He was a born loser. He was born to suffer, born to die, born to endure the

total death of separation from his Father, the same Father who had called him, "My beloved Son."

A born loser? That's what we call the poor soul for whom everything seems to come up thorns and thistles. A new suit? — he stumbles into a mud puddle. A new job? — the company goes bankrupt. Car finally paid for? — it's totalled by a hit-and-run.

Of course we know it's not just "bad luck," or being "star-crossed," the victim of "fate." We may not understand such a life, but it is a part of the infinitely detailed and perfectly executed plan of the sovereign and almighty God.

But about Jesus we can truly say he was a "born loser." His Father planned it that way, and Jesus knew it before he was born. He came into the world in order to "lose," even to lose his life as a peculiarly humiliated "failure" in the eyes of men.

He was a born loser because the Father wanted it that way *and* the Son willingly accepted it, because only so could the almighty and sovereign God show forth the full glory of his grace to mankind.

The Son was indeed the beloved of the Father. But God also loved the world he had made, the world of humankind that had rebelled against him. In spite of their sin he loved them and gave his Son to die. We human beings are the real born losers, congenital defectives, plagued by endemic sin, under sentence of eternal death. Unless Jesus had been born to lose in our place, we all would have been hopeless losers.

So far as men could see, Jesus was a born loser, born to die and to lose all hope of the heavenly kingdom he announced. Even his closest friends and disciples abandoned him. The very earth shook and the sun was darkened in that final hour of loss.

And as he prepared to give up his own life, willing to give it up to carry out his Father's purposes, Jesus said, "It is finished." He was not talking about his

brief life and its suffering and shame. He was talking about the work he had come to do. The old serpent Satan deluded himself into thinking he had won that day. But even Satan must have known that Christ was the real winner.

A born loser? Yes, but he won the greatest victory in all history. In losing his life, willingly giving it up, he had ransomed a condemned people from their hopeless condition. He had paid the price for their sin. He had the power to give his life a sacrifice for many, and he had power to take it up again. He arose from the grave, the victor over sin and death, the conqueror of Satan himself.

He arose, and in his resurrected life and glory he offers eternal life to all who will believe in him, who see him as the Savior and Lord who won the final victory. Because he was born to lose and willingly gave up his life, he could say about his Father's plan to save an elect people for himself, "It is finished."

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:9-11).

Dear friend, every knee *shall* bow and every tongue confess, willingly or perforce. Will you not confess him now and share in his eternal glory? He was a born loser, and by losing, he won over Satan, sin, and death, and all those who reject him. Those who believe in him are victors with him, now and forever.

— John J. Mitchell