

# The Presbyterian Guardian

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## "It Is Finished"

COME with me to Golgotha, the hill which is shaped like a skull outside the city of Jerusalem. It is the break of day and in our minds' eye we look back over the centuries and see the Son of God nailed upon the cross. On either side a thief is hanging. Our heads are bared and we stand in awe as the tremendous significance of this event becomes apparent to us. Such suffering and yet such resignation! Such dignity and yet withal such humiliation! The earth trembles, and it is dark!

Hear the words of the Man. "I thirst," He cries. They give Him vinegar to drink. They scoff—they rail—they deride. "If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself!"

How lonely He seems! The Roman soldiers, the high priests, the curious, milling, ignorant mob, all are arrayed against Him. Where is Peter who so gallantly had declared his loyalty by cutting off the ear of a soldier? He is far away! Where are all the other twelve? Frightened, disappointed, stunned and bewildered by the unexpected turn of events. They had hoped that Jesus would set up an earthly kingdom. Now what could this mean? In His loneliness the Lord cries out, "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

He looks upon the angry mob in mercy. Out of a heart of love He prays, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

One thief rails at Him, while the other repents of his sins and cries out, "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!" Even at this agonizing

hour Jesus Christ's thoughts are for others and He assures the penitent thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

For a moment our attention is diverted from the crowd and Jesus seems to be speaking with some faithful friends. Among them is Mary His mother, and the beloved disciple. They are standing near the cross looking up at Jesus. He speaks to this small group and we hear Him say, "Woman, behold thy son!" and to the disciple, "Behold thy mother!"

His strength slowly ebbs, but with one last effort He lifts His voice. "It is finished!" He cries, and gives up the ghost.

We wonder what He means by His "It is finished!" Obviously He refers to the accomplishment of the work which was given Him to do. He had done His Father's will, not His own. He had fulfilled the righteous demands of God's law. He had never erred. No man found iniquity in Him. Even Pilate said, "I find no fault in him." He had gone through the garden of Gethsemane. He had drunk the last drop of anguish. "I have glorified Thee on earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." The dark night had settled.

But that sentence means much more than a duty fulfilled or a task well done; it means that the satisfaction for our sin is complete, that because of His death our entrance into the Kingdom of God is assured. Once more we can know God through the Lord Jesus Christ not only as the creator of the world, but also as our heavenly Father. Our fellowship and spiritual com-

munion with the Father are full; the barrier of sin between us and God has been broken down.

The first eight chapters of Romans are a compendium of the gospel. They describe so well what has taken place upon that cross. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Jew and Gentile, Greek and Roman, are all under condemnation. "There is none righteous, no, not one."

But the Word of God through the inspired pen of Paul does not stop there. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God." Through the death of Jesus Christ as our substitute for sin we stand before God clothed in the righteousness of the Son of God. The enmity between us and God is no more. We have peace with God.

We are also sanctified by the Spirit of God. A continual warfare between the flesh and the spirit goes on in the life of a Christian. Even Paul was compelled to write, "What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." "O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

And still we meditate and think of that precious portion of Romans which tells of the glory yet to be revealed. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." We look for that time when Christ shall come back and usher in His kingdom and reign forever and ever. Then shall there be no more sin or sickness or death, and men shall learn war no more. Then all the saints gathered around the throne of God shall join in singing the grand hallelujah chorus. Yes, our salvation is complete! "It is finished!"

But the scene has vanished from our sight. We are alone. We are overwhelmed by the wonders of the event which we have just witnessed. It is too profound. And yet how simple: He took my place.

We leave Golgotha and tread our way back to Jerusalem. The words of our Saviour keep ringing in our ears. "It is finished!"

As we in this century contemplate those words we realize that they are as significant for us as for that little band of friends at the foot of the cross.

—E. H. R.

## Another Triumph in Home Missions

By the REV. ROBERT STRONG

General Secretary of the Home Missions Committee



Mr. Strong

THE Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension recently received a communication from the session of Grace Presbyterian Church, Westfield, New Jersey, the contents of which make truly inspiring reading. The letter is one that may well be shared with everyone interested in the work of The Presbyterian Church of America. It is as follows:

"At a meeting of the congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church of Westfield, N. J., held on October 6, 1937, a resolution was adopted declaring that it was our purpose to become financially independent of the Home Missions Committee. It was further resolved that upon attainment of this goal a letter of appreciation be addressed to the committee 'acknowledging that financial assistance which has been so indispensable to our work in its early stages and, through the committee, thanking the many contributors to that cause who, in a very real sense, have thus helped to make Grace Church a reality.'

"Four months have passed since that resolution was adopted. During this period our church has been entirely self-supporting and we are writing now to inform you that henceforth we are definitely assuming full responsibility for the entire amount of the pastor's support.

"We deeply appreciate the financial assistance, amounting to \$447.71, which the Committee rendered during the first year of our existence. Your investment in the cause of the gospel in this place has been most worthwhile. From the original nucleus of 11 members the church has grown to an active membership of 34 and a

constituency of over 85 persons who look to Grace Church and Sunday school alone as their church home and attend services regularly. Best of all there is every indication that the Word has been sown at least in part on good ground for it has brought forth fruit in the salvation of precious souls and in the building up of believers in the truth. Truly our God has done 'exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.' To Him who alone has provided the increase be all glory and praise!

"It is our earnest desire that we may increasingly be of assistance in the ministry of your committee and of The Presbyterian Church of America. We are located in the great metropolitan area of New York where there is an abundance of churches but an appalling dearth of sound Biblical preaching. Will you not join us in prayer that the ministry of the several congregations of The Presbyterian Church of America within this area may be used of God in reaching into the many communities where the Word of God is not preached in its fullness?

"From the place which you as a committee have filled in the life of Grace Church we are convinced that your work is essential. May the Lord strengthen you in your task and may a host of friends join you in it!

"Cordially yours,

"THE SESSION OF GRACE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
Westfield, New Jersey."

The pastor and the congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church of Westfield are certainly to be congratulated on the progress that has been made. It should be encouraging to everyone to read of this progress, and to know, moreover, that what has been done at Westfield is in process of accomplishment in other home mission fields. It is a tremendous task to establish a church where none has been before. But it is a task that is in many places being bravely faced and successfully undertaken. In this fact lies the hope and future of The Presbyterian Church of America.

### Where to Send Gifts

Your gift to the Home Missions Committee should be sent to the Rev. Clifford S. Smith, Treasurer, 506 Schaff Building, Phila., Penna.

# God's Will and God's Word

By the REV. PROFESSOR R. B. KUIPER



Mr. Kuiper

**H**OW am I to know the will of God concerning my life?" That question presents itself time and again to every Christian.

Its answer really is very simple and can be stated with utmost brevity. The Word of God, the Bible, is our one and only infallible rule of life as well as faith.

To be sure, it must not be forgotten that for a true understanding of God's Word the illumination of the Holy Spirit is indispensable. But it does not follow by any manner of means that God reveals His will to His children in two distinct and separate ways—by His Word *and* by His Spirit. He makes His will clear in just one way—by His Spirit *through* His Word.

The fact remains that we have but one infallible and objective statement of the will of God concerning our lives. It is the Bible.

Says the Westminster Confession of Faith (I:6): "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men."

That infidels and Modernists reject the Bible as the infallible rule of life is a matter of common knowledge. What is not so generally understood is that a great many erroneous views on this subject are prevalent among those who would be known as conservative Christians. Right within Christian circles there are those who would discover God's will for their lives by other methods than the study of His Word and who, in so doing, deny, perhaps unwittingly but nonetheless really, the sufficiency of Holy Scripture.

A brief consideration of some instances of that sort of thing may prove helpful.

## Human Tradition

When our Lord Jesus was on earth He rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees for placing the tradition of the elders on a par with, or even above, God's law. He charged them with making God's commandments of none effect by their tradition. Suppose a man had needy parents. God's law declared it his sacred duty to aid them to the utmost of his ability. But according to Jewish tradition he could escape this duty by simply declaring that what he might give them was *corban*, that is, a gift to God.

The Roman Catholic Church has a large body of traditions which find no support in the Word of God and yet are made binding on church members. That is as might be expected, for Rome frankly acknowledges not only the Bible as infallible, but the Church as well. Therefore ecclesiastical tradition is considered as authoritative as Scripture itself.

Protestantism from the beginning firmly rejected the authority of tradition and made the sole authority of the Bible its controlling principle. But what poor Protestants many of us are today! How difficult we find it to distinguish between human tradition and divine precept! How prone we are to make the traditions of men as binding as God's commandments—or a bit more so!

In the kind providence of God I had God-fearing parents. The home in which I was reared was pervaded with a pronounced Christian atmosphere. It was customary, for instance, not only to have prayers before and after meals, but also to read a chapter of God's Word at each meal. I consider the last named custom a most commendable one. Not only does it insure regularity in family worship, but it gives beautiful expression to the significant truth that man's need of spiritual food is at least as great as his need of food for the body. Therefore I have not the slightest inclination to depart from that custom. So dearly do I love it that I confidently expect to hold to it as long as I live. More than that, I strongly recommend it to all Chris-

tians. But have I the right to force this particular system of Bible reading on others? May I count those guilty of sinful neglect who have another system? In a word, may I elevate this most excellent tradition to the rank of divine law? Of course not. Emphatically not!

If even the best of human traditions are not to be compared with God's commandments, then surely less noble traditions do not deserve our respect.

May we ever be on our guard against those who in the name of religion would add to God's law. To be stricter than God is no evidence of piety but, contrariwise, of abominable presumption. To add to God's law is just as heinous a sin as to subtract from it. He who does either puts himself in God's place.

## The Individual Conscience

It is very generally held, both in and outside Christian circles, that the conscience is an infallible guide for right living. Often the conscience has been defined as God's voice in man.

The fallacy of this belief is easily shown. The conscience is indeed a precious gift of God to man. But like everything else in man it was corrupted by sin. In consequence it has become extremely fallible.

It has been truly said that but one dictum of the conscience is thoroughly reliable, namely, that it is right to do the right and wrong to do the wrong. On that all consciences are agreed and rightly so. But when it comes to the question just what is right and just what is wrong, consciences give a wide variety of answers and not infrequently flatly contradict each other. It follows that, if we were to permit men's consciences to decide what may or may not be done, we should be compelled to admit that there is no such thing as objective good. The question, *What is good?* would become unanswerable.

Then too, the conscience is pliable. Everybody's conscience is strongly influenced by the traditions of childhood. As these traditions are left behind, the conscience frequently

changes. And will not the voice of conscience be stifled if one repeatedly does what it forbids?

It is altogether possible for a person to feel in sacred duty bound to do what is absolutely wrong. The Bible contains a striking instance of that. The apostle Paul tells us that before his conversion he verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. When the grace of God had opened his eyes, he saw that by doing these things he had become "a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious."

When one is born again, the new life which is his affects him all around. He now thinks differently, wills differently, feels differently. His conscience also is enlightened. But sin and its consequences will not vanish entirely until death. And so it comes about that the consciences, even of Christians, differ on details. I know a Christian whose conscience forbids him to walk even as little as a mile on Sundays except for going to church. Personally I can take a walk of more than three miles on the Lord's Day without compunction of conscience. In fact, my conscience sometimes troubles me a bit for not walking more than I do on each of the seven days of the week.

We conclude that the conscience is no substitute for the Word of God as a rule of life. Not even the Christian's conscience is that. And this means, among other things, that no one has a right to impose the dictates of his conscience on others.

### Pious Soothsaying

Satan likes to ape God. Magic, for instance, is his imitation of the miracle, and soothsaying is his substitute for prophecy.

The heathen often take recourse to soothsaying in their efforts to discover the will of the gods. They may slaughter an animal. Some sacred person, as a priest, will examine the entrails. Presently he is ready to declare what the gods will have done.

It goes altogether without saying that no Christian will consciously resort to anything even remotely resembling such practices.

And yet, strange, very strange, to say, well-meaning Christians occasionally do seek to learn God's will by a method not wholly unrelated to pagan soothsaying. They are con-

vinced that the Bible is our only source of knowledge of the divine will. So, to discover that will, to the Bible they turn. But how? Do they study its content? No. They offer a brief prayer for divine guidance, open the Bible at random, and then seek the answer to their query in the first verse on which their eyes light.

That this practice is dishonoring to the Bible must be clear to every thinking person. Dr. Machen once likened it to the use of the ouija board. Thus to use the Bible is to abuse it. God's Word is not an instrument of magic. Pious soothsaying describes this practice with a fair degree of accuracy.

### An Abbreviated Bible

Modernists tell us that not everything in the Bible is God's Word. Orthodox Christians insist that the whole Bible is God's Word. And yet there are those in the latter group who abbreviate Holy Scripture after a fashion. To be sure, it does not occur to them to say that any part of it is untrue, but they do teach that certain portions are not intended for us Christians of the New Dispensation.

Our Dispensationalist brethren hold that the Lord's Prayer, for instance, is not for us. And so sharp a line of demarcation do they draw between the Dispensation of Law, under which Israel lived, and the Dispensation of Grace, under which we live today, as to deny that the Ten Commandments are for us. A famous Dispensationalist preacher of New York City once said that the Lord's Prayer "has no more place in the Christian church than the thunders of Sinai." Not all Dispensationalists are equally radical, but at least one extremist has come to the conclusion that the only part of the Bible intended for us lies within the compass of the so-called Imprisonment Epistles.

When men deny that Christians are obligated to obey the Ten Commandments the implications for Christian ethics become extremely serious. This denial is the very essence of that old and devastating heresy known as Antinomianism. The history of the Christian Church tells us that Antinomianism has not been conducive to holy living. How could it be? It would deprive us of God's own summary of His will concerning our lives. It seeks to rob us of that revelation

of the divine will which is an expression of the very nature of God, and to which the apostle Paul could therefore ascribe the divine attributes of holiness, justice, and goodness (Rom. 7:12).

It is not strange that those who deny the eternal validity of the moral law should seek a substitute for it. And so at least a few of them have come to rely for the disclosure of God's will on a vague, mystical guidance of the Holy Spirit.

### Presumptuous Mysticism

It is of the essence of Mysticism to separate the operation of the Holy Spirit from God's objective Word, to hold that the Spirit often reveals God's will without reference to the Bible, and thus by plain implication to deny that the Bible is God's once-for-all, finished, revelation of His will.

No student of Scripture will care to deny that before the Bible was completed God frequently revealed His will through such methods as visions, dreams, and the casting of lots. But to assert that God continues to do this after the completion of Holy Writ is to deny its sufficiency. That obviously is an extremely serious matter. And so we are not surprised to find the Westminster divines militating against it in the warning that nothing at any time is to be added to Scripture, not even "by new revelations of the Spirit."

And yet, how very prevalent is the notion that the will of God may be learned through special guidance of the Spirit apart from the Word!

There is the old story of the young man who imagined he saw the letters P. C. written in the sky, and interpreted them as a divine command for him to Preach Christ. However, soon after his arrival at the seminary, it became clear that he had no capacity whatever for study. So an elderly professor took him aside and in a kind way suggested that he might have misinterpreted his supposed vision. P. C. could stand for Plant Corn.

Then there is the story of the widow who informed a certain gentleman that it had been revealed to her in a vision that he and she should be married, to which he aptly replied that as soon as he received a like vision their wedding day would be set.

The Buchmanites put less stress on the study of Scripture than on their

quiet hour, when they sit still with paper and pencil in hand, ready to jot down whatever revelations God may vouchsafe them.

I once met a patient in a psychopathic hospital who had attempted to shoot his pastor because, as he claimed, God had revealed to him with unmistakable clarity that such was his duty. Likely there are men and women outside asylums who "feel led" to do things almost as bad.

To claim special revelations of God's will by the Holy Spirit apart from Scripture sounds pious but is in reality wicked presumption which lays him who makes the claim wide open to deception by Satan.

This type of Mysticism frequently expresses itself in prayers that in the sight of God must be abominations. Instead of praying that the Holy Spirit may make the divine will in a given matter clear from Scripture, one prays only to be led to know God's will and puts forth no effort to discover it from His Word. That amounts to tempting God as much as if a drunkard were to enter a saloon with the prayer on his lips: "Lead me not into temptation." And how dreadfully easy it becomes for such a one to convince himself that whatever he feels like doing after prayer for guidance cannot possibly be wrong.

Mysticism flings the door wide open to Pharisaism at its worst.

### Providential Guidance

Few notions are held more widely by Christians than that God is wont to disclose His will by two means—His Word and His providence.

It is not difficult to show that he blunders seriously who coördinates providence with the Word as a source of knowledge of the divine will.

Theologians distinguish between God's secret will, embodied in His counsel of foreordination, and God's revealed will, embodied in His law. Of course, God does not have two wills, but for practical purposes this distinction between two phases of the divine will is helpful. God's revealed will is an infallible guide for the life of His children. But His secret will obviously is no guide at all. The betrayal of Jesus by Judas was included in God's counsel. Scripture tells us that it occurred "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." But that does not in the least lessen Judas's guilt. He sinned inexpressibly because he violated God's revealed

will most flagrantly. Here Deuteronomy 29:29 is applicable: "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things which are revealed belong unto us and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

Now providence is simply the gradual unfolding of God's secret will. How perfectly clear, then, that it cannot serve as a guide for our moral behavior. It has been said that destiny is duty, but that is pernicious heresy.

The danger is ever present that the human heart, deceitful as it is, will misinterpret the leadings of providence. A man has a strong desire to do something immoral. Down in his heart he knows that it is immoral, but he does not suppress his longing. He tries hard to convince himself that the contemplated thing is permissible. Now he prays a wicked prayer. He asks God to make it clear to him providentially whether or not he may yield to his inclination. One day he is confronted with an opportunity to satisfy his craving. Is there not great danger that he will interpret this opportunity as a divine hint to go ahead? If, on the other hand, he had held to the law of God as his perfect guide, he could have come to no such evil conclusion.

Sometimes providence will bring to our attention a moral issue which we had not seen. A young man works in an office, let us say. Near him works a young lady. He learns to love her and is thinking seriously of asking her to become his wife. Being a godly young man, he makes this affair a matter of prayer. He prays that God may make it clear to him whether or not he should marry her. Then one day he providentially makes the discovery that she is a divorcee and that she obtained her divorce on unbiblical grounds. His duty is clear. But what has made it clear? Providential guidance? Surely not! Providence simply brought the moral issue to the fore. But the moral issue was decided by the Word of God, and by it alone.

We conclude that questions of moral behavior are to be settled, never on the basis of providential leadings, but always and only in the light of God's will as revealed in His Word.

This article deals with moral issues. But let us for a moment consider an instance which apparently involves no choice between good and evil. A young

man feels called of God to become a foreign missionary but cannot decide whether to go to China or to Africa. He knows full well that God would have the gospel brought to both these places, and he has no personal preference, but he is anxious to do that which is best. So he prays that God may providentially guide him to make up his mind as is best. Presently a serious obstacle arises which renders it practically impossible for him to go to China. He decides that God would have him preach in Africa. The day of his departure comes. He sails. There is no trace of doubt in his mind but the Lord has called him to the dark continent. And well may he be reasonably certain. But, lo and behold, on his journey he is taken ill and dies. The history of Borden of Yale is repeated. What shall we say? In the first place, that what we are told of David when he desired to build a temple to the Lord is applicable to our friend. That he had it in his heart to become a missionary was good. In the second place, that the strongest feeling on our part that the Lord would have us do something is no conclusive proof that He really would. And in the third place, that we have no way of interpreting providential leadings infallibly. Providence often takes such unexpected turns that we can never be altogether sure where it will lead us. Nor do we need to know.

It may be added that when we stand before a choice of conduct we should be very slow to decide that no moral issue is at stake. Often moral questions lie hidden under the surface of things. But if after honest investigation we find no such issue, we may well pray for providential guidance to do that which is most expedient, but we must not neglect to use our God-given common sense, and in ordinary matters there can be no harm in following our natural inclinations. I sit down in a restaurant. The menu gives me a choice between lamb and ham. I dislike lamb. I like ham. There is no reason why I should afflict myself with lamb. Nor is there a good reason why I should not thoroughly enjoy my ham.

But after this digression I would repeat that providential guidance is not intended to solve our moral problems. God has given us His Word for that.

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The conclusion of the whole matter

is that God's Word is our one rule of life, our sole standard of morality. The Bible is an altogether sufficient

lamp unto our feet and the only light unto our path that we need. For the discovery of God's will for

our lives there is no substitute in all the world for painstaking and prayerful study of Holy Scripture.

## Whither Christian Endeavor?

By the REV. JOHN H. SKILTON

Member of the Pastoral Council of the Maine State Christian Endeavor Union and  
Pastor of the Second Parish Presbyterian Church of Portland, Maine

**M**AINE Christian Endeavorers are witnessing an undeclared war. Unbelief, indifference, and compromise have been ill served by the evangelical Christianity of the state Christian Endeavor Union, and are striving to modify or oppose its testimony. They have enlisted the support of the International Society of Christian Endeavor which, without consulting the Maine Union, agreed to "assist" in a "state-wide C. E. conference" held in Portland, January 28th and 29th. This conference brought to Maine men unsympathetic toward the policies of the state Union, among them Dr. Daniel A. Poling, president of the International Society. It aimed to give the young people of Maine, who had been "dangerously" exposed to consistent Christianity by their own Union, "some of the help and some of the inspiration which millions of the world's youth have had." The place of meeting was the Williston Church, where Christian Endeavor happened to be born, and which, a few months ago, virtually ejected the Biblical Maine State Christian Endeavor convention. Again, without consulting the Maine State Union, the International Society invited the general secretary of the New York State Christian Endeavor Union to do some field work in Maine and has attempted to form an independent mailing list of Maine Christian Endeavor societies.

### The Policy of the Maine Union

A source of annoyance to some persons in Maine and to the International Society of Christian Endeavor is that the Maine Union, at its last two annual conventions, has adopted a Biblical statement of "spiritual policy" and has attempted to make its witness conform to that policy. Without a dissenting vote the last conventions have declared that

"Because God is the Lord, and our God, and our Redeemer, therefore we are bound to obey His commandments. He commands: Come unto me . . . Preach the Word (the inerrancy of the Bible, the deity of Christ, the sacrifice of Christ to satisfy divine justice, the bodily resurrection of Christ, the miracles of Christ) . . . Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . Feed my sheep . . . Feed my lambs."

It may seem strange that so simple a statement as this of truths always believed by the Church of Christ regardless of denomination should cause any trouble, but unbelief and indifference are strong within the Church today. They are not pleased when consistent Christians, by affirming truths especially distasteful to infidelity, indicate that they are willing to stand definitely with Christ. The spiritual policy of the Maine State Union was designed to do what it has, in a measure, accomplished: clearly to inform men that in the conflict between Christianity and unbelief in the religious world the Maine Union is on the side of Christianity.

### The Policy of the International Society

The International Society of Christian Endeavor, unlike the Maine Union, has refused to take a definite stand for the historic Christian religion. The trustees of that society, at a meeting in New York city in May, 1936, were invited to clarify their position, and to declare themselves on the side of Christianity by passing a resolution similar to the spiritual policy that Maine has adopted. To this end such a resolution as the following was offered to them by a representative from Maine: "We the trustees of the International Society of Christian Endeavor

affirm our belief in the deity of Christ, His virgin birth, His miracles, His death on the cross as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile God to men, and His bodily resurrection: and we desire that the witness of the International Society of Christian Endeavor shall conform to these verities."

*Not one of the trustees even seconded that simple affirmation and request!* If this is hard to credit, one has only to consult the minutes of that meeting for verification: "The proposal . . . that the trustees of the International Society make a definite assertion as to theological beliefs was not seconded, and therefore was passed by without action."

The representative from Maine had a number of opportunities to learn the sentiment of individual leaders in the Christian Endeavor movement. One of the foremost field secretaries considered it unethical for a union to adopt a spiritual policy such as Maine has adopted. Another field secretary said that his state wanted conservative speakers but, when a man became involved in controversy, he was banned. Dr. William Hiram Foulkes, first vice president of the International Society and since elected moderator of the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., assailed the chief defender of the Christian faith then living, the Rev. Dr. J. Gresham Machen. Another officer of the International Society, Dr. Stanley B. Vandersall, said that Christian Endeavor had never been pinned down to doctrinal statements, and expressed his conviction that Maine policies had excluded or offended many in that state.

When the representative from Maine subsequently wrote to Dr. Daniel A. Poling, the president, informing him that some in Maine, because of difficulty with the policy

of the International Society, could not render it financial support, he received an invitation from Dr. Foulkes, with whom Dr. Poling shared the letter, to leave Christian Endeavor. Dr. Poling himself expressed the opinion that the representative's leadership in Maine was a "temporary misfortune."

### The Conflict in Maine

Knowing the sentiment of the leaders of the International Society as they did, some of the members of the program committee of the executive board of the Maine State Christian Endeavor Union were opposed to giving representatives of that society a place on the program of the last Maine State convention. The pastor of the host church, however, was antagonistic to the spiritual policy of the Maine Union and very sympathetic toward the International Society. He demanded the type of program which some members of the committee could not conscientiously provide. For instance, in a letter dated January 9, 1937, he wrote to the secretary of the Maine State Union: "The local Union [Portland] is planning upon having the best program and the largest attendance for the State Convention in many years. They plan to have as speakers, the leaders of the Christian Endeavor movement. Williston Church will welcome only that type of program."

Because the state Union insisted on arranging its own convention program—a right which it had not surrendered to the host church in accepting its invitation—and insisted on making that program consistent with its spiritual policy, it was requested, in a letter dated September 27, 1937, about a month before the convention, to change either its program or its place of meeting. It changed its place of meeting.

This skirmish, together with significant excerpts from the letter of the modernist pastor of the Williston Church, was reported in full in THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN for November, 1937. With more reverence for the founder of Christian Endeavor than for the God of Christianity, that letter piously declared that "the officers of the International Society agree with us that Williston Church could not wisely allow that type of program to be held in the sanctuary

hallowed by the great spirit of Dr. Clark."

And now the International Society has invaded Maine. Dr. Poling and other officers have participated in a program that could wisely be admitted to that "sanctuary hallowed by the great spirit of Dr. Clark." Young people in Maine have been offered "some of the help and some of the inspiration which millions of the world's youth have had." The general secretary of the New York State Union, in a period of about two weeks in Maine, had, it is said, a large number of interviews, some of them with leaders of the Maine Union. The International Society has sent out self-addressed stamped report cards, requesting information about Maine Christian Endeavor societies. And all of this without consultation with the Maine Union.

How will the conflict result? It is hard to say at present. The Interna-

tional Society threw much of its strength into the Williston conference. But despite all the celebrities that conference boasted—three officers of the International Society, two general or field secretaries of state unions, the city manager of Portland, and the governor of Maine—despite a program expertly designed to "interest the hundreds, even thousands of Endeavorers in the state," and despite good publicity, attractive awards, an appealing occasion (a C. E. anniversary), and excellent weather, the conference failed to draw any startlingly large attendance. But the International Society has more strength than is good for Maine—and it is uncertain whether those in the Maine Union who are resisting its advance will be able to preserve the witness of their Union. Withdrawal from Christian Endeavor may become as obviously necessary in Maine as it now is in other states.

## Presbyterianism in the Light of Church Union

A Review by the REV. PROFESSOR PAUL WOOLLEY

PRESBYTERIANISM IN AMERICA, PAST—PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE, by Andrew C. Zenos. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons. 1937. \$1.50.



Mr. Woolley

of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Chicago, Dr. Andrew C. Zenos. Dr. Zenos has been a distinguished student of church history, a teacher of the subject for many years, and is widely known by thousands of students as the author of a *Compendium of Church History*.

The volume now before us is opened by an introduction from the pen of the Rev. William Chalmers Covert, D.D., until recently general secretary of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Dr. Covert's compli-

mentary remarks concerning the volume he is introducing are numerous and vigorous.

A question which has been discussed with great frequency in recent years in historical circles in America is this: Is there such a thing as a completely objective presentation of history or is history always presented with a bias, whether conscious or unconscious? Though the question is not new, recent events in the political world have raised it again for special consideration. A closely related question, and one to be considered in the same connection, is: Is there such a thing as *the* truth, or are there various truths contrary to one another, but each true in its own sphere?

During the latter part of the last century one of the greatest theologians of Germany, Albrecht Ritschl, presented the view that, with relation to Biblical history in particular, the objective facts were not as important as the values which were derived from the presentation of supposed

facts. The facts themselves might prove not to be facts in the objective sense, but the values might remain. Whether Christ rose from the tomb in the same body in which He suffered is not of as great importance as the belief on the part of thousands of people that He did rise and their direction of their lives in accordance with that belief.

This form of Modernism, often known as Ritschlianism, had a tremendous vogue in this country, but it has become somewhat outmoded since the close of the World War. In many circles it is being replaced by a more up-to-date form of Modernism—that presented by Karl Barth and his followers. Although a vigorous critic of Ritschl, Barth agrees with Ritschl in laying little stress upon the importance of the facts of Biblical history in a terrestrial space-and-time sense. The question whether certain things happened, as the Bible says they did, in space and in time here on the earth, is of minor importance, says Barth, but the spiritual reality represented by those facts is of tremendous importance.

### The Influence of Ritschl

What has all this to do with Dr. Zenos' new book? It has a great deal to do with it, because the question as to the importance and objectivity of historical facts is bound to influence the writing of history. In his little volume, which we are considering, Dr. Zenos adheres to the earlier Modernism of the Ritschlian type. Perhaps the most enlightening illustration of this occurs in connection with his treatment of "Progressive Calvinism." Dr. Zenos says,

the Calvinism which has a right to be inseparably identified with Presbyterianism is the genuine and *potential* [italics mine] Calvinism of John Calvin himself, who repudiated all idea of arbitrariness in divine action, and assumed an element in the mystery enshrouding God and His will, in which the undeniable difficulties of absolute divine sovereignty would disappear.

The potential Calvinism of John Calvin himself, however, must not be confused by the actual expositions of the great reformer in which too often the transient conditions of his day and his personal temperament permit a one-sided emphasis and harsh modes of expression to destroy the balance of the real truth of the system (pp. 177-178).

What Dr. Zenos is saying here, in other words, is that Calvinism is not to be best understood in the full light

of what John Calvin himself actually said, wrote or did. No, Calvinism is something which can be presented by taking those elements in the thought of John Calvin which are congenial to us and our present way of thinking, and by rejecting the uncongenial elements. In other words, we manufacture for ourselves a Calvinism which will be, in our own judgment, more valuable than the original article, and then we call it "genuine . . . Calvinism." Not only do we call it "genuine . . . Calvinism," but we call it "the genuine and potential Calvinism of John Calvin himself," and we say that it "must not be confused by the actual expositions of the great reformer." Thus history is reinterpreted to suit our own desires and supposed needs, and we secure values which are believed to be important.

### Dr. Zenos' Findings

As the author indicates in his foreword, this book is an attempt to inquire into the meaning of facts. Among the meanings which Dr. Zenos believes the facts to yield are the following:

That there is a difference "between the views of the 'theologian' John, the author of the Fourth Gospel, and the preaching of the Kingdom of God by Jesus" (p. 161).

That Charles A. Briggs, Professor in Union Theological Seminary, New York, at the turn of the last century was "a man . . . of predominantly conservative tendencies" (p. 95). The reader will remember that Professor Briggs was found guilty of heresy by the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and that his denial of Scriptural infallibility

was widely known throughout the country.

That "'Hopkinsianism' was a higher form of Calvinism than the traditional [view]" (p. 78). The reader will remember that Hopkinsianism was a development of the New England Theology which departed from the doctrine of the Westminster Standards. It gave rise in part to the New School in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. with its disastrous consequences, and was an important stage in the theological decline of the Congregational churches of New England.

That historical and doctrinal strands in the theology of the church can be separated in such a way that, if the doctrinal values remain unimpaired, historical judgments concerning Scriptural statements can be changed (p. 99).

Results like these are obtained when Ritschl's principles are applied to history.

The style of Dr. Zenos' volume is very attractive, and the views which we have just indicated, and others consistent with them, are presented in a most appealing fashion.

The object of the book appears to be to show that church union is such a desirable end that there are no doctrinal or other differences of sufficient moment to prevent rapid progress at this time toward an ever more-embracing union.

There are occasional points at which we wish that the author had been more clear in his exposition. The treatment of the civil and ecclesiastical government of Geneva in Calvin's time (pp. 37, 38) appears to be most confusing. Several possible interpretations have occurred to the reviewer, but which one was in the author's mind it is difficult to say, and none of them seems to be very satisfactory. The mention of the Culdees (p. 34) as giving evidence of Presbyterianism is unfortunate in the light of our present understanding of these men.

The type face is pleasing, but we have noted more typographical errors than there should be. There seem to be errors, for example, on pages 42, 52, 59, 61, 121, 158, 165, 189. There is a slip in naming the late Dr. Machen as "James Gresham Machen" (p. 102) rather than as "John Gresham Machen," or, using the form which Dr. Machen preferred, as "J. Gresham Machen."

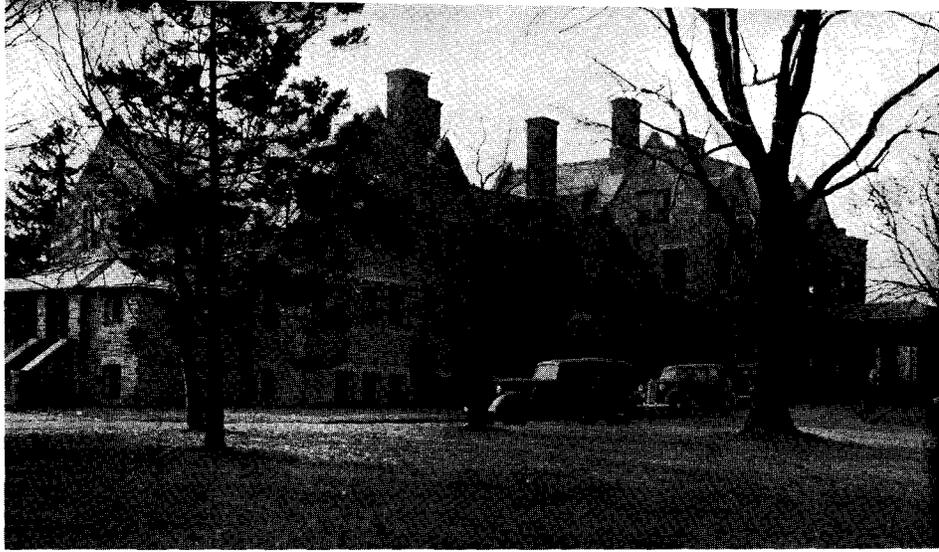
The book has no index.

### Extra Copies Are Available

**A**DDITIONAL copies of this issue may be secured by addressing the office of The Presbyterian Guardian, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia, Penna. The price is 10c a copy.

# Life at Westminster Seminary

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
THOMAS R. BIRCH



**Machen Memorial Hall**, main building on Westminster's campus, has 16 student rooms housing more than 20 students, three class rooms, chapel, dining hall, recreation room, faculty room, and executive offices. Beautifully situated and surrounded by rolling woodland, it is ideally fitted to the needs of the seminary.



**Visitors** to Westminster find the iron scroll-work of this unusual portal in perfect harmony with the dignity of all the appointments of the building. In the picture above Arthur O. Olson, of The League of Evangelical Students, is visiting his alma mater.

**WESTMINSTER** Theological Seminary was founded in 1929 for the purpose of perpetuating the witness of Princeton Seminary as it had existed prior to its reorganization in that year by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. For eight years Westminster Seminary occupied two crowded houses in an uninspiring section of downtown Philadelphia. There candidates for the gospel ministry received their training under such widely-known Presbyterian theologians as Dr. J. Gresham Machen and Dr. Robert Dick Wilson.

In the spring of 1937 the seminary purchased the 22-acre estate situated at Willow Grove Avenue and Church Road, in Philadelphia's suburban Laverock section. On this and succeeding pages are pictured scenes and personalities in the everyday life of the student at Westminster Seminary. It is hoped that many, hitherto prevented from visiting the campus, may through these photographs become better acquainted with life at Westminster Seminary.



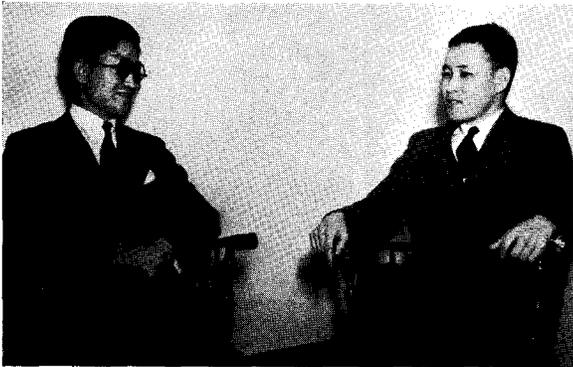
**The senior class** in pastoral theology is paying close attention to Professor R. B. Kuiper. His course will prove invaluable in the pastorates to which Westminster students are looking forward.



**The reception room** is a popular gathering-place after classes. Here three seniors (Robert E. Nicholas, Robert B. Brown and Russell D. Piper) pause for a pleasant moment of relaxation before dinner.



The Arrival of The Presbyterian Guardian

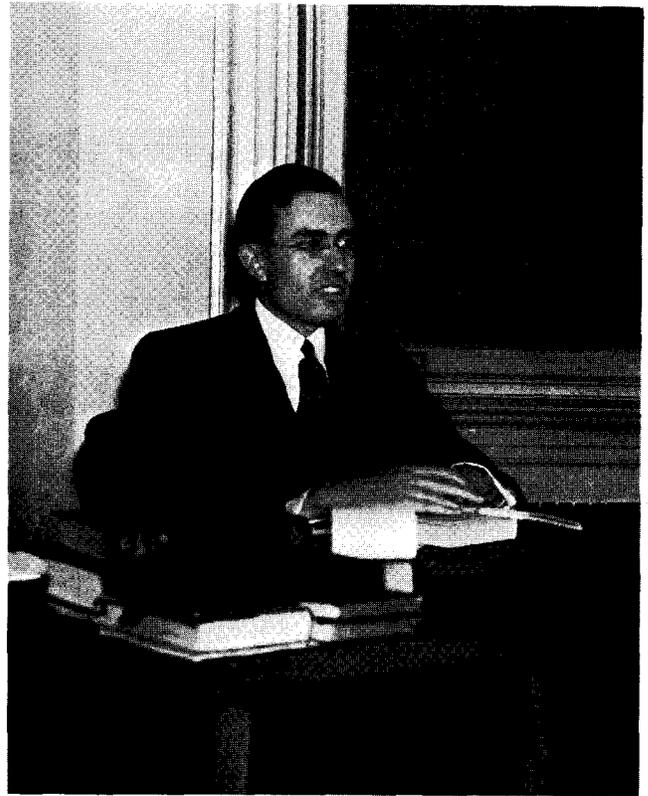


Two Students From Korea Exchange Ideas



Senior Roommates Discuss the Day's Work

**The quartet** is composed of (left to right) Donald Weiglein, first tenor; William Gray, first bass; Dwight Poundstone, second bass; and Calvin Busch, second tenor. These students have sung and preached in many churches throughout the country.



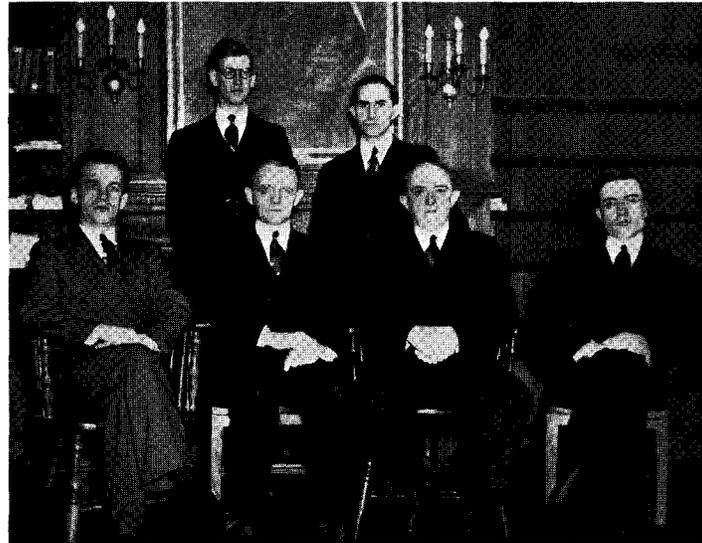
In closest contact with the student body is Professor Paul Woolley, who is Registrar as well as Professor of Church History.

**STUDENT** life at Westminster Seminary is not confined to the class room. Preaching and deputation work occupy much of the time that can be spared from studies. Student prayer groups and other gatherings for prayer and worship are held regularly. Morning prayers for the entire seminary are conducted by members of the faculty. The photographs on these pages are concerned primarily with the academic and social life of the students, and do not attempt to picture the devotional atmosphere that is part of life at Westminster Seminary.





**Extensive alterations** to a former garage have provided Westminster with a spacious, well-lighted, comfortable library building. Through gift and purchase the seminary has acquired a valuable working library for theological study. Generous gifts of standard works have been received, and important theological periodicals are regularly on file.

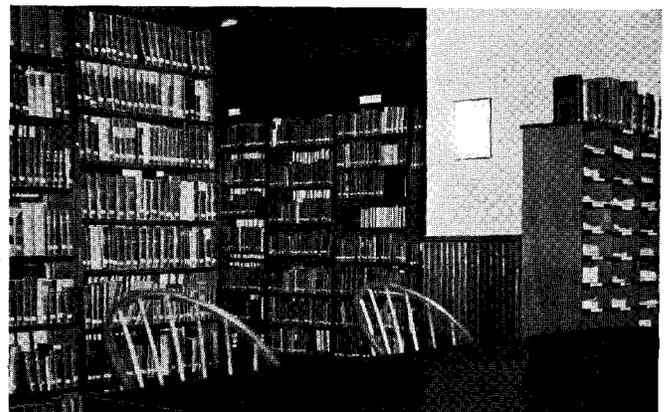


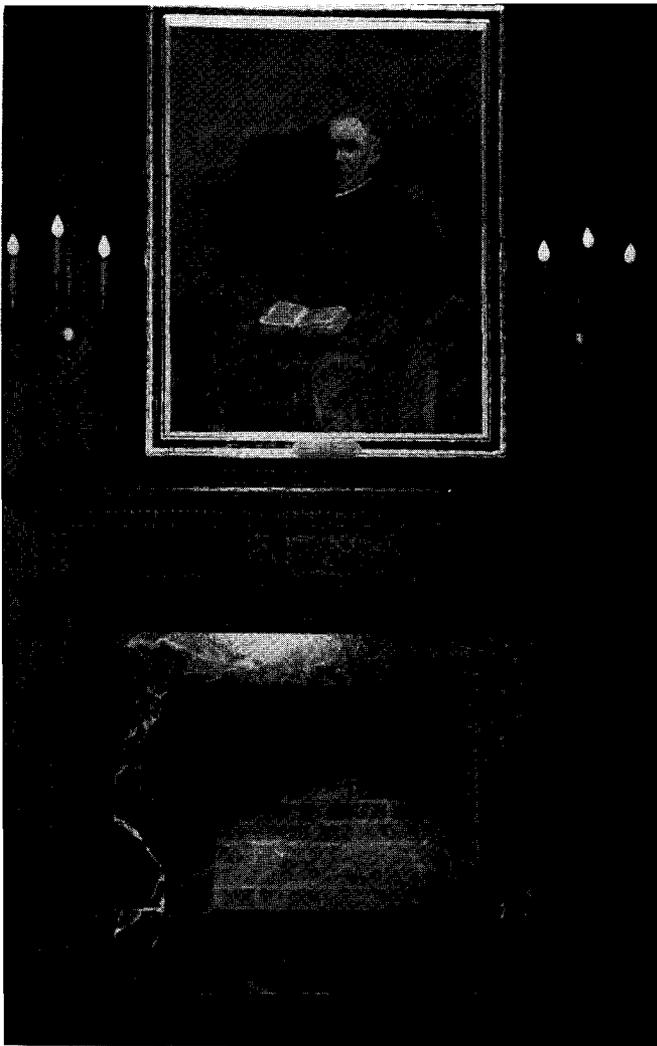
**The Faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary:** (*Standing, left to right*) Edward J. Young, Instructor in Old Testament; John Murray, Professor of Systematic Theology; (*seated*) Ned B. Stonehouse, Professor of New Testament; Cornelius Van Til, Professor of Apologetics; R. B. Kuiper, Professor of Practical Theology and Chairman of the Faculty; and Paul Woolley, Professor of Church History and Seminary Registrar.

**A Comfortable Corner of the Library**

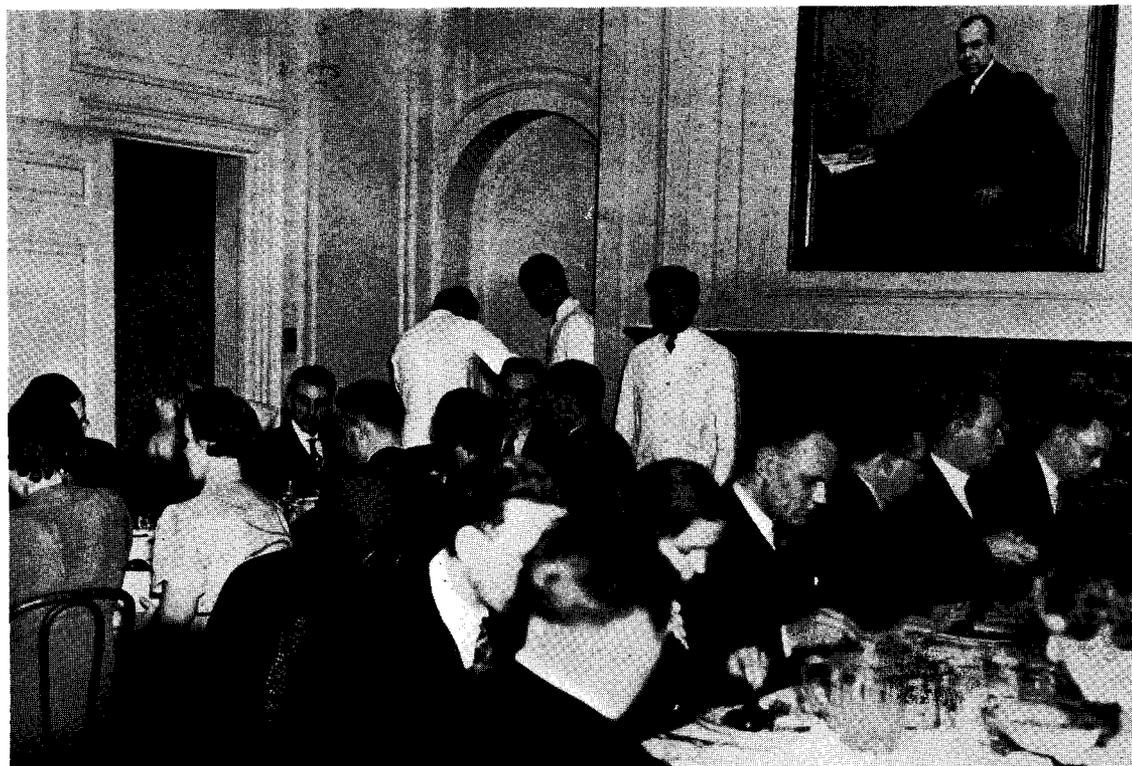


**A Few of the Library's 14,000 Books**





**T**HE Faculty Room (*upper left*) is one of the most beautiful rooms in Machen Hall. The woodwork is hand-carved and above the fireplace is a portrait of the late Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, senior professor during Westminster's first year. (*Upper right*) Through the tireless activity of the Rev. Edwin H. Rian, President of the Board of Trustees, Westminster was able to acquire its new campus. (*Below*) At the Annual Alumni Homecoming graduates and their wives enjoy a pleasant and profitable evening. In Westminster's dining hall the banquet is held under the shadow of Dr. Machen's portrait, given by his brother, Arthur W. Machen.



## The Spirit of Missions

A Mission Study by the REV. CARY N. WEISIGER  
General Secretary of The Committee on Foreign Missions



Mr. Weisiger

ONE of the abominations of our day is a certain careless usage of words by so-called Christians leaders. Precious words that have always had a definite meaning for Bible-believing Christians are emptied of their historic content and so re-filled as to mean something entirely different. Perhaps no word has been more abused in this way than the word "spirit" when applied to the things of God. Men speak glibly of the "spirit of Christ." Apparently, what they mean is a kind of attitude of mind which Christ had and which His followers attempt to cultivate. Therefore, when one has the "spirit of Christ," he looks at things in the way that Christ looked at them.

In spite of the fact that the New Testament does contain an admonition such as Paul's "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5), still it has a certain rigorous usage of the word "spirit" which does not refer to a vague attitude of mind but to personality. Sometimes the reference is to a human being. More often, however, the reference is to the third Person of the Trinity, God the Holy Spirit. Hence, Bible-believers have always understood the "Spirit of Christ" to be worthy of a capital "S" and to be the Holy Spirit whom Christ promised to send and did send to His followers.

It is in the strict Biblical sense that mention is made here of the Spirit of missions. The Spirit of missions is not a hazy feeling which some Christians may have about missions, but it is the One who makes missionary work possible by His presence and power.

One has only to read the book of Acts to realize the important, nay, absolutely indispensable, place of the Holy Ghost in missionary endeavor. He is mentioned at least 40 times in the book of Acts and His divine attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence shed lustre and radiance upon His glorious deeds. By way of amazing contrast one may

read the book, *Re-Thinking Missions*, which was published several years ago by Modernists, to see what place is given the Holy Ghost in that "modern" treatise on missionary endeavor. The book has a rather exhaustive index in the rear, but there is nowhere to be found a reference to the Holy Ghost. Think of writing a book on missions which, according to its index at least, has no mention of the Spirit of God!

### His Omniscience

The tragedy of such a book is made obvious when the activity of the Holy Ghost as it is recorded in the book of Acts is studied with reference to His omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence.

Since He completely knows the hearts of men, it is fitting that He should call those to missionary service whom He deems to be fitted for it. It was He, therefore, who spoke to the early Church and said: "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

Likewise, He not only knows the hearts of those whom He commissions but also of those whom He prepares to receive the gospel. When Philip, the evangelist, was commanded by an angel to go south from Jerusalem to the desert way of Gaza, he saw the Ethiopian eunuch and heard him reading aloud in oriental fashion from the book of Isaiah. "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot" (Acts 8:29). The Spirit knew how to direct Philip because He had prepared the heart of the Ethiopian.

Missionaries must ever remind themselves of the necessity of trusting at all times the omniscient directing of the Holy Spirit. Though He works in very different ways since the Word of God was completed, He definitely does guide His yielded servants. A striking example may illustrate this. In an oriental country a mission board was eager to establish a Christian college as part of a great government university. By prayer and circumstances those who were responsible believed that God

was guiding them to purchase property which was then at a considerable distance from the center of the university. Nevertheless, they went ahead in faith and, after some years, the university built a great new administration building adjacent to the mission property which now occupies a strategic location at the heart of the institution. Though the direction of providence can never be infallibly interpreted the subsequent turn of events made those responsible for the original move more ready than ever to seek the guidance of the omniscient Spirit.

### His Omnipotence

When the Lord gave His last command in regard to missions just prior to His ascent into Heaven, He placed emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit. He said: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). It is not someone with limited resources who is back of Christian missions; it is the omnipotent God!

This is a fact of which missionaries must be reminded again and again. There is a crying need today for educated, healthy and Bible-taught missionaries; and yet, if they do not consecrate all that they are and have in daily yieldedness to the Lord, they will not be Spirit-empowered missionaries.

If one is filled with the Holy Ghost, he is bound to be a power for the Lord. There is an inevitable sequence about that. Certainly it was proved in the life of Barnabas, Paul's great companion. In Acts 11:24 it is written of him that he "was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and [note the sequence] much people was added unto the Lord." It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6).

### His Omnipresence

It is a great comfort to missionaries that they worship a God who is unlimited in every respect. Not only has He all knowledge and all power, but He is everywhere. He cannot be confined to any one place. The Holy Ghost works just as surely in China and Japan as He does in America.

This means that He witnesses

everywhere and is not bound in the scope of His operations. When Paul was returning to Jerusalem after his third missionary journey, he was conscious of impending arrest and imprisonment because, as he himself said, "the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me" (Acts 20:23). Obviously, no metropolis, no region, no country which Paul had visited was without the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Since, therefore, the Holy Spirit is omnipresent and witnesses everywhere, it follows that He works at both ends. Acts 10 clearly shows that while He was preparing Peter at Joppa to preach to the Gentiles, He was also preparing Gentiles at Caesarea, notably Cornelius and his company, to receive Peter's preaching. The same thing may be said about Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. The Holy Spirit who is everywhere worked at both ends.

The Spirit of missions, then, is the all-knowing and mighty God who works everywhere. He is the One who will secure the fulfillment of that wonderful prophecy in Malachi 1:11: "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles."

### News from the Orient

THE latest word from the Rev. M. C. Frehn is reassuring in regard to the condition of his twelve-year-old son, David, who was at the point of death. Mr. Frehn says of David:

He knows the Lord, and this changes his ideas of his condition. This did not just happen, and God has something in it for us all.

Mr. Frehn also writes concerning the eventual coming of the Rev. R. Heber McIlwaine from Harbin, Manchoukuo, to Tokio, Japan, to join him there. He says:

Last week a fine letter came from Mr. McIlwaine, and I have one on my desk to him asking him to come over as soon as he can arrange things. I need him for consultation as things are beginning to shape themselves in relation to our work.

A most interesting letter from Mr. Richard B. Gaffin has been received recently. Mr. Gaffin is with his wife and two children in Tsingtao, China.

He writes of the recent taking over of Tsingtao by the Japanese:

On the morning of the tenth of January we were surprised to hear the hum of planes while we were eating breakfast. We went out to find ten planes in the sky. Now of course the Chinese officials and the military had left on Dec. 31st and the Tsingtao Civilian Corps had been patrolling day and night since that date and we men out in Ilitis Hook had helped patrol in our locality. Soon after the planes came over on the tenth. We foreigners received word from the American Consul to move over to a big hotel which would be a neutral zone. However we knew that there would be no fighting for there were no soldiers here to fight against the Japanese, so we could see no need of leaving our warm house and going over to a cold summer hotel in mid-winter and running the risk of having our children suffer from cold and improperly prepared food.

We decided to stay. A good many others left, but before noon word came that it was not necessary to leave our house and at about 1:30 P.M. we saw the Japanese bluejackets marching into town

on the road across the fields from our house. . . . Of course the turn of events has saved part of Shantung from the direct horrors of battle and we are grateful that Tsingtao has been kept in peace.

This fresh evidence of God's protecting care for the Gaffins encourages grateful thanks on the part of those who have been following the course of our missionaries in the Far East, who are laboring so that "from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same" God's name may be great among the Gentiles.

### Suggested Study Material

THE PLACE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN MISSIONS: With the aid of a concordance locate the places in the book of Acts where the Holy Spirit is mentioned. A study of these references will be richly rewarding. "CHINA CALLING": Chapter Four: *The Nation*.

## Studies in the Shorter Catechism

By the REV. JOHN H. SKILTON

### LESSON 54

#### The Second Commandment

QUESTION 49. *Which is the second commandment?*

ANSWER. *The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and four generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

QUESTION 50. *What is required in the second commandment?*

ANSWER. *The second commandment requireth the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his word.*

QUESTION 51. *What is forbidden in the second commandment?*

ANSWER. *The second commandment forbiddeth the worshiping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his word.*

QUESTION 52. *What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?*

ANSWER. *The reasons annexed to the second commandment are, God's sovereignty over us, his propriety in us, and the zeal he hath to his own worship.*

### The Duties Required



Mr. Skilton

ALTHOUGH the second commandment, like the first, is expressed in the form of a prohibition, it too has positive implications and requirements. The ten commandments, in which the perfect law of God is summarized, require perfection of us. The Larger Catechism, Q. 99, to which we referred in our last study, tells us that for a right understanding of them we are to observe among other things the rule "that as, where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden [Isa. 58:13; Matt. 15:4-6; Deut. 6:13; Matt. 4:9, 10]; and, where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded [Eph. 4:28]: so, where a promise is annexed, the contrary threatening is included [Ex. 20:12; Prov. 30:17]; and, where a

threatening is annexed, the contrary promise is included [Jer. 18:7, 8; Ex. 20:7; Ps. 15:1, 4, 5; 24:4]."

The living and true God, beside whom we are to have no other gods, alone has authority to direct His creatures as to the manner in which they should worship Him. In the second commandment He has given us His binding Word as to the fashion of religious worship or the fitting "external expression of religion."

The Larger Catechism, Q. 108, says that "the duties required in the second commandment are, the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath instituted in his Word [Deut. 32:46; Matt. 28:20; I Tim. 6:13, 14; Acts 2:42]; particularly prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Christ [Phil. 4:6; Eph. 5:20]; the reading, preaching, and hearing of the Word [Deut. 17:18, 19; Acts 15:21; II Tim. 4:2; James 1:21, 22; Acts 10:33]; the administration and receiving of the sacraments [Matt. 28:19; I Cor. 11:23-30]; church government and discipline [Matt. 16:19; 18:15-17; I Cor. 12:28; 5]; the ministry and maintenance thereof [Eph. 4:11-12; I Tim. 5:17, 18; I Cor. 9:7-15]; religious fasting [Joel 2:12; I Cor. 7:5]; swearing by the name of God [Deut. 6:13], and vowing unto him [Ps. 76:11; Isa. 19:21; Ps. 116:14, 18]; as also the disapproving, detesting, opposing all false worship [Acts 16:16, 17; Ps. 16:4]; and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all the monuments of idolatry [Deut. 7:5; Isa. 30:22]."

Our worship must be spiritual (John 4:24; Deut. 4:15-18). God is Spirit and must be worshiped as Spirit by the spirit in man. Since man has a body, he "may and even must give external expression to the worship of his spirit. But this external expression does not reduce the spirituality of worship if only the external is used as a means to the internal" (Cornelius Van Til). See Joel 2:12, 13; I Cor. 14:23-40; Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:8; Heb. 11. The various ordinances that God has prescribed for man, such as are mentioned in the Larger Catechism, Q. 108, quoted above, must be received, observed, and kept pure and entire and contrary practices opposed.<sup>1</sup> Finite, sinful man

<sup>1</sup>As to forms of worship established by God see particularly the books of Moses, Acts, and Col. 2:13-23.

must look only to God for the rule of worship. And because of sin no man can come to God and worship Him except through our Mediator Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Eph. 4:24).

### The Sins Forbidden

It will be profitable for us to have before us the list of sins forbidden in the second commandment as given by the Larger Catechism, Q. 109: ". . . all devising [Num. 15:39], counseling [Deut. 13:6, 8], commanding [Hos. 5:11], using [I Kings 11:33; 12:33], and any wise approving any religious worship not instituted by God himself [Deut. 12:30, 32]; the making any representation of God, of all, or of any of the three Persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever [Deut. 4:15-19; Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:21-23, 25]: all worshipping of it [Gal. 4:8], or God in it or by it [Ex. 32:5]; the making of any representation of feigned deities [Ex. 32:8], and all worship of them, or service belonging to them [I Kings 18:26, 28; Isa. 65:11]; all superstitious devices [Acts 17:22], corrupting the worship of God [Mal. 1:7, 8, 14], adding to it, or taking from it [Deut. 4:2], whether invented and taken up of ourselves [Ps. 106:39], or received by tradition from others [Matt. 15:9], though under the title of antiquity [I Pet. 1:18], custom [Jer. 44:17], devotion [Isa. 65:3-5; Gal. 1:13, 14], good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever [I Sam. 13:12; 15:21]; simony [Acts 8:18, 19]; sacrilege [Rom. 2:22]; all neglect [Mal. 3:8], contempt [Matt. 22:5; Gal. 1:7, 13], hindering [Matt. 23:13], and opposing the worship and ordinances which God hath appointed [Acts 13:45; I Thess. 2:15, 16]."

Any lack of perfect, spiritual worship is forbidden in the second commandment. We are prohibited from making any representation of God inwardly in our mind or outwardly in an image or a likeness of anything in heaven or earth. (The word "likeness" in the commandment may mean "something that can be made" or "shapes," the "natural forms of nature"—Vos.) We must not worship God through, or with the "assistance" of, any similitude (Deut. 4:15-19; 27:15; Ex. 32:5; Lev. 26:1; Num. 21:9; II Kings 18:4; Isa. 40:15, 18; Rom. 1:25; Acts 17:24-29). The com-

mandment does not, of course, forbid the making of representations of other beings than God and of objects He has created if they are not to be used to "assist" in worship. (Consider the making of the cherubim, the brazen serpent, the golden candlestick, Ex. 25:31-40, and see I Kings 6:29; 9:3.) The breaking of this commandment by the employment of images to aid in worship of the living and true God has, it is to be feared, too often been the prelude to the worship of the images themselves and the violation of the first commandment as well.

The second commandment prohibits our neglecting in any way or failing fully to observe the religious worship and ordinances established for us by divine authority. God's Word, and not our own opinion of what is fitting, must be our rule for worship. We are not permitted to add to God's ordinances or in any wise to take away from them (see Deut. 12:32; Lev. 10:1-3; I Kings 12:32, 33; Judges 17, 18; Heb. 10:25; Acts 2:42).

The multitude of those who are attempting to come to God and worship Him other than by the only mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, break the second commandment. Those who disregard the Son will be found to have an erroneous conception of God and of all truth.

### The Reasons Annexed

The sovereign God, on whom we are completely dependent, our authority in matters of worship, instructs us, the more to enforce this commandment, that He is a jealous God. He is jealous for fitting worship. He does not want men to contaminate His worship with practices and misconceptions offensive to Him. Although everyone is judged for his own sins (Deut. 24:16), nevertheless God will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon their descendants unto the third and fourth generation (cf. Hos. 2:2-4; Josh. 22:20; and consider the effects upon the children of the parents' sins in all ages). To this warning of judgment justly to fall on those who hate God is added a revelation of His mercy to those who simply do what is their obligation—love Him and keep His commandments (cf. Luke 17:10). And we must marvel at the vastness of God's mercy. If He visits the iniquity of the fathers to the third and fourth generation, He will show mercy unto thousands of generations!

## SUBJECTS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Distinguish clearly between the first and second commandments. Does violation of the second ever precede violation of the first?
2. What is meant by John 4:24?
3. What view does the church of Rome have of the use of images in worship?
4. Should pictures purporting to represent the Lord Jesus Christ be made?
5. What are the ordinances established by God for our worship of Him?
6. Are we fulfilling God's requirements for worship if, when able to attend church, we listen to a service over the radio?
7. Mention some "isms" which think to come to God apart from the mediator, Jesus Christ. Expose their chief errors.

## LESSON 55

## The Third Commandment

QUESTION 53. *Which is the third commandment?*

ANSWER. *The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

QUESTION 54. *What is required in the third commandment?*

ANSWER. *The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works.*

QUESTION 55. *What is forbidden in the third commandment?*

ANSWER. *The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning and abusing of anything whereby God maketh himself known.*

QUESTION 56. *What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?*

ANSWER. *The reason annexed to the third commandment is, that however the breakers of that commandment may escape punishments from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment.*

## What Is Required

THE third commandment instructs us as to the attitude of awe and reverence that is due to our all-glorious God.

A comprehensive statement of the requirements of the commandment is to be found in the Larger Catechism, Q. 112: "The third commandment requires, that the name of God, his titles, attributes [Matt. 6:9; Deut. 28:58; Ps. 68:4; 29:2; Rev. 15:3, 4], ordinances [Luke 1:6], the word [Ps. 138:2], sacraments [I Cor. 11:28, 29], prayer [I Tim. 2:8], oaths

[Jer. 4:2], vows, lots [Acts 1:24, 26], his works [Job 36:24], and whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known, be holily and reverently used in thought [Mal. 3:16], meditation [Ps. 8:1, 3, 4], word [Ps. 105:2, 5], and writing [Ps. 102:18]; by an holy profession [I Pet. 3:15; Mic. 4:5], and answerable conversation [Phil. 1:27], to the glory of God [I Cor. 10:31], and the good of ourselves [Jer. 32:39] and others [I Pet. 2:12]."

The "name" of God, with which the third commandment deals, stands for God's "personality," "what He is in Himself." "It expresses nature and character and that by which these are manifested." "As names are intended to distinguish one person or thing from another," Dr. Charles Hodge has expressed it, "anything distinguishing or characteristic may be included under the term. The name of God, therefore, includes everything by which He makes Himself known." Dr. Cornelius Van Til has said that "in the 'kingdom of heaven' each name is a significant expression of the essence of the various members. . . . God has revealed his gracious purpose to his people in his name. Jehovah means the one who will be faithful to carry out his promises of redemption for his own. . . . The special revelation of God in Scripture. . . is no more nor less than the explication of the name Jehovah." The term "name," therefore, embraces in its significance all the names and titles applied to God in the Scriptures: His Being, His attributes (see Lessons 7-9), His ordinances (see Lesson 54), the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, the Bible, His works of creation and providence, "and whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known."

Our use of God's name, in the inclusive sense just set forth, must be wholly reverent. We should possess knowledge of His name or revelation of Himself, and ever strive for further knowledge. We should devote ourselves to the study of the Scriptures, receiving the words of the Bible in "their plain historical sense," permitting Scripture to explain Scripture, fortifying ourselves against heretical exaggerations by a knowledge of the system of doctrine taught in the Word, and ever remembering that without the illumining work of the Holy Spirit we can understand noth-

ing. We must study also the general revelation of God apart from the Scriptures, not letting unbelief and "neutrality" interpret for us erroneously various fields of knowledge and experience. No fact can be understood apart from God, and no field of learning can be wrested away from Him who is Truth. Only those whom the Holy Spirit enables to obtain true knowledge of God and of the Scriptures can understand aright any field of human experience or investigation (see Lesson 2).

Not only are we required to know the name of our God, but we are also required to confess that name, to declare it or "make it known." Our church confesses the name of God in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. We must never fail to declare the authority of the name of the Lord and defend that name against all. Our confession must be in all fields of experience and endeavor. The name of our Lord should be praised everywhere and in all things.

## The Sins Forbidden

On the sins forbidden see the Larger Catechism, Q. 113. The third commandment prohibits our taking vainly or for vanity the name of God, in its broad sense. . . . any "neglect of or an open opposition to the revelation of God," which betrays itself in "a neglect of and opposition to any attempt at knowing and confessing the name of Jehovah." Violations of this holy law are found in paganism; all forms of science or philosophy which ignore God and His revelation and seek "independently," in "open-mindedness," and "neutrality," for truth; occultism; theosophy; and all other forms of "Modernism." Since the special revelation of God has been finished, the "lot of prediction" (Num. 27:21; Ex. 28:30) and the "lot of consultation" (Josh. 7 and Lev. 16:8) may no longer be used, but it has been held that, with certain important conditions, the "lot of division" (cf. the partition of Canaan) may still be employed (cf. Acts 1:24, 26; Prov. 16:33; 18:18).<sup>1</sup>

Men violate the third commandment when they swear falsely. A valid oath, such as we find commanded and employed in Scripture,<sup>2</sup> is an exercise of worship, revealing our belief in the existence of God, in His glorious attributes of omnipresence, perfect

knowledge, justice, and power; in His "moral government," and in our relation to Him as our King and Judge. Permissible oaths are "attempts of man to bring his statements into the immediate presence of God in order to test their truth. . . . If there is special need of truthfulness man places himself right before the judgment of God admitting that God's threatened punishment may justly descend upon him if he has not spoken the truth" (Dr. Van Til). To call upon the God of Truth to support a lie is gross sin. Permissible oaths and vows bearing on the future should not be broken.<sup>3</sup>

What we call blasphemy and swearing, even when devoid of their original significance and not used with a conscious hatred of the name of God, and all attenuated oaths, are forbidden. It is obviously a heinous sin for us to use the name of God with intent to bring curses on others, or to scorn God by a vile rebellious utterance of His name, but it is also sin to use the divine name without thought of its meaning and in unworthy associations of words.<sup>4</sup> Even in prayer and praise we may be guilty of vain repetitions, of thoughtless, hollow, formal employment of it. Any want of intelligent reverence for it is prohibited. The name of God must never be made the matter of profane jests. The Scriptures must not be misquoted or misconstrued so as to be made the subject of amusement.

The Word of God should not be brought to the service of heretical teachings, curious and unprofitable questions, or abused, along with anything else involved in the name of God, to charms, or sinful lust and practices. God's truth, grace, and ways must not be maligned, scorned, reviled or opposed. Religion should not be professed in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends. We should not be ashamed of it. Nor should we bring reproach on our religion by any unscriptural conduct or backsliding. (On this last paragraph see again the Larger Catechism, Q. 113, and look up the proof texts.) We should in no way fail to recognize and glorify the name of God wherever the Most High makes Himself known.

### The Reason Annexed

No matter how lightly men may take the breaking of the third commandment, and how little direct punishment they may seem to receive on

earth for their sin, our great sovereign God holds its violation to be no slight matter and warns that He will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain. See the Larger Catechism, Q. 114.

### SUBJECTS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. List all specific duties and prohibitions that you can think of that are included in the third commandment. Find various Scriptures bearing on them.

<sup>1</sup>The lot of division, "if used upon the basis of the recognition of God's providence and after the principles of God's revelation have been prayerfully consulted, may be used by Christians, according to most Christian moralists. It is then a most serious prayer for a testimony from God with respect to possible alternatives in order to settle a difference of judgment" (Cornelius Van Til). The lot must not be used to "settle" matters fully decided in God's Word (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

<sup>2</sup>See Gen. 14:22; 22:6; 24:2, 3, 9; Lev. 19:12; Jer. 12:16; 4:2; Ps. 110:4; Heb. 6:17; 7:21; Matt. 26:63, 64; Rom. 9:1; II Cor. 1:18; 11:10; Gal. 1:20; I Tim. 2:7; Deut. 6:13; Ex. 22:10, 11. Our Saviour's words in Matt. 5:36 are directed against improper oaths—"unnecessary, colloquial, irreverent swearing." Cf. James 5:12.

Oaths must have to do with righteous and weighty matters, not with things impossible or wrong, must be "truthful in purpose," with no intent to deceive, and "truthful in fact" (Lev. 6:3; 19:12; Ps. 15:4; Deut. 10:20; Josh. 23:7; Isa. 65:16; Jer. 12:10; Zech. 5:4). The state, as instituted by God, may administer oaths.

<sup>3</sup>See Ps. 24:4; Ezek. 17:16, 18, 19; Deut. 23:21-23; Num. 30:3-5; Matt. 5:33; Gal. 6:7. It is a sin to keep vows and oaths that are unlawful, that are opposed to the revelation of God

2. What are good methods for private reading and study of the Word of God?

3. Would a Christian school system be necessary if we were to observe all the requirements of the third commandment?

4. What do you think of the phrase, "No creeds but Christ"?

5. When are oaths and vows lawful and when not?

6. Have all men broken this commandment? Is there any hope for some who have broken it? If so who are they and what is the basis of their hope?

in His Word (Mk. 6:26; I Sam. 25:22, 32-34; and Acts 23:12, 14). A vow is a "promise made to God." It should be made of a right object, pleasing to God, be possible of performance, and for spiritual upbuilding, and be made of a free, willing, thoughtful, and reverent spirit.

<sup>4</sup>Dr. Vos says that the third commandment forbids "word magic." "The modern man has retained such a small amount of religion as to make him feel that swearing cannot at bottom be irreligious. In ages not so long ago the employment of supernatural names for the purpose of execration and oburgation had a quite realistic intent. The names served to call out the supernal powers for injuring the enemy or for miraculously attesting the truth of a statement. It is from such practices that all survivals of swearing have descended. And, even where the swearer professes to attach no real significance to his formulas, yet there still clings to the most thoughtless use of them always more or less of the feeling that it does not matter much if the name of a god, perhaps no longer believed in, can be harnessed to the service of man in the most trivial of affairs. . . . The core of the sin does not exclusively lie in its believed efficacy, but in the disrespect for God that is implied" (Dr. Geerhardus Vos, *Notes on Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 88).

## News From the Presbyteries

### Ohio

**C**OVENANT CHURCH, *Indianapolis, Indiana*: The Young People's Society of this church held its first meeting on Sunday, February 13th, and is going forward with a regular schedule of meetings for each Sunday at 7 p. m. Monthly social gatherings are planned, and will be held in the homes of the members. This society gives distinct promise of developing into a useful arm of the organized activities of the Covenant Church.

On Sunday, February 27th, two new members were received by the pastor, the Rev. Carl Ahlfeldt, into the fellowship of this congregation.

*Trinity Church, Cincinnati*: The pastor, the Rev. Everett C. DeVelde, together with a group of his people, went to Xenia, Ohio, on the evening of February 24th, and met in a special rally with nearly 30 Xenia Presbyterians interested in the witness of The Presbyterian Church of America. Mr. DeVelde preached on "Crucifying Christ Afresh." Arrangements were made for holding monthly services.

Two of the recent meetings of the

Gerard H. Snell Memorial Young People's Society were of special interest. Miss Frieda Rosenthal, missionary to the Jews, gave a very timely address to this group on March 11th. On March 4th a special service was held in memory of Mr. Snell, for whom the society is named. One of the outstanding features of this program was a hand-written monograph containing the life story and records of the work of Mr. Snell, presented by Gertrude Treon. The name of Gerard H. Snell recalls vividly to readers of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN the valiant young soldier of the cross, who had been assistant pastor of the Covenant-First Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati, and whose career was cut short in February, 1936, by a fatal automobile accident.

### Wisconsin

**LD** Stockbridge Church, *Gresham*: In addition to his work in the Stockbridge Presbyterian Church, the history of which dates back to Jonathan Edwards, the Rev. John Davies also does much mission work among the Menominee Indians.

His work is not easy and is accomplished in spite of much opposition. Whenever he announces a meeting in one of the cabins the Indians announce a religious dance in order to keep their people from the cabin meetings.

The work among the Stockbridge Indians seems to be more successful. Mr. Davies reports an excellent Sunday school and a fine young people's Bible class in which the Shorter Catechism is being memorized.

*Milwaukee:* The Rev. William A. Swets, missionary of The Presbyterian Church of America in Milwaukee, has moved to a new location. He writes: "We are now nicely settled in our new location which is a growing community on the outskirts of Milwaukee. This territory is peculiarly unchurched, there being only one Protestant church for some twelve or fourteen blocks in every direction from us. We believe God has blessed us in bringing us to this community.

"We are holding services in our own home at present. We hope soon to outgrow these quarters as a meeting place. Last Sunday evening there were 14 present at our service, of whom all but one are prospective members. We are also trying to organize a Sunday school."

*Calvary Church, Cedar Grove:* An inspiring service was enjoyed by the Cedar Grove congregation on February 22nd, at the ordination of the Rev. Leland Jorgensen, a graduate of Westminster Seminary. The Rev. Oscar Holkeboer, moderator of the Presbytery of Wisconsin, preached the sermon. He took as his text I Corinthians 10:31. The Rev. William A. Swets gave the charge and the Rev. John Davies led in the prayer of ordination. All the ministers who took part in this splendid service are graduates of Westminster Seminary.

### California

**C**OVENANT CHURCH, Addison and Grove Streets, Berkeley. Once each week the church observes a day of prayer. In no legalistic manner, of course, prayer warriors, during the hour each has designated for himself, bear up before the throne of grace the witness of this church. That evening all members assemble in the church for united prayer. There is a burden for reclaiming lost souls and the establishing of children in the faith. "The Calvin Hour" radio broad-

cast at 2.30 p. m. every Sunday, reports clear reception 500 miles south of station KLS. Songsters among the young people of the Christian Reformed Church, under the able direction of Thomas Hook, are proving of inestimable assistance. A banquet rally is in the offing, and to it all the presbytery is invited. Prayers for the ministry of this broadcast are requested.

*Westminster Church, 5638 York Boulevard, Highland Park, Los Angeles.* The pastor, the Rev. E. Lynne Wade, has just concluded a ten-sermon series on "The Reformed Doctrine of the Sacraments." On the occasion of the concluding message of this series, "Responsibilities of Church Membership (as Based on the Sacraments)," the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was commemorated and five persons were received into membership. Two persons received the sacrament of Christian baptism, and the total membership now stands at thirty-nine. Despite the threatening California flood, a capacity congregation was present on this occasion. A few days later, during the torrential downpour, water in the church reached four inches at high tide, the rugs being the chief sufferers. With such a heavy loss of life and damage to property within a short drive's distance, one may well sing the Doxology when he remembers there was no life lost and negligible property damage among the members of this presbytery.

### Westminster Commencement

**T**HE ninth annual commencement exercises of Westminster Theological Seminary will be held at the seminary campus on the afternoon of Tuesday, May 10th. The commencement address will be delivered by the Rev. J. B. Hutton, D.D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church (Southern) of Jackson, Mississippi. All are urged to attend this important gathering.

### New Jersey

**C**ALVARY CHURCH, Ringoes: January was the largest month financially in the church's history. The Rev. W. Benson Male was guest preacher Sunday morning, February 27th, and that evening the church enjoyed the largest evening attendance of the winter. Two new members were received on the first Sunday in March, by the pastor, the Rev. Bruce Wideman.

*Covenant Church, Orange:* In conjunction with the Grace Church of Westfield, the Emmanuel Church (Independent Presbyterian) of Morristown, and the group now forming in New York city, the Covenant Church held an all-day missionary meeting, on March 29th, sponsored by the Women's Missionary Society. The Rev. Cary N. Weisiger was the speaker at the afternoon meeting.

*Faith Church, Pittsgrove:* As a result of evangelistic services held here from February 20th to March 4th by the Rev. Robert Moody Holmes, of Rochester, nine decisions for Christ were recorded and several have indicated their desire to unite with the church.

*Faith Church, Trenton:* The pastor, the Rev. Bruce Coie, is beginning a doctrine class, meeting once a week until Easter, for the instruction of candidates for church membership. The people and pastor of Faith Church mourn the passing of one of their loyal members, a stalwart, godly 85-year old Scotsman—the kind of member whose death leaves "an empty place against the sky."

*Emmanuel Church (Independent Presbyterian), Morristown:* The congregation of Emmanuel Church, whose pastor, Dr. Lawrence B. Gilmore, is stated clerk of the presbytery, was host to the presbytery on Tuesday, March 15th. Overnight accommodations were graciously provided for presbyters from distant points.

### Philadelphia

**K**IRKWOOD Church, Kirkwood: Missionary activity is dominant in the Kirkwood Church. Each month the Berean Missionary Society meets in the homes of its members. Extracts from THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN are read, letters from missionaries are shared, and helpful talks from the secretaries of the committees have fostered the spiritual growth of the group. There are now 30 active members of the society, and \$200 was sent

last year to missions. The budget of benevolences for the church as a whole is 25 per cent., and over \$700 was contributed last year. In the temporary absence of the pastor, the Rev. George W. Marston, guest speakers have occupied the pulpit during March. Each Sunday afternoon from 2 to 2.30 a group from the Kirkwood Church joins with the Faith Church of Quarryville in a program of song, testimony, and gospel message over radio station WGAL. The Christian Endeavor Society has organized a deputation team and is visiting other churches for the purpose of winning young people for Christ. At the first communion service of the year 11 members were added to the church roll.

*Calvary Church, Willow Grove:* A recommendation by the Building Committee that the construction of the new church building be limited to the basement only was adopted at a recent congregational meeting. Construction will be of stone, and the size 65 by 80 feet.

At the meeting of Philadelphia Presbytery held in Calvary Church on March 21st the Rev. James W. Price, pastor of the Susquehanna Avenue Church, was received into the presbytery. Mr. Price's church renounced the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. on January 27, 1937, and on March 16, 1938, the property was awarded by a court decision to the old denomination. Grace Church, Middletown, Delaware, whose pastor is the Rev. Robert H. Graham, was added to the roll of the presbytery's churches. Plans for the proposed Reformed Bible institute are now definite. It will be known as "The Calvin Institute of the Bible," and will open its doors next fall in or near the central Philadelphia area. Its purpose will be the training of laymen, and its course is in no way to be considered a substitute for a theological seminary training for ministers. High school graduates or persons over 16 years of age will be admitted to the four-year course. The school year will consist of two terms of 24 evenings each. Three classes, from 7 to 9.30 p. m., will be held two evenings a week. Further details will be announced soon.

*Bethany Church, Nottingham:* The church has completed the building of a balcony. The property, which was

purchased and renovated into a fine and comfortable church in the summer of 1936, forms one large room 50 by 30 feet. This room has never been able to accommodate the Sunday school of 132 members in seven large classes. At a congregational meeting in January it was decided that a balcony would best solve the problem and, by the end of February, it was completed. On March 20th the Rev. Edwin H. Rian preached the dedicatory sermon. The balcony will seat 55 persons comfortably, and increases the total seating capacity of the church to 225.

#### New York and New England

**S**ECOND Parish Church, Portland, Maine: Newton Kapp, a missionary to Africa under the Sudan Interior Mission and a graduate of Westminster Seminary, class of 1932, visited the Second Parish Church recently and addressed the regular Tuesday prayer meeting. The church and, in particular, its pastor, the Rev. John H. Skilton, are leading a brave struggle against the combined forces of Modernism in the field of Christian Endeavor in the State of Maine.

#### The Dakotas

**T**HE Presbytery of the Dakotas is planning to meet at Volga, South Dakota, on April 19th and participate in services to be held during the following five days. At that time the building of the Volga church will be dedicated. The Rev. Charles L. Shook, pastor of the church, has invited Dr. James B. Brown of Aurora, Nebraska, to preach the dedicatory sermon.

The Trinity Church of Bridge-water, South Dakota, having wiped out the existing debt on the church building, is contemplating the construction of a basement and enlargement of the church. The Sunday school enjoyed record-breaking attendance on the last Sunday in February and the first in March, with 56 at each meeting.

The members of the presbytery are at present searching for a suitable location for the annual summer Bible camp, and it is expected that definite plans will be announced after the April meeting.

In Lincoln, Nebraska, the Rev. Thomas M. Cooper is progressing rapidly toward the organization of a particular church of The Presbyterian Church of America. On March 6th 33 persons met in the church building

which has been rented for five dollars a month, and ten have indicated their wish to join the denomination. Mr. Cooper hopes to see the church received into the Presbytery of the Dakotas at the next meeting.

## PRAYER AND EVANGELISM IN ILLINOIS TOWN ATTENDED BY WAVE OF GENUINE REVIVAL

**T**HE town of Alto Pass, Illinois, has just passed through a period of revival that has worked a miracle of transformation in the lives of its people.

In February the Rev. Henry D. Phillips, pastor of the Alto Pass Congregational Church and a minister of The Presbyterian Church of America, invited the Rev. J. Lyle Shaw of Newport, Kentucky, to hold a series of evangelistic services. Prior to his arrival on February 21st, the Rev. Thomas Renfro, pastor of the local Baptist church, cooperated with Mr. Phillips by holding two weeks of special meetings for consecration and evangelism. A League of Prayer was organized, with more than 175 persons pledging themselves to daily private intercession for individuals and to daily group meetings to pray unitedly for the consecration of fellow-workers and the conversion of sinners. According to many observers the very atmosphere of the meetings was charged with the spirit that grew out of the prayer groups.

When Mr. Shaw arrived he found the Christians of the community united and expecting a revival. "It was impossible to go anywhere in the town," said Mr. Phillips, "without hearing the men talking about the meetings. Wherever two or three were gathered together there the topic of conversation was the Lord and the Church. So wonderful was the impact of the Holy Spirit upon the town that many changes were noticed. The section gang on the railroad talked about the things of the Lord and 'swore off' swearing at their work. Men and women who had not been inside of the churches for years were seen taking an active interest in the services. Hardened sinners came under the conviction of sin, and the Spirit is still working in their hearts. Men who heretofore were inaccessible gladly

listened to the old, old story of Jesus and His love. One man, well over sixty, who had never had any time for the church, as he came into the inquiry room waved good-bye to the old things of the world. Over all there pervaded the spirit of a new awakening to Christianity."

In addition to the church services Mr. Shaw was given a daily period of 20 minutes in which to speak to the pupils in the grade school. The principal of the high school also granted him a daily period of 45 minutes with all the students gathered in the chapel. After four days the principal acknowledged that Mr. Shaw was doing more for the pupils than he or his faculty had been able to accomplish, and asked him to take unlimited time thereafter. At the conclusion of the talks results in both schools seemed most gratifying.

Said Mr. Phillips: "We covet the prayers of all the friends of The Presbyterian Church of America that God's Spirit may continue to abide in mighty power among us. We raise our prayers to the throne of grace in thanksgiving for the earnestness with which the Word is being heralded by each of His true ministers. The present reward may be small but how great is the treasure awaiting us in Glory!"

## NEW YORK GROUP MEETS IN NEW LOCATION, EXPANDS IN ATTENDANCE AND ENTHUSIASM

WHEN the Rev. Edward B. Kellogg took over the work among the small group in New York City last October the prospect was not bright. For months a few faithful persons had gathered each Sunday for worship, but there seemed little hope of expansion. In February the group obtained, for a nominal rental, the use of a beautiful church building at 922 St. Nicholas Avenue. The Rev. Professor John Murray, of Westminster Seminary, preached for several Sundays and the group was joined by many persons who had recently arrived from Scotland. Although the average attendance at these services was only about 25, it was actually a 100 per cent. increase over former attendances. The building has been assured to the group for an indefinite

period, and it is perfectly fitted to the present needs.

In addition to the Sunday services and Wednesday evening prayer meetings the group has recently undertaken a children's Bible class in Ozone Park, Long Island, which meets each Saturday morning. Twenty-four children were present on March 12th, and there is every reason to expect a rapid growth. Many of the children come from non-Christian homes and have never been instructed in the gospel.

Mr. Kellogg has expressed hope that in the very near future, the group will apply for admission as a particular church of The Presbyterian Church of America.

## WESTMINSTER ALUMNI PLAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

By the Rev. Calvin K. Cummings

FOR many years there has been a definite need in the United States and Canada for a summer ministerial conference that could be relied upon to be true to the Word of God and to the consistent Christianity of that Word—the Reformed Faith. The average minister of the gospel feels a need for a summer season of spiritual refreshment and stimulating study of the Word. Most of the summer conferences formerly sound have come to be dominated by Modernism. Other summer conferences which claim to be evangelical are either compromis-

ing in their attitude toward Modernism or lack an adequate message with which to combat Modernism.

In the gracious providence of God it is the happy privilege of the Alumni Association of Westminster Theological Seminary to announce the founding of a Summer Conference for Ministers to meet this growing need. This conference will be based on the Bible as the infallible Word of God and on the consistent supernaturalism of that Word—the Reformed Faith. The aim of the conference will be to provide a week of instruction that will be profitable to the pastor in the work to which God has called him. Already ministers from the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in Canada, Southern Presbyterian Church, United Presbyterian Church, Dutch Reformed Church and The Presbyterian Church of America have shown a genuine interest in the conference, and indications are that ministers scattered far and wide feel a need for such a conference.

An interesting and profitable program of study has been arranged, which is subject to later additions and alterations:

Mornings: *The Passion Narrative of Matthew*—Ned B. Stonehouse, Th.D., of Westminster Seminary; *Studies in Ephesians*—James E. Moore of Baltimore, Md.; *Pastoral Problems*—R. B. Kuiper of Westminster Seminary; *Recent Substitutes for Christian Theism*, Lawrence B. Gilmore, Th.D., of Morristown, N. J.

Afternoons: Recreation in the countryside surrounding the Westminster campus.

Evenings: *Preaching Services*—W. D. Reid, D.D.,\* of the Presbyterian Church in Canada; Alexander K. Davison of Vineland, N. J.; Robert K. Rudolph,\* of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Special Week-end Popular Services: R. B. Kuiper; George W. Marston of Kirkwood, Penna.; James E. Moore; Cary N. Weisiger of Philadelphia, Penna.

The conference will be held at Westminster Seminary, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from August 23rd to 30th. The registration fee is \$5, and the cost of room and board is \$6. Registrations and requests for further information should be addressed to the Rev. Calvin K. Cummings, chairman of the Conference Committee, Westminster Seminary, Chestnut Hill, Phila., Penna.

\*Acceptance pending.

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