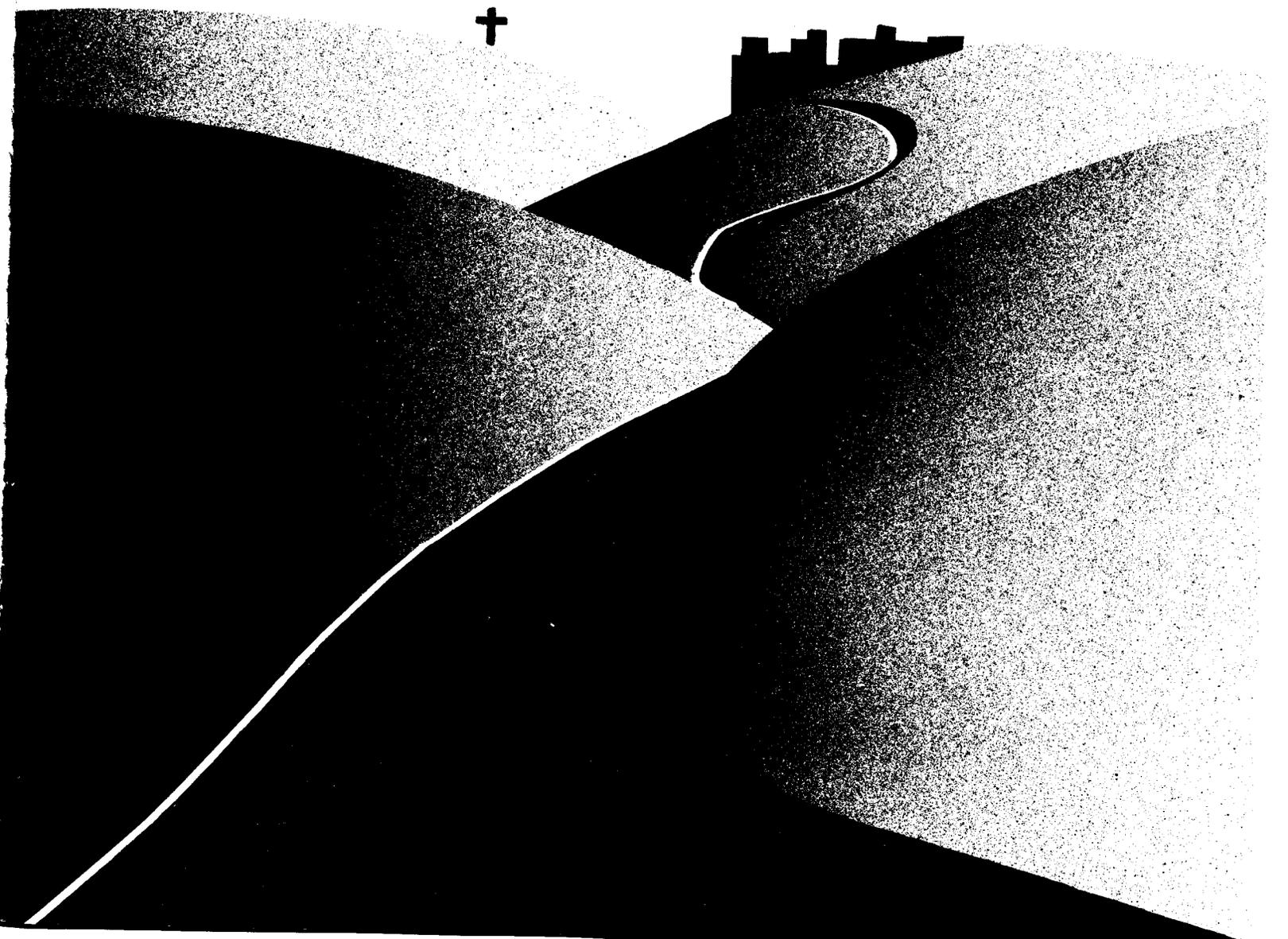


The Presbyterian Guardian

VOL. 42, NO. 3 - MARCH, 1973



NPRF Hears Schaeffer in Atlanta

Members and interested friends turned out in large numbers for the semi-annual meeting of the National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship in Atlanta on February 15 and 16. The "drawing card" was undoubtedly the presence of Dr. Francis Schaeffer, well known "evangelist to 20th-century man" from L'A bri, Switzerland.

Dr. Schaeffer's lectures included an examination of 20th-century man's state of mind, his felt hopelessness and despair, and his tendency to turn over the management of affairs to a body of "experts." The collapse of faith in the scientific dream of continued progress, of constantly improving evolutionary development, has left the modern generation with no hope. In many ways, the truths of Christian faith can be more readily presented to today's younger people than was true even ten or fifteen years ago.

In this world as it is, the church must be clear in two areas of the content of its proclamation: (1) The

church must teach *and practice* the purity of the truth it has received; both corporately and individually the members of the church must demonstrate the spiritual realities of those truths. (2) The church must also be prepared and willing to give "honest answers to honest questions"—a mandate that requires us to give more than a casual look at the "mind" of today's generation.

The church, Dr. Schaeffer emphasized, must display convincing evidence to the world of the spiritual realities it professes to have and to believe. In particular, the Christian's union with his Lord must be plainly visible to all in the Christian's practice—at great cost to himself—of Christian love and fellowship in all its beauty.

In his lectures, Dr. Schaeffer also spoke of the need for separation from unbelief, of the need to exercise discipline within a church against unbelief or failing that to exercise it by separating. But, Dr. Schaeffer was particularly concerned to stress, even where separa-

tion is necessary it must not result in attitudes of hatred or bitterness toward those Christians who remain behind in unbelieving communions. His remarks on this general subject were obviously directed mostly toward those in Southern Presbyterian circles who face this issue today, and his emphases seemed to be genuinely appreciated by those present.

Attendance at this Atlanta meeting was surely encouraging to the members of the NPRF. It is increasingly apparent that men in many different denominations, men who hold to the doctrines of the Reformed faith, are desirous of maintaining and enlarging their fellowship with one another. The dream of a national Presbyterian and Reformed church seems firmly embedded in the consciousness of many; mention of even a remote possibility of such a nationwide church elicited spontaneous approval more than once during the meeting.

It was also encouraging to note the pattern of attendance at this Atlanta meeting. Naturally, the number of those from the Presbyterian Church, U.S. ("Southern") was quite large. Orthodox Presbyterians and Reformed Presbyterians, both from the Evangelical Synod and the Covenanters, were present in good numbers. A strong contingent of Christian Reformed men was also present. Several United Presbyterians were there, but only one from the Reformed Church in America.

For the first time, there were several men in attendance from the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. (This denomination, concentrated in the South, has its roots in the Reformed (Covenanter) tradition and the Associate Presbytery in Scotland. Its northern "relatives" were part of those who made up the old United Presbyterian Church many years ago. But the southern ARP Synod maintained its separate existence.)

This reporter was impressed anew with the number of men, in all this variety of denominational connections, who sincerely seek to be Reformed even to the point of separation from their present ecclesiastical relationships. This unity in faith and commitment to serve the Lord has measurably grown since the NPRF began.

NPRF reissues invitation on "National Synod"

At its meeting in Lansing, Illinois last October, the NPRF issued a call to representatives of several denominations to meet to consider the possibility of convoking "a national synod of genuinely Presbyterian and Reformed churches." The basic idea of such a "national synod" was to provide a means for closer counseling together without requiring the various groups to achieve full organic union; it would be a synod of churches, not a super-church.

The invitation was sent to the various committees on fraternal relations in the Christian Reformed Church, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church/Evangelical Synod, the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Covenanter), and the Steering Committee for a Continuing Presbyterian Church (U.S., i.e., "Southern"). These committees or their representatives were urged to meet and consider the possibility of convoking such a national synod of churches. (The NPRF as a fellowship of individuals felt it was out

of order for them to issue any call for such a synod; instead, they were asking these representatives of various churches to consider the matter.)

It was disappointing to NPRF members to learn that the "Southern" Steering Committee rejected the invitation. But since that decision was made, interest in the idea has spread particularly in the South. The NPRF meeting in Atlanta determined to reissue its invitation for a meeting with some hopes that it would receive a favorable response. The resolution reads:

"The National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship reaffirms the resolution adopted in Lansing, Illinois, October 27, 1972, looking toward a meeting of correspondence or fraternal relations committees of those Presbyterian and Reformed churches, existing and emerging, that seek to maintain a pure witness to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ in the communion appointed by Christ through his apostles and prophets in the New Testament."

The Presbyterian Guardian is published ten times each year, every month except for combined issues in June-July and August-September, by the Presbyterian Guardian Publishing Corporation, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia, PA 19126, at the following rates, payable in advance, postage prepaid: \$3.75 per year (\$3.25 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.

UPUSA-PCUS Plan of Union collapsed

A recent meeting of the Joint Committee on a plan of union between the Presbyterian Church, U.S. and the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., ended with the plan in tattered scraps under the table.

A subcommittee report triggered the collapse of this proposed merger plan, long sought by the leadership of both churches. The subcommittee was reporting recommendations to improve the wording of the "escape clause" provision in the proposed plan. This "escape clause" was to permit congregations to remain out of any merged church if they so desired. Conservatives had looked upon this as their one hope of escaping the increasingly liberal and radical trends in both denominations, without having to give up property rights in the process.

Originally, the "escape clause" had been sought by the Southern leadership as a means through which to gain a favorable vote on the merger itself. Conservatives were expected to vote for the plan if it contained the "escape clause"; without it, the conservatives could have defeated the plan.

But when the subcommittee reported, it was the Southern contingent in the Joint Committee that raised objections. (Dr. Edward Dowey, UPUSA member of the Joint Committee, had long objected to the whole idea of an "escape clause," and had indicated his intention to take the issue into the civil courts if need be. He saw this "escape clause" as an "un-Presbyterian" idea.)

The Southern representatives in the Joint Committee wanted to postpone further action on the plan of union until after the 1973 General Assemblies. Apparently, the leadership now feels that, given a year or two more, it can complete the reorganization of synods and presbyteries to such an extent that conservatives will be unable to block a union, "escape clause" or no. On the crucial vote in the Joint Committee, it was decided with only two dissenting votes to "revise the plan" and present it to the Assemblies in 1974.

One of those dissenting was W. Jack Williamson, an attorney who had been

named to the Joint Committee to express southern conservative objections to the plan. Mr. Williamson reminded the committee that it had spoken of the existing plan as the product of months of negotiation in good faith, but now was willing to junk the whole thing.

The other dissenting vote was cast by Dr. William P. Thompson, stated clerk of the UPUSA, who charged that the southern leaders had been "dishonest" in their dealings. They had insisted on the "escape clause," and Dr. Thompson had reluctantly accepted it; but now they wanted to change the whole plan. "You insisted that an escape clause was necessary in order to secure a favorable vote. You have now betrayed brethren who trusted your integrity." Dr. Thompson indicated that he would never consent to an "escape clause" after this.

To this observer it seems clear enough that the Southern leadership sees itself no longer hampered by conservative strength in the presbyteries. At least that would be true once reorganization (i.e., a large measure of gerrymandering) is completed. The honesty of such a switch in tactics is another matter, and both Mr. Williamson and Dr. Thompson pointedly denounced the move to abandon the existing plan with its "escape clause."

Meanwhile, conservative congregations in the South that had been holding on until the "escape clause" would permit them to leave with their property, must now decide what to do next. Some of them have already decided; a few congregations have simply voted themselves out of their local presbyteries and claimed their property. These churches have been, or soon will be, challenged by court suits on the part of presbyteries seeking to regain the property. On the other hand, one congregation simply asked permission to leave and was granted it by the presbytery (a quite liberal presbytery, in fact). Since that precedent, some twenty congregations asked and were granted dismissal in Alabama and have formed a new presbytery of their own.

At the present, a polite request for permission to leave seems the most promising route for conservative congregations. And many will no doubt seek that way out in the months ahead.

In general, it appears that a "Continuing Church" is finally becoming a reality in the South. Two presbyteries already exist: the Vanguard Presbytery (reported here earlier) and the recently organized Warrior Presbytery in Alabama. (The militant sound of that latter one may or may not have been intentional; the name is derived from a river in the area!)

Throughout the South there are ministers, elders, and church members who have fought for years to preserve their churches from the increasingly radical unbelief in their denomination's leadership. Now these people look ahead to the day when they will be free. But freedom brings responsibility. It is one thing to struggle against blatant unbelief. It is quite another to be consistently and positively Reformed and Presbyterian. Yet that is the goal these people have set for themselves. They are painfully aware of the lack of sound instruction, in the official church colleges and seminaries, and in the official church literature, they have received. They see themselves as having the right intentions but in great need of solid teaching.

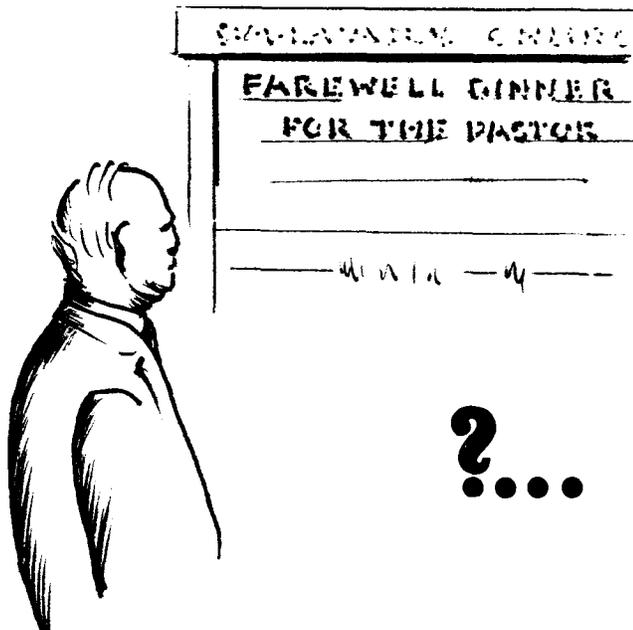
Articles on the distinctives of the Reformed faith have appeared in various publications circulating among conservatives in the South. An increasingly influential number of ministers have been trained in such seminaries as Reformed in Mississippi, as well as Westminster in Philadelphia and Covenant in St. Louis. And the formerly common practice in many churches of encouraging memorization of the Shorter Catechism is still bearing good fruit.

To those who are already free of ecclesiastical organizations that have left the historic truths of Christianity, it is easy to find moles in the eyes of these southern conservatives. But it is heartening indeed to hear these people frankly acknowledge their own moles and express earnest desire to overcome their lacks. A "continuing church" that is truly Reformed and Presbyterian in the South seems clearly enough to be in process of becoming. May the Lord of the church richly bless those who struggle to bring it forth!

—J. J. M.

THE SUPERANNUATED

ROBERT L. VINING



A relatively new breed of ministers is appearing among the ranks of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church—the superannuated, those retired and living on pensions.

There have been, of course, a few retired ministers within the church before now. But when the Orthodox Presbyterian Church came into being in 1936, it was largely a young men's movement. Most of the ministers were recent graduates of Westminster Theological Seminary, and most of them were youthful. But thirty-seven years have rolled by. Those once young and bushy-haired are now old and grey-headed—if they still have hair at all.

When ministers reach retirement age, what shall they do? If they are in poor health, they will be glad for the opportunity to desist from their arduous labors and to live a more leisurely life. But if the retired minister enjoys good health, he may desire to continue serving the Lord in some active capacity. What form shall that take?

The most obvious answer for the retired minister is to supply a pulpit from time to time as requested. In the summer when pastors go on vacation will likely be his best opportunity to do this. Or, if the regular pastor requires surgery or extended hospitalization, a retired minister may fill in for that period. And there are always churches temporarily without pastors who may request a retired minister to serve on an interim basis for three or four months.

The retired minister may also seek a more permanent arrangement. There are home mission fields where the membership is small and financial ability limited. Such a field may welcome the services of one who receives his Social Security check each month and whose other earnings must be restricted to an amount the small congregation may be able to afford.

If the retired minister possesses sufficient income of his own and has good health, he may choose to go forth on his

own. He might even volunteer to go to a foreign field, to assist the missionaries there for a year or more.

If the retired minister has a flair for writing, he may contribute an article now and then to the *Presbyterian Guardian* or to some other religious periodical. Perhaps he could provide some copy to the Committee on Christian Education for a devotional message on the back of a church bulletin. If he has the ability and some expertise of interest to the public, he might even write the book of which he has long dreamed—but finding a publisher is another matter. *[Ed. note: It's safe to say that such literary effort is highly unlikely to swell his income to the point of endangering his Social Security benefits!]*

This article is prompted by the fact that the number of superannuated ministers in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church will be steadily increasing in the next few years. Several foreign missionaries are retired or in their final term of service abroad. Several pastors have announced or plan to announce their retirement soon.

How may the abilities of these men best be put to use? Is there—or should there be—some denomination-wide strategy to help put such men in a place of service? Should the Committee on Home Missions appoint a sub-committee to study the matter? Should the General Assembly give it some consideration?

Some ministers will be glad enough to reach the superannuated status and to enjoy the relaxation. Others are superannuated and eager to continue in some form of service. Some are confronted with grossly inadequate retirement incomes and will have to find further employment or else seek help from the church.

John Wesley carried a heavy preaching schedule well into his seventies and eighties. His theology is one thing; but should we not emulate his zeal? and, should not the church plan for and make opportunities for service to those who desire and need to continue laboring for their Master, even if on a reduced scale?

The Rev Robert L. Vining retired from his pastorate at Bethany Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Oxford, Pa., over a year ago. Since then he has served as interim supply at the Westminster Church in Valdosta, Georgia, and has given some assistance to a new group in Shreveport, Louisiana. He is now living in Valdosta—and perfectly able to give further service in the church of Christ. And there are others also.

(It should be pointed out, before someone thinks he has some ideal plan for such retired ministers, that there are real problems in adjusting both a reduced income—particularly if it includes provision for housing—and a limited work-load to the rather stringent restrictions of the Social Security regulations. One retired minister is being challenged now to repay nearly \$4000 of Social Security payments because he worked more than the limited number of hours permitted. Others have found that housing provision, either a manse or housing allowance, has pushed their income well above the minimum permitted under Social Security. Official advice on these matters ought to be obtained before assuming it can be worked out.)

for that we feel in our hearts any motion toward Thee" (page 55). And, "Give us true repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and let the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us" (page 63).

Again, he prays, "O meet us with Thy heavenly grace that we may be able to come to Thee. Stretch forth Thy hand and loose the chains wherewith our souls are entangled. Free us from every weight of sin, from every yoke of bondage" (page 66). And again, "Give us true repentance for all our past offences, and . . . work in us a firm and effectual resolution to amend our lives for the time to come" (page 97). Wesley even asserts that God "alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men" (page 91).

God is sovereign. He does rule all things by his providence and for his own glory. He grants repentance and faith in Jesus Christ to the hearts of sinful men, and he works in us to conform us to his own will. These things John Wesley believed in his heart and confessed freely when he was on his knees before God. Wesley had his intellectual struggles with biblical Calvinism; but when he prayed, John Wesley was a Calvinist.

Now it occurs to me to wonder: What about the Calvinist who neglects to pray? Is he an Arminian at heart? It's worth pondering!

The Rev. Mr. Valentine is a Calvinist, both when praying and when exercising his intellect. He is also home missionary-pastor in Greeneville, Tenn.

Christian Discernment

CARL J. REITSMA

Funny things happen among Christians. I recently heard of a Christian school choir that planned to include numbers from the rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* in one of its programs. This wicked composition depicts Jesus as human only. The very point that is central to Christianity is omitted in the opera—the divinity of Christ.

The opera even insinuates that an immoral relation existed between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Mary sings, "He's a man, he's just a man, and I've had so many men before." Then in Gethsemane, the opera tells us that Jesus was "inspired" but is now just "tired," and God is accused of being "far too keen on where and how and not so hot on why." The music ends and leaves Jesus in the grave. What brazen blasphemy!

The task of Christian teachers

Now as I see it, it is precisely the job of a Christian school to teach its young people to be "discerning" in all fields of culture including that of music. We are to teach them to be knowledge-prone, inquisitive for truth, discriminating, and to be more receptive to God's glories and to understand him better. How then could any Christian school have any association with an opera like *Superstar* and still claim to be a Christian school? The answer is simply lack of discernment.

Another case in point: Recently Billy Graham had a short column in the public press entitled "We learn about God only by experience." Here is what he said: "It is when our faith rings with the sound of experience that it becomes real." I think I know what Billy meant by this. He meant that just being accurate about Jesus is not true faith in Jesus. Our faith must be a living, daily dependence on Christ rather than a formal and dead orthodoxy. That is quite true.

But Billy went on to say, "In this sense, I agree with Jean Paul Sartre, when he said in effect: 'Only that which is experience is really real.'" Wow! Incredible! How can Mr. Graham say he agrees with a radical, atheistic existentialist? The answer is that at this particular point Mr. Graham is revealing a lack of discernment.

When Sartre says "Only experience is really real" he is not talking about living your faith. What Sartre is saying in effect is, "Since there is no God and there is no standard of right or wrong, life is an absurd joke. You might as well live for the moment, let yourself go, and do what comes

naturally." Graham and Sartre mean something totally different even though they may use the same words in a particular sentence.

The need to be discerning

What this means for us as Christians is that we must be most careful not to proceed on the lazy assumption that everything is right that sounds right. We must be willing to go below the surface and weigh right against wrong with the Bible as our standard. This is discernment.

Discernment is something we Christians must cultivate. Discernment is somewhat like the antennae of an insect. With these antennae the Christian can test and probe and analyze and put things in their proper categories. Solomon had discernment; the Pharisees did not. They could analyze the sky, but not the signs of the times.

John urges us to be discerning when he says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." That is discernment. It is Christian sensitivity and it grows in proportion to the closeness of our walk with God. It is an awareness that the world is full of clever demons who appear as angels of light to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

One of the most important and urgent responsibilities we have is to communicate the gospel to 20th-century man in a relevant manner. The world in which we are living is a rapidly changing place and we must be alert to the shifting patterns of thought around us. While the gospel itself is changeless, its application expands. All of this makes being a contemporary Christian a very exciting business.

But if demonstrating the relevance of the gospel is necessary, it is also delicate. We must be careful not to borrow pagan music and tack on a Christian ending, or pagan philosophy and dress it up in Christian words. No! Just as Christianity is a system of truth that is fundamentally complete and therefore changeless, so Christian culture has a style all its own.

Why must we wait for worldlings to produce religious opera with depth and flair? We should be doing it. Who will make a dramatic event out of Revelation 12? It could be tremendous with the right script and the right cast. Some patrons might even leave with broken hearts rather than broken eardrums.

The Rev. Carl J. Reitsma is pastor of Sharon Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Hialeah, Florida.

The Word of God, the Bible, and the AACCS

In defense of a reformational movement

BERNARD ZYLSTRA

By a "reformational movement" I have in mind that spirit among Christians that, in subjection to the Holy Scriptures, led by the Spirit, and in communal endeavor, calls for a reformation of the institutional churches, for renewal of orthodox thought, and for the revitalization of Christianity as the source for new direction in our culture. There are several such movements coming to life in various parts of Christendom, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. Most are small, none today as yet of historic import; that is, they have not been able to change the direction in established institutions.

In the pages that follow I have in mind specifically the reformational movement that finds its main organizational vehicle in the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship (AACCS), the sponsor of various projects of which the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS), a small center of graduate reflection and research in Toronto, is the most outstanding.

Areas of Critique

Ever since it was established in 1956, the AACCS, its official spokesmen, supporters and friends, both in Canada and in the United States, have been subjected to varying degrees of criticism from fellow Christians in numerous articles, brochures, and even overtures to ecclesiastical and educational assemblies. The criticism has been voiced mainly in publications and periodicals within the Reformed and Presbyterian church world. The main periodicals are: *The Presbyterian Guardian*, *The Christian Patriot*, *The Banner*, *The Outlook* (formerly *Torch and Trumpet*), *The Reformed Journal*, *The Canadian Reformed Magazine*, and *Calvinist-Contact*.

The criticism does not concern some secondary issues in Christian life and thought. It deals with themes that are fundamental to our very understanding of the gospel itself. Here are the most significant area of debate:

1. *The Word of God*: the nature of the Word of God (event, power, text); the so-called "forms" of the Word of God (God's order for creation, the incarnate Word, and the Bible); the nature and extent of biblical authority; and the relation between the Bible, our study of creation in philosophy and science, and the norms for human life.

2. *Kingdom and church*: the nature of the kingdom of God; the nature of the Body of Christ; the relation between

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these two; the distinction between the Body of Christ and the institutional church; the nature and extent of the authority of the institutional church; and the office of all believers.

3. *Creation and redemption*: the kingdom of God and creation; the structure of creation; the effect of sin in human life and culture; the relation between creation and redemption; the connection between the so-called cultural and mission mandates; and the necessity and character of Christian witness and action in culture, notably education, politics, economics, and the arts.

4. *Creeds and confessions*: the nature of confessions; the relation between church creeds and confessional statements outside of the institutional church; church, home and school; and the authority of the church in education.

5. *World-and-life view, philosophy, theology*; the nature of a biblical view of life and the world; the nature of human knowledge; the distinction between "naive experience" and theorizing; philosophy and theology; and the relation between the Bible, theory, and science.

In this article I will limit myself to a discussion of the first area of concern, focusing mainly on the question of the relation between the Word of God and the Bible. For our critics argue that the spokesmen of the reformational movement turn men away from the written Word of God, and that therefore our position should be decisively rejected by the Christian community. Since in our view clarity on this question of the Word is necessary before the other issues in debate can be seen clearly, this is a good point to start with. What is the contention of our critics?

The charge: A dual concept of the Word

The critical charge has been formulated rather carefully by Norman Shepherd, professor of systematic theology at Westminster Theological Seminary, in an article entitled "The Doctrine of Scripture in the Dooyeweerdian Philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea," published in the February and March 1971 issues of *The Outlook*. Here he asserts that in the writings of Herman Dooyeweerd himself and in those of his North American associates, Hendrik Hart,

All promises, "Yes!"

EDWARDS E. ELLIOTT

None of us would relish being reminded of times when we seemed to be saying yes-and-no. For if we were really saying yes, but with a reservation, we would belong among the liars. The politician does not like the playback of his campaign promises, and the liberal minister does not care to rehearse again the vows he made as he entered the ministry.

In fact, if a minister is a Mr. Yes-No, it may reflect upon his message, placing a question mark upon every doctrine he preaches. Most seriously, it may reflect upon Christ himself. And this "Yes-No" Jesus is the kind of Jesus we find presented in liberal churches, a Jesus who took the title of Messiah only to put across some other message.

To his critics at Corinth, Paul seemed to be a Mr. Yes-No, the *adokimos*-reprobate. This Paul says, "Yes, I'm coming" and "No, I'm not." Paul could give a perfectly good explanation of his apparent change of plans. But his real concern was not so much that he be personally vindicated as that there should be no reflection on the gospel he proclaimed.

God is not Yes-No

The promises of God are not yes-no. The Son of God is not yes-no. And our response to the gospel must therefore be a resounding "Yea and Amen" to the glory of God.

God is true, and his promise is simple and straight-forward: "I will be your God." The Book of God's promise is true, and presents a unified covenant promise from beginning to end. But since God's people are developing in an earthly history, God's promise also includes their children: "I will be your God, and the God of your children after you." In the prism of history, God's promise becomes many promises, covering all circumstances and developments. These promises are expressed not only in word but in type and symbol. While the promises stem from the one basic promise—"I will be your God"—they in turn find their focus in the one who finally validates the promise, Jesus Christ, Imman-

uel—"God with us."

Christ the Amen of God

So Paul says, "As many as are the promises of God, in him is the Yea, wherefore also through him is the Amen, to the glory of God, by us" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

There is no promise of God that can be divorced from Jesus. There is no promise but what is residing in his person. There is no promise but what finds its stamp of authentication at the hands of Jesus. He has Amen-ed all the promises of God.

In Genesis we find Abraham saying "Amen" to God's promise, and still saying "Amen" even when the child of the promise was apparently doomed to be slain on an altar. For the promises residing in that child would continue to reside in him, regardless of the thrust of the obedient knife. So confident was Abraham's "Amen" that he fully expected the child to be raised again to life which, as the writer of Hebrews says, in a type he was. The promises are real, and the "Amen" is justified. It is not a Yes-No.

But the true child of the promise is Jesus Christ. Would the promises fail if he were slain? No, rather, the promise was validated once for all by his resurrection. And thus his very name incorporates the word "Amen" (Revelation 3:14). All the promises of God are given their Amen in Christ.

In the early church, Greek-speaking Christians usually expressed their agreement with a faithful saying by responding, "Faithful is the word," or simply, "Yea." Hebrew-speaking Christians would respond by "Amen" or "Hallelujah." All these Christians knew full well that the word of the cross was not a Yes-No. But in Christ they had found their Yea and Amen. So they shouted it forth, all to the glory of the ever-faithful God.

The Rev. Mr. Elliott is pastor of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Garden Grove, California.

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John Wesley, the Calvinist

ROBERT G. VALENTINE

John Wesley, a Calvinist? No doubt this is the reaction of most readers. On the basis of Wesley's sermons and writings, one would surely classify him as an Arminian.

Bavinck once wrote that people who are Pelagians in their theology often become Augustinians the moment that they are on their knees before God—that is, when they are face to face with God, they realize their total dependence on his sovereign grace (quoted by G. C. Berkouwer in "Where Paths Converge," *Christianity Today*, April 28, 1972).

A careful study of John Wesley's prayers reveals that this is certainly true in his case. An interesting little volume entitled *John Wesley's Prayers* (edited by Frederick C. Gill; London, The Epworth Press, 1951) proves Bavinck's point that even a John Wesley was a Calvinist—when he prayed.

Confessing God's sovereignty

Nebuchadnezzar learned of God's sovereignty the hard way. After living like an ox for seven years, his reason was restored and he confessed the truth in these words:

I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?—*Daniel 4:34, 35.*

So too did John Wesley confess God's sovereignty, using words in his prayers that are reminiscent of Nebuchadnezzar's:

He is our great and sovereign Lord, the absolute King of heaven and earth; He sees at once the whole frame of all things, and thoroughly comprehends their various natures.

To every creature He appoints a fit office, and guides all their motions in perfect order; till He has wrought His glorious design to finish the world in a beautiful close.

All these He governs by His infinite wisdom, and all for the good of them that love Him; His counsels are deep and beyond our reach, but all His ways are just and merciful.

The day will come, it will infallibly come, when God will crown all that love His glory.

Let us not faint, and we shall surely see a prosperous issue of all our sorrows (page 78).

No Calvinist could acknowledge God's sovereignty more clearly than Wesley does in this address to God: "Eternal God, my sovereign Lord, I acknowledge all I



am, all I have is Thine." He goes on to thank God for all the favors bestowed on him including "daily preserving me by Thy good Providence, for redeeming me by the death of Thy blessed Son, and for the assistance of Thy Holy Spirit; for causing me to be born in a Christian country." Then he prays, "O SOVEREIGN GOODNESS, O mighty Wisdom, Thou dost order and govern all things, even the most minute, even the most noxious, to Thy glory and the good of those that love Thee. Thou so disposest all events as may best magnify Thy goodness to all Thy children" (pages 37, 38).

Certainly Wesley on his knees recognizes God's sovereign control of all events, including even the place of his birth. The most minute and evil of things is under God's control, for God's glory, and for the good of God's own people.

God's sovereignty outworking

This sovereign God whose "counsels are deep and beyond reach" (page 78) works out his plan in his gracious providence. Wesley repeatedly speaks of this and calls God's providence "gracious" (page 26), "almighty" (page 34), "good" (page 37), "never-failing" (page 57), and "watchful" (page 60). By his providence God orders "all things both in heaven and earth" (page 57).

So Wesley prays that God would "free us from the cares of this world, from all distrust of Thy good providence, from repining at anything that befalls us; and enable us in everything to give thanks, believing that all things are ordered wisely, and shall work together for our good" (page 67). He asks God to "order by Thy providence what we shall be; and in the end, crown Thine own gifts" (page 83).

The Calvinist who insists that salvation is entirely by God's working can join with Wesley in praying, "We bow ourselves before Thee, acknowledging we have nothing but what we receive from Thee. . . . Blessed be Thy love

5. *Psalm 103:20*. "Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, hearkening to the voice of his word." Here "word" entails communication, but not to man. And it is not just linguistic, verbalized communication that is involved. "Word" is an order to be *heard* and *done*. "Word" is an equivalent of the will and dominion and kingship of the Creator over his creatures, his servants. The following texts clearly indicate this:

Bless the Lord, all his hosts,
his ministers that do his will!

Bless the Lord, all his works,
in all places of his dominion.

Bless the Lord, O my soul! (verses 21, 22).

6. *1 Corinthians 1:18*. Paul writes of "the word of the cross" which, to those who are being saved, is "the power of God." Is "word" here linguistic communication? Indeed, it is that. It is also a power "which is at work" (*1 Thessalonians 2:13*). Through that Word, which is living and abiding, we have been born anew (*1 Peter 1:23*). That Word is the sword of the Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life. It can save our souls (*James 1:21; Ephesians 6:17*). Through that Word we know Christ and the power of his resurrection (*Philippians 3:10*). Hence, it is the Word of life (*Philippians 2:16*). That Word is the gospel, the good news about Jesus—"the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith" (*Romans 1:16*).

So we could continue. I have done that in another context, in an essay that should be read alongside this dialogue, entitled "Thy Word Our Life" (*Will All the King's Men. Out of Concern for the Church: Phase Two*; Toronto: Wedge Press, 1972, pp. 153-221). We suggest that the contours of our theologies will be drastically changed if all of us will take to heart the Bible's teaching about the Word of God.

The Word of our Lord

When the Bible speaks of the Word of God or the Word of the kingdom or the Word of the cross or the Word made flesh, the Bible does not—in the first place—present us "materials" for a doctrine of Scripture. Instead, the Bible introduces us to something else, which we had better accept if our doctrines and theologies can justifiably be called scriptural. In numerous passages the Bible, infallibly and with divine authority, teaches us that the Word is God's calling creation into being-for-service. The Bible teaches us that the Word is God's calling sinners to repentance and to the restoration of service. Through that Word of power the creation is born, upheld, and is being redeemed. That is the meaning of John 1.

In a nutshell it says everything there is to be said about the Word. And it need not even refer to the Scriptures, except with reference to Moses, through whom the law, the Word, came prior to Christ (cf. *Deuteronomy 5:5*).

Listening to the open Bible's teaching on the Word, we are confronted with Christ, the Alpha-Omega, the Word as mediator of creation, the Word as mediator of history, the Word as mediator of redemption at the cross. The Bible's teachings on the Word are the foundations for a doctrine of the *covenant* between the Creator and the creation, linked by this Mediator, this Word.

For this reason we indeed call the Bible the Book of the Covenant, of the Old Covenant (Testament), and of the New Covenant in Jesus Christ. The Bible, as Book of the Covenant, is indeed the book of the Word, is itself the Word

inscripturated. The Bible is God's Book to mankind, an indispensable element in the link between God, who in Christ is covenantally reconciling all things, uniting all things, and Christ's body, the redeemed mankind. But it should be eminently clear that the Bible does not exhaust the Word; that the Bible is not the Word only and exclusively; that, though the Word and the Bible may never be *separated*, they must be *distinguished*. For without that distinction we cannot understand the Word, and thus not the Bible itself.

CONCLUSION

Messrs. Frame and Shepherd contend that the reformational movement closes the Bible, turns men away from the written Word, and will cause the disappearance of the Reformed faith from those circles where the goals of the "Amsterdam Philosophy" prevail. We reject this charge. If all of us in the Christian church do not open our hearts to the biblical teaching on the Word of God, seeing clearly what this entails for our action, reflection, and theorizing, then the Word of the King(dom) will be heard among us only in reduced form, if at all. The matter is of great concern to us. For the first casualty will indeed be the "reformed faith." We, within the reformational movement, address ourselves first of all to our brethren close to home, to those in the tradition of the Calvinistic heritage. In the light of the Word written, we humbly formulate our evaluation of our critics' position: The path chosen by Messrs. Frame and Shepherd is not the way on which the Word, the Bible, shines in *all* its brightness. In the measure that this is the case, they are confusing God's little children, his grassroots people, who today perhaps more than ever before need clear and truthful and scriptural prophetic direction.

Ed. note: We appreciate Dr. Zylstra's willingness to continue the discussion, and his desire to focus it on the matter of Scripture and the Word of God. This article does, it seems to us, make it clearer where the crucial questions lie. Since the article came to us just in time for inclusion in this issue, any reply to it must wait for a later issue of the *Guardian*.

HOLY LAND TOUR

There is still time to make reservations for the Holy Land Tour set for July 8-30. In addition to a group of very congenial laymen, two additional ministers will also be on the tour—the Rev. Henry Coray and the Rev. Edwin Urban. The presence of these men will increase your opportunity to make this a most valuable learning experience.

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We sympathize Dr. Schaeffer, but . . .

NOEL K. WEEKS

Dr. Francis Schaeffer has recently produced another in his series of small readable and relevant books. *The Church Before the Watching World* is written against the background of Schaeffer's own experience in the American Presbyterian church. It continues his emphasis on truth both in doctrine and life. He stresses once more that the church must practice truth.

In this connection Dr. Schaeffer draws attention to the failure of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. to practice discipline in the years 1900-1930. He makes it clear that one must strive to maintain the purity of the visible church. If this battle for the purity of the church is lost then a second step must be taken. Christians may have sadly and soberly to leave the visible organization with which they were once associated. Even if this involves great sacrifice Christ must be placed first by the Christian, not the church as an organization.

"Champion of anti separationism"

In the light of these statements it may come as some surprise to learn that Schaeffer has been subjected to a scathing condemnation in the *Australian Beacon* by Dr. Charles Woodbridge, who calls him a "champion of anti separationism." There is much in Woodbridge's attack that centers on mere trivialities. Schaeffer had said that Dr. Machen was "defrocked" by the Presbyterian Church. Woodbridge makes a mountain out of a molehill and says Machen was only "suspended" from the ministry. It is not my concern to debate about such insignificant details.

If one reads Schaeffer's book it will be clear that he advocates discipline to maintain the purity of the church, and that he advocates leaving the church if it loses its purity. This is hardly being a "champion of anti separationism." Yet Schaeffer does make some statements that I think are most unfortunate and leave him open to Woodbridge's charges. He says, "We are not practicing separation. Separation is a negative concept and builds a poor mentality." This to me is another instance of quibbling about words. "Separate" is a biblical term and its dictionary meaning is not really different from "leave."

To be fair to Schaeffer, we must ask what he really means. Clearly to him "separation" means something other than leaving an apostate church. Is there an incorrect notion of separation?

A wrong kind of separation

1 Corinthians 5:9-13 makes it very clear that there is a wrong idea of separation. That is the idea that we are to separate from all men who do not reach our moral standards. On the contrary, biblical separation is to be from false professors of Christianity. The practical difference made by this false notion of separation shows when Woodbridge condemns Schaeffer because hippies come to L'Abri to hear him. Woodbridge seems to think that one should separate from all unwashed unbelievers. Schaeffer should rather be praised for the way he has opened his home to hippie unbelievers. He realizes that one must first cleanse

the inside and that the outside will then become clean. The insinuation that Woodbridge makes, that Schaeffer encourages and approves the hippie lifestyle, is pure slander.

Schaeffer has said that separation is a "negative concept." One may deplore his way of phrasing the matter, and yet we must ask what he really means. Has separation ever been made a purely negative thing? I think we must admit it has. When some of the leaders in the synagog refuse to believe, Paul separates from them that he may carry the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 13:44-52; 19:8-10). Yet we must confess that we have often been so unbiblical in our understanding of separation that we have spent our energies condemning the Jews back in the synagog rather than carrying the gospel to the Gentiles. We must acknowledge that there has been a tendency amongst separated groups to live by reaction. They have concentrated their attention on staging counter-meetings to the World Council of Churches, and issuing counter-statements to liberal statements.

The problems in separation

Schaeffer goes on to talk about the problems that arise when separation takes place. Using again the example of separation in the American Presbyterian church in the 1930s, he points to two dangerous tendencies.

The first of these is that evangelicals who refuse to separate tend to drift into a weak position on doctrines other than the doctrine of the church itself. They become weak on doctrine generally, and specifically on the doctrine of Scripture.

But those who separate have tended to become hard and narrow. They lose their perspective and create major issues on minor points of doctrine. They tend to lose their Christian love for the true Christians who did not separate.

Once again there is much truth in what Schaeffer says. Yet one could wish for a greater care in the way he writes. One almost has the impression that failure to come out creates people who are fuzzy on doctrine, and coming out creates people who are harsh and narrow. If coming out is biblical, and Schaeffer believes that it is, then in itself it cannot create an unbiblical character. Let us agree with Schaeffer, for the sake of the argument, and investigate the causes of unbiblical attitudes amongst those who separate.

The history of the separation movement, particularly in the United States, has been one of successive schisms. There have been many divisions amongst those who separated. Woodbridge's attack on Schaeffer is but one in a long series of fallings out amongst those who were once with Machen. Why?

I am afraid that much of the problem really comes from having lived too long in an apostate church. Evangelicals who try to fight unbelief within a church without either disciplining or leaving develop certain undesirable habits. They are forced to attack those who claim to be brethren. They are again and again betrayed by pseudo-evangelicals. They become accustomed to the use of slight changes in words that camouflage complete denial of basic doctrines.

Arnold De Graaff, and Paul Schrottenboer, one is confronted with a *dual* concept of the Word of God: (1) the Word of God as used with reference to the Scriptures, and (2) the Word of God as used with reference to a "motive power driving man in the central core of his being." Mr. Shepherd, "for the sake of convenience," refers to these two senses as "text-word" and "power-word." It should be noted that this terminology is his, not ours.

It should also be noted that I am not interested in defending the position of Herman Dooyeweerd in this article. Dooyeweerd, one of the most outstanding Christian thinkers of our day, has not developed a detailed theory concerning the nature of the Bible. What he has said in earlier decades is now in need of correction and revision. What is important is the fact that Dooyeweerd accepts the Bible as the written Word of God. But he has also argued that the Word of God cannot be *equated* with the Bible. There is an *identity* between the Bible and the Word. But there is also a *distinction* between the Bible and the Word. On this point we agree with Dooyeweerd.

Mr. Shepherd, however, alleges that the *distinction* between the Bible as Word of God and the "motive power" as Word of God is in effect a disjunction, a *separation*. He argues that the reformational thinkers, along with the spectrum of modern theology, drive a *wedge* between the Word of God and the Bible, and that for this reason the Bible loses its authoritative character in the area of history, morality, and science. What Dooyeweerd and his followers supposedly do is this: "Instead of looking *to* the Scriptures to find there what the Lord requires of us, we must look *through* the Scriptures to another Word, the Word of God in the sense of power-word" (*The Outlook*, March 1971, p. 21). This vigorous disjunction, Shepherd argues, can only lead to situation ethics in which the Bible functions "only as a guide, or as an example, to assist us to discover for ourselves or more accurately, to *determine* for ourselves, what the Word of God requires of us here and now" (*idem*).

The reformational thinkers, he contends, no doubt contrary to their own desires, have succumbed to the pitfalls of modern subjectivism, in which each man does what is right in his own eyes. The adherents of the philosophy of the cosmonomic idea do not really subject their thinking and doing to the Word of God written but to the "power-Word." In effect this means that "scriptural directedness" comes perilously close to meaning "philosophical directedness." Philosophy has taken the place of Holy Writ.

What is the relation of law to God?

Mr. John Frame, Shepherd's colleague in systematic theology at Westminster Seminary, reiterates this charge in his article "The Word of God in the Cosmonomic Philosophy" published in the October and November 1972 issues of *The Presbyterian Guardian*. In his booklet, *The Amsterdam Philosophy: A Preliminary Critique* (Harmony Press, 1972), Mr. Frame is more explicit with reference to his own view from out of which he critiques reformational thought. This explicitness contributes to the possibility of a more meaningful dialogue.

In this booklet Frame asks the fundamental question: What is the relation of law to God? Before he answers this question he formulates the frame of reference within which

the answer can be given: "The Scriptures teach that God is creator, the world is his creature, and that there is nothing in between, no third category" (p. 29). Here, we submit, Frame departs from the teaching of the Bible, which clearly posits a "third category," namely the Creator's law for creation—the statutes, ordinances, and words that creatures must obey and do. The absence of this "third category" in Frame's conception makes it extremely difficult for him to understand the Bible on this score, as we will see later.

At any rate, after positing the two categories of Creator and creation, he asks, "Where does 'law' fit in this structure?" His answer is significant because it already suggests that "two categories" will hardly suffice. He writes:

In Scripture, the law of God is purely and simply divine. There, "law of God" is a phrase which refers to the "Word of God" (note Ps. 119:89); and the "Word of God" is equated with God himself in John 1:1. To obey the law is to obey God. The law deserves from us a kind of total obedience which only God deserves; divine attributes are ascribed to it (Ps. 119). . . . "Law of God" is simply a way of speaking of God's own claim upon His creatures. The Law is *spoken* by God, not created by Him (note distinction in John 1:1-3).

In Frame's answer we are indeed confronted with "three categories": (1) God; (2) God's claim; and (3) God's creatures. For this reason we do not disagree with his answer. But Frame does not, in the light of Scripture, pursue the question as to the nature of God's claim. He only has two categories, so he has this dilemma: God's claim is simply God himself, or it belongs to creation. Frame himself accepts the first possibility, and he *wrongly interprets us by contending that we make God's law a creature*. We not have to accept his dilemma, since for us God's law or God's Word is the Creator's order *for* creation. (Please note carefully: It is not order "in" creation. The order *in* creation presupposes an order *for* creation.)

The relation of the Word of God and the Bible

At this point we must pursue the problem of the identity and distinction between the Word of God and the Bible. When Frame formulated the sentences that we quoted just now, he should have been aware of that problem. For when the Bible states that "the Word was God," that the Word was in the beginning, was with God, that all things were made through the Word, that in the Word was life, that this life was the light of men, and that the Word became flesh, then Frame should know that these fundamental statements in the prologue of John's Gospel cannot possibly mean: "the Bible was God," or that "all things were made through the Bible." *In other words, the Bible itself forces us to make a distinction between the Word of God and the Bible*. The debate among us will rapidly advance if our critics were to address themselves to *this* matter.

Frame suggests a "solution." He seizes on the phrase "the Word was God" (although John 1 says more than that). Then he (correctly) states that the law of God refers to the Word of God. After this he offers a definition of that Word. It is simply "a word," that is, "a linguistic communication from God to man" (p. 34). At this point we issue a strong warning to our readers, for here Frame's reductionist view of the Word of God is clearly evident. If he were consistent

he should now say: "a linguistic communication from God to man" is God, since he has only two categories—God and creation. He does not say that, perhaps because the utter absurdity kept him from saying it. At any rate, he is not writing a treatise on the nature of God, but is dealing with his view of the Scriptures.

Before he gets to the Scriptures, however, he must, in the context of his reduction of the Word to "a linguistic communication," deal with *law*. Not surprisingly, but wholly unscripturally, he now also reduces the law of God to mean the "written Word of God" or, occasionally, "God's *spoken Word*" (p. 39). He suggests that Psalm 119:91 may possibly be a reference to a spoken word instead of a written word, probably because in this context the word seems to be addressed to creatures who cannot read but who doubtless can hear! The question of course is whether Psalm 119 and its numerous equivalents can indeed be understood if "Word" is reduced to written or spoken linguistic communication. Let the reader try it out:

For ever, O Lord, thy *word* is firmly fixed in the heavens.
Thy *faithfulness* endures to all generations;
thou hast *established* the earth, and it stands fast.
By thy *appointment* they stand this day;
for all things are thy servants.
I will never forget thy *precepts*;
for by them thou hast given me life.
(Psalm 119:89-91, 93)

Frame himself sees no problem here. He is satisfied with the suggestion that "word" in this context (and its italicized equivalents) may be a spoken Word, a linguistic communication. But for the rest his conclusion is simple: law is written word. Hence: "Scripture is the law of God. Scripture is the very Word which proceeds from God's mouth, the 'breath' of God (II Tim. 3:16, Greek text)" (p. 39).

In my opinion, this conclusion is far too simple. Let us just suppose for a moment that Frame is right in his reductionism, in his definition of the Word of God in terms of its lingual content *only*. Even then Frame, in the light of the clear biblical testimony, is *forced to distinguish between written words and spoken words*. The question then comes to us: What is the nature of these spoken words? Were they never *written*? Does God still speak words that are never written? Is God's Word still firmly fixed in the heavens? Or is it only fixed in the Bible?

This is the problem that all of us, Mr. Frame included, must address ourselves to. Mr. Frame does not do that. He hints at it, but then hurries on. For he is apparently more at ease with the Word and Law of God in written form. My question now is this: Is Mr. Frame more at ease with the Word of God in written form because his theological conception allows him to control the Bible rather than be controlled by it? Should not the richness of the Holy Scriptures direct our theological conceptions instead of having our theological conceptions narrow that richness?

Let us once more put the issue plainly. We do not deny that the Word of God can indeed be a "linguistic communication from God to man." It is that in the Scriptures. But our question is: Is the Word of God, also in the Bible, *only* a linguistic communication? Further, we do not deny that Scripture is the law of God. But our question is: Can the law of God be reduced to Scripture? In Frame this reduction is real. The reductionism stands in the way of his understanding the Scripture in its plain teachings on the

Word of God. Let us turn to that now.

Listening to the open Bible

We would like to ask Mr. Frame, along with all those who argue that the Word of God is "linguistic communication," and we would like to ask Mr. Shepherd, along with all those who argue that the Bible only is the Word of God, to pick up their copy of Young's *Concordance*. We would advise them to check all those passages in the open Bible where the phrases "Word of God," "Words of God," and their equivalents are found. They will be in for some healthy surprises. For one thing, they will not find many passages where the phrase "Word of God" can be exchanged with "the Bible." Moreover, though in many instances that phrase will have the connotation of "linguistic communication," in hundreds of cases this will not be so. Here are a few examples:

1. *Psalm 33:6*. We read: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth." Here "word" cannot mean the Bible. Nor will it do to say that by a "linguistic communication from God to man" the heavens were made; for man was not present as yet to receive any communication. The passage is clear if we stick to our open Bible. Colossians 1:13, 14 tells us that God the Father created all things through his beloved Son. Plainly, therefore, the Scriptures reveal that already with reference to the origin of all things the Word is the Father's beloved Son.

2. *Matthew 4:4*. Christ rebukes Satan: "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word (Greek, *rhema*) that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" Earlier we saw that Frame defined Scripture as "the very Word which proceeds from God's mouth." Now Christ uses the very same terminology, but does he refer to a written Word? No! Christ quotes Deuteronomy 8:3, where Moses told the people of Israel that "man does not live by bread alone, but that man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord." And here "everything" or "every word" refers to manna and the clothing which did not wear out. Professor Jan Ridderbos, in his commentary on Deuteronomy, writes that Christ meant by "everything that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord" the divine power-word itself; that is, the creating and upholding power that proceeds from the Lord. That "power-word" apparently is not to be identified with Scripture. And we know that from Scripture itself; "it is written."

3. *Hebrews 1:1-3*. The Son is here revealed as upholding the universe by his word of power. Doesn't this passage again indicate that Mr. Frame's frame of reference (Creator, creation, with nothing in between, no third category) simply will not suffice? Isn't there a "third category" that upholdingly links the creation to the Creator, namely a word of power?

4. *Psalm 147:15*. We read: "He sends forth his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly." Is "word" here linguistic communication to man? Hardly. The "word" here expresses God's kingship over the universe: "He gives snow like wool; he scatters hoarfrost like ashes" (verse 16). Further, in this Psalm "word" is the Lord's sovereign and gracious rule over his people: "He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and ordinances to Israel" (verse 19). This lordly declaration may well imply "linguistic communication," but it is not to be reduced to that.

The Changing Scene

HENRY W. CORAY

A hope of fulfillment

One of the most important books to come off the press recently is Iain Murray's *The Puritan Hope, Revival and Interpretation of Prophecy*. It merits more than the passing nod it received in this column last year. We are indebted to the Banner of Truth Trust for its appearance.

Mr. Murray begins by tracing the mighty awakenings in England and Scotland during the 16th and 17th centuries. These movements were punctuated by a passionate hunger for the Scriptures on the part of laymen, by a proclamation of distinctively Reformed teachings on the part of the clergy, by much prayer, dedication and a willingness to suffer for Christ on the part of both. The effect was a burst of power that swept into the churches, directed by the Holy Spirit, that was volcanic, no less. Whole segments of society were converted and turned to God with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

One of the results of the stirrings was a renewed interest in the study of unfulfilled prophecy. The Reformers were made to realize that the God of the Covenant was not yet through dealing redemptively with "Israel after the flesh." Ministers, sparked by Hugh Broughton (1549-1612) who himself went out to evangelize in the Near East, felt strangely burdened for the salvation of the Jew. These men believed that before the Messiah returned from heaven there would be a tremendous response to the gospel by multitudes of Hebrews, both men and women.

Was there a biblical foundation for this expectation of Israel's eventual conversion? A key section in Murray's book is Chapter IV: "Apostolic Testimony: The Basis of the Hope." In this he gives a clear, convincing and scholarly exegesis of Romans 11. I do not see how anyone who studies this exposition with an unprejudiced mind can escape the conclusion that the Lord has a distinctive purpose to be accomplished in the recovery of Israel before the second

coming of Jesus. Whatever terminology we are geared to—pre-, a-, or postmillennialism—nothing should hinder us from accepting this truth with readiness of mind. And instead of causing us to be indifferent to the condition of Jewry today it ought to impel us, as it did these Reformers, to become zealous in praying and working for the redemption of the "natural branches" of the olive tree.

The impetus to modern missions

The second half of this fascinating book treats of such themes as: "World Missions," "The Hope and Scotland's Missionaries," "The Eclipse of the Hope," "The Prospect in History: Christ Our Hope," and excerpts from John Howe's "The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit" and from Spurgeon on prophecy.

The writer anticipates some practical problems: If the New Testament holds out the second coming as the *blessed hope*, why look for an intervening event like the conversion of the Jews? How does this "delayed" coming affect holy living? How should it influence the cause of world-wide missions and evangelism? Mr. Murray's answers are eminently satisfying because they are scriptural. We heartily commend this excellent and stimulating study to readers of the *Guardian*.

Fox paws in the pulpit

Last Sunday evening our minister preached, Most earnestly, on the temptations of Jesus. Inadvertently, he committed an unfortunate blunder: When commenting on the text of Matthew 4:5, He explained, "Satan took our Lord and set him "On the *pinochle* of the temple . . ." And the preacher, with puzzlements, wondered Why his congregation broke into laughter.

The Old Chinese Philosopher

[who is himself a cousin of Mrs. Malaprop]

In the end they become suspicious of men and ideas, and indeed they have to be to maintain their faith in the midst of apostasy.

Yet the church is the place where men should learn to love one another. Sadly these tendencies to suspicion and attack are continued after separation. The real answer is not to avoid separation but to separate at the right time, before one has learned the vicious laws of survival that operate in the liberal church.

The heart of the problem

Even this analysis does not get to the heart of the matter. If there has been a lack of love among those who separated, then that is sin. Let us ascribe blame where blame is due. It is our own sinful hearts that have been the problem. It is our own proud tendency to praise ourselves and to attack those who have not been as obedient as we.

We believe in the doctrines of sin and grace. Are we any better than those who did not separate? Of course not. We

are sinners just as they are. We have only one thing to say in defense of separation: It is biblical. We confess to our shame that the separation movement has sinned and sinned grievously. That in no way alters the truth of the basic position!

So, Dr. Schaeffer, we lament with you what has happened among those who have separated from unbelief. We lament that *our brethren* who have not separated are losing their clear understanding of doctrines as well as that of the church. We confess our own narrowness and lack of love. But the problem is not really the word "separation" is it? That is a good biblical word and doctrine. The real problem is us.

Dr. Noel Weeks is a professor of history in the University of Sydney in Australia. A graduate of Westminster Seminary and Brandeis University, he is speaking here out of his own background and understanding of the "separation movement" that began under the leadership of Dr. J. Gresham Machen.

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Reformed Youth Conferences in the South

Forest, Miss. — Two Reformed Youth Conferences are scheduled for the summer of 1973, it was announced here.

The first such conference, sponsored by the Reformed Youth Movement, Inc., was held last summer at King College, Bristol, Tenn. The sponsoring agency seeks to provide a challenging program of study that is faithful to the Westminster standards. Over 120 young people were present last year when Dr. Palmer Robertson was featured speaker.

This summer conferences are scheduled for **June 18-23** at John Kyle State Park, Sardis, Miss., with Prof. Harvie M. Conn of Westminster Seminary as main speaker; and for **July 9-14** at King College, Bristol, Tenn., with the Rev. John Reisinger, editor of the magazine *Sword & Trowel*, as main speaker.

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Vineland (N.J.) Christian School has a career opening for a qualified take-charge individual for the post of principal. Applicant must have BA and MA in elementary education and administration, certification credentials, and 5 years minimum in teaching experience.

Dedicated to instruction in accord with the biblical Christian faith, Vineland Christian School now has 142 students in grades K-8 and is growing. Founded in 1946, the school moved into its present modern building in 1969. An addition in 1971 boosted facilities to 9 spacious classrooms, offices, teachers' room and storage area on 10½ acres less than an hour from the Philadelphia metropolitan area.

Salary range: \$10,000-\$12,500 per year (12 month schedule) plus full fringe benefits. Contact:

Vineland Christian School
c/o William S. Harker (Chairman,
Education Committee)
2947 Driftwood Lane
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A SECOND THOUGHT ON

Refusing to pay taxes

In commenting on the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion (in the February *Guardian*, page 29), the editor opined that "we may need to refuse to pay taxes that support aborting procedures."

A discerning reader challenged that statement. His objection to it is well taken—and the editor can only plead temporary stupidity.

We tend to think of taxes as "our money." If others can refuse to pay taxes that support what they feel is an unjust war, why can't we refuse to pay "our money" if it is to be used for murdering unborn children? That's logical, right?

Wrong! Our taxes are *not* "our money." Christ plainly said, "Give unto Caesar that which is Caesar's." Every dollar bill has the "supercription" of the U. S. Government. Every dollar you pay in taxes belongs to the government.

Christ's words are clear enough. We pay what "Caesar" demands. What Caesar does with it afterward is Caesar's responsibility—whether to fund the gross immoralities of the official religion of ancient Rome or to pay for abortions today.

There is one difference now as compared with then. Caesar was the sole authority on what was done with tax revenue. He alone was responsible to God. The Roman citizen was a subject, no more. He paid, Caesar spent, and Caesar alone had to make account to God.

But the American citizen has a dual role as citizen. He is citizen-subject and may not refuse to pay taxes no matter how the money is used. But he is also a citizen-ruler. As such he shares Caesar's responsibility before God for the use made of tax revenues.

The American Christian citizen has the duty to use every legal means—the vote, petition, even organized lobbying—to persuade our 'Caesar' not to use tax money to destroy human life in the womb.

—J. J. M.

The Presbyterian Guardian

The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITOR
JOHN J. MITCHELL

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

LETTERS

What name for united OP-RP?

Concerning a new name for the envisioned merger of Orthodox and Reformed Presbyterians, I hope that we are not so provincial that we forget the many brethren we have in Canada who are already, or may become, members with us in the new denomination.

My thought at the moment is that Presbyterian Church of America is too restricted. Perhaps Presbyterian Church of North America would satisfy the

needs better.

I agree, though, that selection of a name is going to be a difficult matter. It may cause more problems than we think now.

Ronald J. McKenzie, Pastor
Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Bothell, Wash.

I enjoy the *Presbyterian Guardian* very much, especially the editorials on the OP-RP proposed merger. I have been reading the articles by Lawrence Eyres on elders of the church at our session meetings.

How about the name, Presbyterian Church of America, if and when the Lord leads us into merger?

Kyle Thurman, Pastor
Westminster Presbyterian Church
(RPC/ES)
Gainesville, Texas

Ed. note: In 1936, those who were forced to leave the old Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., with Dr. J. Gresham Machen, organized a new body with the name Presbyterian Church of America. The old denomination went to court, insisting that the new name was so similar to theirs that people would be

misled. The court enjoined the new group from use of the name. Though this decision could have been appealed to higher courts, the General Assembly chose to change the name rather than use money to defend its right to the name. The Presbyterian Church of America then became the Orthodox Presbyterian Church; this name change was adopted in 1939.

The court decision barred the new denomination "from using or employing the name of the Presbyterian Church of America, or any other name of like import, or that is similar to or a contractive of the name Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., or the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, or ever doing any act or thing calculated or designed to mislead the public or the members of the plaintiff church." That decision is still in force, and applies directly to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. No doubt it could also be extended toward any other group or merged church that adopted a similar name. Whether the present United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. would go to court again over such a matter is anyone's guess.

The Pastor's home — whose is it?

A recent news item in the *Guardian* that a church had acquired a manse probably was intended as *good* news; let me suggest that it was *bad* news.

Providing a manse for the pastor originally was intended to benefit the pastor. He could be assured of a house when he assumed his pastorate, and he would be spared the normal worries about repairs and taxes. But a closer look at this practice will show that it is an unjust procedure.

A manse is provided to a pastor as part of his income, as part of the congregation's obligation to relieve him of "worldly care and avocation." Normally a person acquires a house for two purposes: (1) for present use by himself and his family; (2) for an investment to hedge against inflation or to provide a living place when retirement comes.

Neither of these purposes or needs are met by providing the pastor a manse. (1) No one house will be adequate for every pastor and family that may serve the congregation over the years; it may be too small or too large. (2) The pastor who lives in manses throughout his active years of ministry will have no place of his own when he retires. Since he has no investment in

any of his homes, he cannot benefit by any capital appreciation on these homes. Ironically, the church views the manse as part of its obligation to its pastor; but it is only the church that can benefit from the house's increased value over the years!

Since several Orthodox Presbyterian pastors are retiring now or soon will, there is increased concern about providing adequate facilities for them. Appeals are being made to presbyteries and the denomination as a whole to see that these men are cared for. It would seem more fair to all concerned for each congregation to share in this concern while the man is ministering to them. The church could do this by providing its pastor with a housing allowance rather than a manse. Pastors could then accumulate equity over the years and provide some protection against inflation. At retirement they could either sell and buy a home elsewhere or remain in their own home. In both cases they would be provided for.

Some churches may feel that they cannot afford to provide a housing allowance instead of a manse. But if they sold a \$20,000 house and invested the proceeds at 6%, they would have \$1200 a year toward a housing allow-

ance. Or, the church might rent the manse and allow the pastor to use the income as he chose.

The Presbytery of Southern California recently polled its pastors on this matter and found that 80% of them would prefer a housing allowance to a manse. Results of this poll were reported to the sessions. James says that the Lord of Hosts hears the cries of those who have been defrauded of their just wages (5:4). Surely the church should be sensitive above all others to avoid any cause for such a cry!

Roger W. Schmurr
San Diego, Calif.

Ed. note: The Rev. Mr. Schmurr—who does receive a housing allowance—says he does not want to start a crusade on this. But he does feel that sessions should carefully consider what is most equitable in this matter. If anyone cares to present counter-arguments, we will be interested in hearing them.

It may encourage Mr. Schmurr to know that three congregations in one presbytery, all of which presently own a manse, have agreed to make whatever housing arrangement may be most desired by any pastor they call. In most, though not all, sections of the country today the real estate market is such as to give the local church considerable freedom in this matter.

The Presbyterian Guardian

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Here and There in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Sioux Center, Iowa—A new congregation, to be called Faith Orthodox Presbyterian Church, is in process of formation here. Presently existing as a branch work of Trinity Church in Bridgewater, S. Dak., the group is planning to ask the presbytery in March to constitute them as a particular congregation. At the first morning worship on February 11 there were 56 present, with nearly 80 in Sunday school including a large class of Dordt College students. Formation of another witness to the Reformed faith in this

solidly Reformed community has met with favorable reaction. The Rev. Richard G. Hodgson and Dr. Samuel van Houte, both faculty members at Dordt College, are sharing pastoral duties for the new group.

MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

**Knollwood
Presbyterian
Lodge**

August 4-11, 1973

Knollwood Presbyterian Lodge, located on Rice Lake, Birchwood, Wisconsin, is pleased to announce that Dr. J. Barton Payne, Professor of Old Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and Dr. Richard B. Gaffin Jr., Associate Professor of New Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, will be the speakers at a Ministers' Conference to be held at Knollwood, August 4-11, 1973.

Dr. Payne will present "The Older Testament's Theological Preparation for the Book of Hebrews," and Dr. Gaffin will present "Studies in the Book of Hebrews." It is anticipated that many will want to avail themselves of the opportunity to hear these gifted teachers of the Word; early reservations are advised. A registration fee of \$10 is requested and is in addition to the normal weekly rate of \$60 for the Lodge.

Inquiries may be addressed to the President of the Board of Trustees of Knollwood Presbyterian Lodge:

The Rev. Theodore H. Engstrom
1007 East Third Street
Merrill, WI 54452

Fairlawn, N.J.—The congregation of Grace Church has extended a call to Mr. Dennis E. Johnson to be its pastor. Mr. Johnson (whose article on "Evangelism and God's Election" appeared in the November *Guardian*) will complete his studies at Westminster Seminary this spring before taking up this new post.

Bothell, Wash.—The former Puget Sound Church has a new name: Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church, located at 405 240th S.W., Bothell, WA 98011. The Rev. Ronald J. McKenzie is pastor.

In Memoriam

RALPH C. CLOUSER, SR.

On January 24, the Lord called home his faithful servant, Ralph Clouser. A member of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Middletown, Penna., Ralph has served as deacon, elder, benevolence treasurer, and custodian. His open friendliness to all has been warmly appreciated and will be genuinely missed. We pray that the family may rejoice in their hearts as they think of this Christian husband and father being received into the presence of his Lord.

KARL HIGGINS

The people of the Park Hill Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Denver, Col., together with those from the chapels in the Denver area, had only recently gathered for a testimonial dinner in honor of Karl Higgins. Now this faithful elder and friend has been called to his heavenly home. Mr. Higgins' parents had been members of the Second Congregational Church that later became the Park Hill Church, and Karl grew up in the church. He had served as ruling elder, Sunday school teacher, and superintendent, and his presence in church with open Bible attending to the Word being preached will be sorely missed.



Covenant Christian School of Westfield, N.J., rejoices in the addition of Miss Bonnie Jo Duthler to its teaching staff, Miss Duthler, from Grand Rapids, Mich., will teach in social studies, literature, and art. A product of Christian schools, and a graduate of Calvin College, she takes up her duties in this Christian junior high school that opened its doors last September.