

# The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

J. GRESHAM MACHEN • EDITOR 1936-1937

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*If the Word of God be heeded, the Christian battle will be fought both with love and with faithfulness. Party passions and personal animosities will be put away, but on the other hand, even angels from heaven will be rejected if they preach a gospel different from the blessed gospel of the Cross.*

—J. Gresham Machen



**May 10, 1948**

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## Your FAMILY ALTAR

### Daily Bible Readings

#### Week of April 26 (continued)

Saturday ..... *II Corinthians 2*  
 Sunday ..... *Genesis 3:1-15*

#### Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. What will be the result of putting iniquity far away? See Job 11:15. What does this mean?
2. How may one defile the temple of God? Of whom is the writer speaking in I Corinthians 3:16?
3. How may we know the devices of Satan? By experience alone?
4. What device did Satan use to tempt our first parents to sin? What should Eve have said to Satan? What did Jesus say?

### Temptation

James has written, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." (James 1:12). Since God does not tempt man to sin, He will support those who are tempted. Satan is the Tempter, but there is One who has overcome the enemy of men's souls. As the writer of Hebrews tells us, "For in that He himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." (Hebrews 2:18)

Why do we yield to temptation? One reason is that we are not yet perfect. All the dross has not yet been removed. Sin still abides in our members. But that does not excuse sin. God's command is to resist the devil, to withstand in the evil day. There is always a way of escape if we will take it. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation always make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (I Corinthians 10:13)

Joseph's way of escape was to flee

from the presence of Potiphar's wife. Job's way of escape from the temptation placed before him by his wife was to lean more heavily on God, his Savior. If our supreme affection be for God, then we shall spurn anything that would draw us from Him.

The hungry man is tempted to steal food. But if the Christian feeds upon Christ and His Word he will turn from the husks of the world. Are you drawn away from God's Word by the ideas of ungodly men. Delight your soul with the fatness of truth, and the unsatisfying portions of men will go untouched.

#### Week of May 3

Monday ..... *John 14:15-31*  
 Tuesday ..... *Galatians 1:1-11*  
 Wednesday ..... *Galatians 1:12-24*  
 Thursday ..... *Daniel 2:1-13*  
 Friday ..... *Daniel 2:14-30*  
 Saturday ..... *Amos 3*  
 Sunday ..... *I Corinthians 2*

#### Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. Why were the wise men of Babylon unable to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream? Why was Daniel able to do it?
2. What was the source of the gospel Paul preached? Did the other apostles get the gospel from a different source?
3. Why cannot man know the truth of God unless he have the Spirit of God?
4. Where did the prophets of the Old Testament times get their message? Do they tell us the source?

### The Source of Wisdom

A wise man once wrote, "The first step to knowledge is to know that we are ignorant." If man would be wise he must humbly seek knowledge from Him who knows all things in all their relations. Magicians and astrologers failed in the times of Joseph and Daniel because their wisdom was earthly, sensual and devilish. In other words, it began and ended with man. But man's mind will always err in its search for knowledge apart from God.

Paul knew that the gospel of God's saving grace had not originated in his mind. It could not. He knew salvation only by works. But when it

pleased God to reveal His Son in Paul, that man confidently asserted "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed . . . I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after men." (Galatians 1:8, 11)

Joseph had a message to give to Pharaoh, but if he had given him his own wisdom, the end would have been disaster. In giving what God had revealed he was the instrument in saving the nation of Israel, the Church. Shall we give a message to the world? Surely the world needs advice in the midst of spiritual famine. But from whence cometh this message? From the philosophers, astrologers, politicians, scientists? If they are giving men their own thoughts, the blind world with its blind leaders will fall into the ditch of despair.

There is only one absolute cure-all for the world's plight, and that is the gospel of Christ. That gospel *has come* from God. If men of this generation seek for light, our duty is to tell them that the secret of real hope lies in listening to God and heeding His Word. Like Daniel we have been given the message in order that we may tell it to others. "We've a *story* to tell to the nations." Go ye into all the world, then, and teach all nations. Only the truth will make men free.

#### Week of May 10

Monday ..... *Psalms 103:1-11*  
 Tuesday ..... *Psalms 103:12-22*  
 Wednesday ..... *Matthew 6:1-15*  
 Thursday ..... *Luke 17:1-10*  
 Friday ..... *Ephesians 4:17-32*  
 Saturday ..... *Matthew 18:21-35*  
 Sunday ..... *II Samuel 9*

#### Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray for the General Assembly which will meet in Wildwood, New Jersey May 13-18.
2. Pray that opportunities for summer preaching may be found for students for the ministry.

LEROY B. OLIVER

(Daily Bible Readings to bring the series up to date will be found on the back page)

*The Presbyterian*  
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**Facing Another Assembly**

**T**HE 15th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is at hand and, unless we continue to be harassed beyond measure by printers' strikes and congested printers' schedules, that Assembly will still lie ahead when this number reaches our readers. Matters of special moment to commissioners, especially relating to the doctrinal issues before the Church, have been prepared with this important gathering in view.

We anticipate, however, that these items will also receive a hearty welcome from all our readers as affording a timely clarification of several doctrines which have been under discussion among us. The doctrinal formulations adopted by the Committee, and published in the last and present numbers, set forth clearly the positions which we believe stand the test of Scripture. Since these formulations constitute only portions of the report of the Committee, and do not take account of dissenting views, they provide only a partial picture of the work of the Committee. This lack is supplied in good measure, however, by the two articles from the pen of Arthur W. Kuschke, Chairman of the Committee. While not without interest and value to commissioners to the forthcoming Assembly, the articles were prepared with the broader public in mind. It is our conviction that the Christian church will be strong in the work of the Lord if church members generally, and not merely ministers and other office-bearers, are informed and alert doctrinally.

Examination of the Committee's Report will disclose that it contains no specific recommendations for action. Nevertheless, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church may well consider how it may most fruitfully utilize the Committee's labors to advance its purity, peace and unity. All will agree, we believe, that whatever action might be taken regarding the doctrinal conclusions, acceptance of them by the Assembly would not be tantamount to their elevation to the level of constitutional authority. The Constitution does not allow of such facile amendment of the doctrinal standards. But the Form of Government does grant to the General Assembly the "power of deciding in all controversies respecting doctrine and discipline" and of "reproving, warning, or bearing testimony against error in doctrine, or immorality in practice, in any church or presbytery." Hence, it would be completely within the province of the Assembly to approve certain doctrinal formulations if it judged that the weight of such approval would contribute to the settlement of controversy and the advancement of the truth.

Since the doctrinal issues have been before the Church for a considerable time, it may be that the 15th Assembly will be in a mood to proceed to act upon these questions. The fact remains, however, that the reports, though ready as early as March 1st, have been slow in reaching commissioners due to unavoidable delays in the printing shop. Moreover, even if the reports had been available for several weeks, it might still appear unwise to the Assembly to express itself finally on such weighty matters without more mature deliberation. Hence, the Assembly might consider it judicious to send the doctrinal conclusions down to the presbyteries for study with a view to action at the 16th General Assembly.

Regardless of the procedure that may be adopted, we trust that the Assembly

**T**HE strike which has hindered printing work in Philadelphia for a number of weeks still continues as this is written. In view of the delay in printing the Guardian, it has been decided to skip an issue. The present issue therefore comes under date of May 10th. The last issue was under date of April 10th. This issue has been made slightly larger, with 20 instead of the usual 16 pages. We are sorry at the inconvenience to our readers, but find ourselves unable to overcome the situation at present.

will face its responsibilities with due regard for the lofty issues involved and with the determination that at all costs the truth, and the truth alone, shall conquer. To achieve that end an atmosphere of humility and good will must be cultivated. There must be a passionate concern, not that personal prestige and honor be maintained, but that the divine rule of the Head of the Church may be established and acknowledged. We hope that the statement recently prepared by signers of the *Complaint*, which has been published in this issue, may contribute to that end.

On the background of devotion to the truth, and in a spirit of submissiveness and humility, the positive program of the Church's work may go forward with good hope of success. Devotion to the truth of God has ever been the mainspring of vigorous evangelistic activity. The origins and history of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, rooted as they have been so largely in this life-giving soil, have been marked by evangelistic fervor. During the past year solid progress has been made in spite of many obstacles. The work of Andrews, Gaffin and Hunt in the Orient, of the Duffs, Mahaffys and Stantons in Eritrea, has inspired solid support at home. The arrival of Miss Handyside in Korea, where she has gone under a civil service appointment to expedite her service as a missionary, and the appointment of Miss Healy as a reinforcement for the Eritrean Mission are encouraging developments. There are also evidences of steady progress in the field of home missions. But we may not consider the progress made abroad or at home with complacency. The fields are calling for workers. The need for the gospel of sovereign grace has never been more apparent or more urgent. The challenge facing the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to go forward with its divinely commissioned task is so overwhelming that it calls for a renewed consecration of all of our forces to the work being undertaken and that which should be begun.

We would not be realistic if we stated that there have not been discouraging aspects in the life of this Church. But concern for the factors which clearly stand approved of the King prohibit pessimism and defeatism. When the truth is placed first, there will be a spirit of consecrated devotion to

the God of truth, and that truth will energize its servants to make the only kind of progress that counts in His sight.

N. B. S.

### Discernment

**WE** ARE assailed by an incessant stream of words. They pour out day and night from radio, daily newspapers and magazines. The voices are many and they do not speak the same thing. The result is confusion. People do not know what to believe or whom to follow. Many allow their judgments to be shaped by passion and prejudice. Others become cynical or indifferent. Christians also become confused and sometimes fail to judge in the light of the principles of the Word of God.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God . . ." (1 John 4:1). The Scriptures command us to examine contemporary movements in the light of its teachings. Indeed there are many antichrists already come and it is important that the Christian exercise discernment.

Sometimes we are too lax in our judgments. Under the stress of the emphasis on tolerance and good will we forget that Satan is disguised as an angel of light. For instance some liberals impressed with the Communist ideal of equality have failed to see its basically anti-christian character. This has been true of some of the leaders in the Federal Council of Churches. There are also those who feel we should not be too severe with the Roman Catholic Church in view of the fact that we shall probably have that church as an ally in the coming struggle with Russia. Lack of discrimination is a hallmark of the religious thought of our day and we who would be true to the Bible must be on guard against it.

On the other hand many, particularly evangelical Christians, are too narrow in their judgments. From their knowledge of the Bible they discern the basic error in modern thought and movements. They know that the Devil is the god of this age and they are ever on guard against his lies. But in their sweeping condemnation they fail to recognize the relative good in the absolutely evil. Also they sometimes mistake their prejudices for the truths of God's Word.

Let us look at some of the great movements of our day and try to apply

the principle of true discernment. Jehovah's Witnesses are an heretical sect. They deny the deity of Christ and pour scorn on the doctrine of the Trinity. They reject the dogma of eternal punishment. They are fanatical and obstreperous. It is obvious that we must be dead set against them. Yet when cities seek to bar them from distributing literature in the streets and school boards to expel their children for refusing to salute the flag we should defend their religious freedom. If freedom is denied them it may later be denied us. Also it is not for the state to judge of truth in religion. That must be left for God's judgment.

As self-conscious Protestants we have no part with Rome. Unlike the National Conference of Christians and

(See "Discernment", p. 131)

### Leaving the Church

**T**HERE is hardly a pastor who has not had the unpleasant experience of going to see a member who threatens to leave the church. Someone in the church has offended the touchy member, or else the church itself has done something which the member thinks to be wrong. The winning back of such people is a primary responsibility of every church session.

The sin of withdrawing oneself from a church for other than biblical reasons needs to be emphasized in all Protestantism. Too long has the doctrine of the church been neglected in Protestant preaching, so that most Protestants think that if one does not like something in one church he can simply move to the church down the street. Yet there is a definite procedure which the Word of God prescribes for maintaining proper church relationships. If one member is offended by another, let him go to that member, state his offense, and try to have it corrected. Failing that, let him take with him a mutual friend, and if that fails, let the offense be told to the church session for their action. Likewise, if a church does something which we think to be wrong, let that wrong clearly be brought to the attention of the proper authorities for correction. If they fail to make the proper amends, let the matter be carried to the presbytery in accordance with the procedure outlined in the Book of Discipline. This is a troublesome thing to do, and it often

appears easier simply to step out, but to leave a church dissatisfied, under such conditions, unless that church must be judged to be apostate, is sinful. When, in order to do what is right in accordance with the Word of God, we are compelled to trouble ourselves greatly, it is infinitely better to do that than to take the easier but the sinful way out. When we take the easier way we not only deny the validity of the Word of God as it relates to settling disputes, but we also deny the power of the truth and the headship of Christ in the Church. We then cease to be Bible-believing people, and certainly thus forsaking the Word of God is a grievous sin. The church is Christ's church; the members of it are members of His body, and members one of another. To sever that relationship is to mar the body of Christ for which He desires nothing less than complete unity.

What can be said of individual members can also be said of ministers. To be sure, there are some perfectly legitimate reasons why ministers as well as lay members may move from one faithful communion to another relatively as faithful. Certainly a minister, as well as a lay member, may move from a less pure communion to one more pure. Yet to withdraw is wrong, when one simply becomes dissatisfied with the direction a denomination seems to be taking or with some actions or words of those who seem to be leaders in a denomination. It is wrong even when there are official actions of a denomination which one may judge to be sinful but which do not render it apostate.

When one becomes dissatisfied with a local church or with a denomination there are but two possibilities. If he judges that mistakes have been made, he can protest those mistakes and seek to have them rectified through convincing those that made them that they were mistaken. Failing to convince those responsible for the mistakes if he judges the mistakes to be serious enough he can seek to have those responsible removed from office. He must do this through convincing the majority of those who have the responsibility of voting for them. In the last analysis, all mistakes are sinful, but not all sins are chargeable in church courts. If the mistake is one not

(See "Editorial", p. 132)

# Moses' Message to The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

*Encouragement from Ancient Times for  
Bible-believing Christians Today*

By ROBERT K. CHURCHILL

THAT was a strange gathering of the church that day. It was the meeting of the church in the wilderness. As a church today, we know what unusual meeting places are: such places as dance halls, store buildings, tents, barns, private homes. Where have our people not met in their zeal to start an Orthodox Presbyterian Church? But this struggling church gathered that day on the desert floor, walled by wide air and roofed by boundless heaven.

But if you had looked carefully that morning as the crowds gathered you would have been startled by the absence of the old people. As the various families from Judah to Dan gathered in the family pew, all the children were present but grandfather and grandmother, and often father and mother, did not appear. In fact, no one over sixty years old came to church that day. Oh yes, there were two—Joshua and Caleb. And the others? Well, you only spoke of it in hushed tones. All the mothers and fathers had perished under God's judgments in the wilderness.

The Church met that day on the borders of the promised land. The air was electric with fears, hopes, and on the faces of many were deep lines of discouragement and failure. Many of them remembered a similar gathering forty years ago when the church also met on the borders of the land. They remembered too well how the whole congregation drew back when the Lord had urged them to go forward. They could still hear the older folks weeping all that night. And now the congregation gathered again, decimated in numbers and severely chastised. How costly was the lesson they had learned. God could no more cease from punishing sin than He could cease from being God. The absence of the adults that day taught them that the Lord did not make empty threats.

Moses looked old to them. He was strong and his step was firm, but what

a contrast to them were his one hundred twenty years. Nostalgia for the days of their fathers stole over them. Moses faced the church that day fully conscious of the responsibility God was placing on him. This new generation must advance to take their place in the center of world history. But these families had not seen God's wonders in Egypt, nor the arm of the Lord laid bare in their behalf at the Red Sea. Most of them had not been present at the Mount that burned with fire. The gifted law-giver, orator and poet stands before them. His Spirit-given theme warms his own heart and leaps as a flame to his lips. What was the theme? A re-telling of the law? Yes, but more. He would bring to their minds their history, a history big with meaning, and then show them that they were part of this tremendous and glorious past, the living part, which God meant to project into the future. An added solemnity must have come to him as he realized that these were to be his last teachings. God was waiting for him in the height of lonely Nebo's mount with its mysterious grave. If ever a minister prayed for heavenly words it must have been this man of God.

A hush is over the vast audience. Moses is speaking:

"For ask now of the days that are past . . . since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?"

"Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?"

"Or hath God assayed to go and take Him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that

the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?"

"Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that the Lord He is God; there is none else beside Him.

"Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day . . ."

Moses is saying in beautiful language that the birth of the church as God's elect people was the most glorious fact since creation. Whatever wonders and mysteries lie buried in history like gems in the mines of time, there can be none more unique than that people called out of the world to walk in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake.

Moses challenges the sages of all time: is there any such great history found? Is there any such great history even heard of?

Look at the days before you, church of God, and you will behold a wonder so great that it is beyond comparison. The appearance of God's adopted family—established in the settled things of an eternal covenant, washed in Jesus' blood, and ruled by heavenly laws—such was their story. Search from one end of heaven to the other, says Moses. Let your search be as wide as space. Record all that is wonderful in His wide domain. Put these wonders side by side with the history of God's church and you will see that the events of the history of God's people stand alone and unique. Let it stand, the world of wonders.

God assayed to take a nation from the midst of another nation. He assayed to adopt a people who were the slaves of the most powerful nation on earth. He looked down on these poor, lashed creatures. Their cry came up to Him and He said "I will take these for my church". "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." He chose the weak things of the world. God said, I'll break those

fetters, snap the chain, and set them free. I'll take those minds in the black night of despair and enlighten them in the knowledge of Christ. See that bestial face, where bitterness gives way only to fear at the approach of the slave driver? I choose to write my Glorious Name on that forehead. See the one there bowed with the weight of oppressed centuries? He is my son, I will call him out of Egypt.

So has God delivered us from the kingdom of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of His Son. So He saved us from the uttermost to the uttermost. See if there is anything in any place so grand. What can be compared with the sovereign grace of God? The church was called when it was as an unwanted infant thrown out to die on the dung heap.

"From sinking sand He lifted me,  
With tender hand He lifted me,  
From shades of night to plains of light,  
Oh praise His name, He lifted me."

Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him; I will not let Israel go". But the rivers turned to blood, armies of frogs came. This is the finger of God, cried the magicians, as the lice swarmed over them. Herds and flocks sickened and dropped with murrain; hail descended while fire ran along the ground. Darkness came, darkness that could be felt, no light could burn, such darkness as had never appeared in the world, and Pharaoh pled for light. The angel of death struck the first born of all, from the king on the throne to the man in the dungeon. Then the Egyptians begged Moses, saying, Please Go. How many difficulties were there against Israel's deliverance? How many impossibilities? But in God's way and time, millions departed and not a dog wagged his tongue at them. The slaves departed, loaded down with the wealth of their masters. Men think it impossible to be saved from the depths of sin. Men see so many difficulties, the arguments against it seem overwhelming. So did the situation in Egypt long ago. But whom the Son sets free shall be free indeed. He can break every fetter and load the sinner with benefits. For with God all things are possible. And this was only a part of that history of a people in which the name of God was writ so large.

But think of Sinai, cried Moses. Did

ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of fire . . .? There the people were purified. The mount trembled, the earth quaked; God came down. The mount burned with fire and the thick smoke ascended to the midst of heaven. The trumpets sounded louder and louder to the accompaniment of peals of thunder. God was writing with His own finger the laws which were for their life and worship. Did any other people receive their religious and social laws in such a manner? Where does this history of God's church fit into the scheme of comparative religions? Did ever people receive instruction from such a holy God? Where is the teaching dealing

with the profoundest subjects, with such clarity and simplicity? Where else are the commandments that are so exceeding broad?

Can God bless evil? Perish the thought. For this is the way of pagan gods and it brings vast unhappiness to the world. What a rod for sin is found in God's holy law. Let us give thanks, because here there is a happiness for this world patterned after the happiness of heaven. Where else are there precepts and promises which have in them such magic to stir the blood of men? Where has there ever appeared such a beckoning finger of hope to earth's weary millions? Moses pled  
(See "Churchill", p. 131)

## Orthodox Presbyterian Church News

**Los Angeles, Calif.:** The building expansion program of Grace Church has set a goal of \$25,000. Gifts and pledges of nearly \$3,000 were made at the opening of the program, early in March. A twelve-man committee is in charge of the campaign.

The annual congregational meeting of Westminster Church was held on April 9th. On April 21st the church was host to California Presbytery, for its spring meeting. Dr. Carl F. H. Henry of Fuller Seminary was asked by the session to bring the message at the popular meeting of the Presbytery. His subject was "Modern Man at the Crossroads".

**San Francisco, Calif.:** At a special congregational meeting of First Church, held February 25th, Mr. Clarence Bush and Mr. Charles Osborn were elected ruling elders. They are taking a course of instruction before their ordination. On March 25th the congregation of Covenant Church, Berkeley, joined with First Church in a Communion service. The Rev. Robert K. Churchill of Covenant Church brought the meditation. The Sunday School of First Church has had to admit defeat in the first half of its contest with the school of Westminster Church in Bend, Oregon. The second half of the contest began the first Sunday in April.

**Berkeley, Calif.:** The pastor of Covenant Church, the Rev. Robert K. Churchill, was asked to present the position of Christian theism to a group of philosophy students of the University at a recent meeting in Horton Hall. A discussion period followed the address, and lasted for over two hours. A joint hymn-sing by the Berkeley and San Francisco churches provided both an introduction and a send-off for Miss Florence Handyside, when she stopped here on her way to Korea. A number of high school students are attending the mid-week prayer meetings.

**Seattle, Washington:** The pulpit of First Church will be supplied the last three Sundays of May by Mr. Earl C. Zetterholm, a member of the graduating class at Westminster Theological Seminary. A congregation that filled the church to capacity gathered for the Easter morning Sunday school program and regular worship service.

**Omaha, Nebraska:** An attendance of 136, the largest in the church's history, featured the Easter morning service at First Church. There were 92 present in the evening for the Sunday school program. One infant and two adults were baptized, and five persons in all were received into membership of the church. A girl's choir and

a women's choir have been assisting in the services recently. Miss Louise Salmon is the first in the church to earn the 4th term Go-to-church Band pin.

**Bancroft, S. D.:** The Bancroft, Manchester and Yale congregations have all suffered inconvenience as a result of the severe winter. The pastor, the Rev. Melvin B. Nonhof, reports that he missed more services at Yale this winter than in all previous years combined. Roads were often impassable, and the intense cold kept people indoors. Mr. Nonhof had a narrow escape on one occasion when a blizzard caught him while returning from Yale at night.

Mr. Albert Wobbema, a retired elder of the Manchester congregation passed away in February. He was an active elder at the time of the formation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Two of his children are members of the Manchester congregation. Mr. Aldred Halverson, a retired elder of the Bancroft congregation, died on March 25th. He also was an active elder at the time the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was formed. He had been ill for a year prior to his death.

On Easter Sunday a covenant child was baptized and two persons received into communicant membership in the Bancroft church. Seventeen delegates from the Bancroft and Manchester congregations attended a Young People's rally in Bridgewater, S. D., on March 20th. A feature of the program was a basketball contest, in which the host team defeated both Bancroft and Volga teams. The Rev. Arthur Olson of Volga spoke at the meeting, which was held in Trinity Church

**Waterloo, Iowa:** The Women's Missionary Society of First Church recently held a covered dish supper, with each member bringing a guest. The guests were told about the home and foreign mission program of the church. At mid-week services the pastor, the Rev. Oscar Holkeboer, is giving a series of studies on "What is a Christian".

**Gresham, Wis.:** While Easterners were wallowing around in snowdrifts this past winter, this section of Wisconsin was comparatively free of snow. The congregation of Old Stockbridge Church was able to continue its regu-

lar activities, using its warm comfortable church building or government buildings for the services. But a snowstorm the last Sunday in February did close everything for that day. Junior and Senior choirs are helping in the services. The Senior Choir has been asked to sing at Youth-for-Christ meetings, and has also appeared in neighboring churches of another denomination. The pastor, the Rev. John Davies, was able to continue regular communicant and Bible classes during the winter.

**Cincinnati, Ohio:** The Rev. Dr. Martin Van Dyke, pastor of the Christian Reformed Church of Highland, Indiana, spoke at a meeting of the Christian School Association of Greater Cincinnati on March 22nd in First Church. A board of directors for the Association was elected at the meeting. They are the Rev. Messrs. Cornelius Abbas, Charles Ellis, J. L. Shaw, William O. Ferguson, Messrs Vernon Robey, Paul Hackstedde, Jay Hoeksema, Miss Beatrice Shillito and Mrs. Charles Ellis. Chaplain John Betzold, now stationed at Fort Knox, presented a musical sermon at First Church on Friday evening, March 26th. A Go-to-Church-Brigade program is stimulating attendance on the part of a number of young people at the regular church services.

**Indianapolis, Indiana:** On March 7th the National Director of the Rural Bible Crusade, the Rev. J. H. Kornelson, preached at the evening service of Covenant Church and showed slides of the work of the Crusade. A week later the Rev. Kenneth Johnson visited the church and showed moving pictures of the work of the New Tribes mission in Mexico and Bolivia.

**Pittsburgh, Penna.:** March 29th was a memorable night for Covenant Church. The Calvin College Choir of 60 voices rendered a sacred concert that truly redounded to the glory of God. The testimony of the students in the homes where they were guests was also a definite aid to the witness of the church. The church has advanced in the matter of self-support, so that the amount of aid received from the Committee on Home Missions has been substantially reduced.

**Harrisville, Penna.:** The Easter offering of Faith Church for the build-

ing fund amounted to \$253.00. Plans are being drawn up for a manse.

**New Hope, Penna.:** The Machen League recently presented a missionary play. The offering of the evening was for the Missions committees. The pastor, the Rev. LeRoy B. Oliver, and several members of the congregation attended the Calvin College Choir recital in Covenant Church, Pittsburgh.

**Silver Spring, Md.:** Four new members were welcomed into the fellowship of Knox Church and a covenant child was baptized at the Communion service, March 21st. The church rejoices in the blessing of God during the past year. Church and Sunday school attendance have been larger than last year. The average Sunday morning attendance in March was 130. Eight teachers have been added to the teaching staff of the Sunday school. Total congregational receipts for the fiscal year were over \$9,500, and over \$1,600 was given to benevolences.

**Nottingham, Penna.:** The Sunday school of Bethany Church has accepted the challenge of the Kirkwood school to an attendance contest. The Bethany school is about twice as large as the Kirkwood school, but the contest will be based on percentages. The missionary and prayer band will be hostess to the Philadelphia Presbyterial at its meeting on April 29th. Bethany Church is now officially constituted as a non-profit corporation.

**West Collingswood, N. J.:** The ten-week Bible study course completed its sessions with an average attendance of 52. Eighteen persons have been received into communicant membership in Immanuel Church in recent weeks. Four of these are regular attendants at the Crescent Park Chapel, and were given preparatory instruction by the Rev. Robert Eckhardt, who is in charge of the Crescent Park work. On Palm Sunday evening the choir presented a musical program, "Olivet to Calvary", by Maunder.

**Philadelphia, Penna.:** At a recent congregational meeting of Calvary Church, a committee was appointed with power to act for the congregation in the purchase of a building in Germantown, provided the way becomes clear. The building is a large stone structure located at Chew and Sedgwick streets.

**Ringoes, N. J.:** Attendance at Calvary Church during March has been substantially above the average for the past few months. The Ladies' Missionary Society has held two "sewing meetings" preparing baby clothing to be sent to the denomination's mission fields. The Sunday school is placing copies of Vos' *Child's Story Bible* in the homes of Sunday school children where there is no Christian literature. Plans are under way for the starting of a Machen League, and also for an adult Social Club which will meet monthly for recreation and for discussion of topics of current interest in the light of the Christian revelation.

**Fair Lawn, N. J.:** The building campaign for Grace Chapel was formally launched at a dinner held in the chapel on April 2nd. The Rev. Robert S. Marsden was speaker for the occasion. He stressed the fact that the erection of a church building was primarily for the proclamation of the truth to the glory of God. Pledges amounting to \$2,400 were received. Enthusiasm is running high for the erection of a building this summer. The pastor, the Rev. Bruce Coie, recently preached in the Wildwood and Vineland Churches and told of the need at Fairlawn.

**Franklin Square, N. Y.:** Five adults and two children were received into the membership of the Franklin Square church at the spring Communion service. The auditorium was crowded to capacity for the Bible school Easter program. The pastor, the Rev. Robert L. Vining, was one of the speakers at a Good Friday service which was broadcast over radio station WGBS of Freeport. Dr. William Harlee Bordeaux, general secretary of the American Council of Christian Churches, recently addressed the Bible school, telling of the Council's relief work in Europe and Asia. Easter Sunday evening the church choir presented the cantata, "Redemption's Song".

**Schenectady, N. Y.:** The annual congregational meeting of Calvary Church was held March 31st. Two elders and one deacon were elected, reports were received from the Session, Sunday school and young people's choir. A benevolence budget for the coming year of \$944 was adopted. At

the corporation meeting April 7th four trustees were elected, committees were appointed and the regular church budget was adopted.

**Albany, N.Y.:** At the annual corporation meeting of Covenant Church the Board of Trustees was authorized to exchange some land it holds for certain other land. Proceeds from this exchange will be used for filling in the lot adjacent to the church's present building, where it is hoped a new church structure will eventually be erected. Ten members were received into the church on Easter Sunday. The Sunday school presented a pageant, "Pilgrims of the Way", that Sunday evening. The Ladies' Covenant Society sponsored a hymn sing in

the Ann Lee Home for the Aged on Palm Sunday.

**Portland, Me.:** On Friday, April 2nd, the Rev. Calvin A. Busch was installed as pastor of the Second Parish Church. Dr. Burton Goddard presided and with other members of New York and New England Presbytery conducted the installation. Mr. Busch is beginning his ministry in Portland with a series of sermons on the great truths of our faith as outlined in the Shorter Catechism. The Book of Romans is being studied at the well-attended Tuesday prayer service. Mr. Busch spoke at the city-wide Easter sunrise service in the First Baptist Church. The service was broadcast over station WGAN.

## Preparing to Partake of The Lord's Supper

*The Sacrament is Not at the Circumference,  
But at the Heart, of Christian Worship*

By ROBERT L. VINING

**I**N AN earlier day Communion tokens were given in some Presbyterian churches to those attending the Preparatory service. Then on the following Sabbath those who desired to partake of the Lord's Supper showed the tokens which they had received and were admitted to the Lord's table. Those who were without such tokens were not admitted. In other words, attendance at the Preparatory service was mandatory if one wished to partake of the Lord's Supper. Adequate preparation prior to coming to the Lord's table was considered most necessary.

In our free and easy age we fear that many church members in America come to the Communion service with scarcely a thought beforehand concerning the nature of the service, and concerning their fitness in approaching the Lord's table. Many are careless with

respect to this holy sacrament. One of the dangers which besets the ministry according to Dr. John H. Jowett is "the deadening sense of familiarity with the sublime." Perhaps laymen, who have frequently come to the Lord's table, are in like danger with respect to this sacrament.

We do well to remember that while the unsaved are always welcome to attend divine worship we do not, and cannot, invite them to join us who are believers at the Lord's table. The Communion service is for believers only, and for such believers as come with discernment and understanding, and in the suitable spiritual condition.

When the great painter, Turner, was visited by two friends who had come to see his pictures, he kept them in a dark room for a short time before he told his servant to show them upstairs to his studio. He then apologized for the apparent discourtesy by telling them that they had to have their eyes emptied of the common glare before they could really see the color of

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his pictures (G. B. F. Hallcock). Much more do we need our hearts and minds emptied of this world, and centered on Christ, ere we gather round the table appointed by our divine Lord.

Why must there be due and adequate preparation ere we come to the Communion? Because it is the Lord's will for us. In I Cor. 11:28 we hear the exhortation, "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." In the church at Corinth there was great need for self-examination prior to coming to the Lord's table since grave abuses had gathered around the observance of the Lord's Supper. The particular abuses which had gathered strength in the church at Corinth in connection with the celebration of the holy sacrament may not confront us, although, as in Corinth, Satan often engenders party spirit within a church. But though the particular abuses which had crept within the church at Corinth may not be the dangers that confront us, the church must needs ever seek reformation. And there may be sins of which we are guilty individually or collectively no less heinous than those of which the Corinthians were guilty.

The passage in I Corinthians 11:17-34 makes it abundantly clear that there is rich blessing for the believer who fittingly comes to the Lord's table, and just as certainly that there is condemnation for him who comes unworthily.

The Larger Catechism, in answer 168, after stating the nature of the Lord's Supper, declares, ". . . and they that worthily communicate, feed upon his (Christ's) body and blood, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace; have their union and communion with Him confirmed; testify and renew their thankfulness and engagement to God, and their mutual love and fellowship with each other, as members of the same mystical body." These are truly glorious benefits enjoyed by the believer who partakes in a worthy manner of the bread and wine according to Christ's appointment.

Just as truly there is condemnation for those who partake unworthily. In the church at Corinth the Lord had chastened such, causing some to fall ill, and some even to die. Hence, our Confession of Faith in Chap. XXIX utters the solemn warning: "Although ignorant and wicked men receive the

outward elements in this Sacrament, yet they receive not the thing signified thereby; but by their unworthy coming thereunto are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord to their own damnation. Wherefore all guilty and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with Him so are they unworthy of the Lord's table, and cannot, without great sin against Christ, while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted thereunto."

Since then there is such rich blessing for him who comes in a worthy manner and such condemnation for him who comes unworthily it is of the highest importance that we examine ourselves before coming to the Lord's table. How shall we examine ourselves ere coming? The Bible does not prescribe hard and fast rules, but it does lay down certain guiding principles. These principles are well summarized in answer 171 of the Larger Catechism, which we will presently consider.

Our Directory of Worship states: "It is imperative that believers meditate beforehand upon the teaching of the Word of God relative to the meaning (of the Sacrament) in order that they participate in a worthy manner." It would be well for every Christian prior to the Communion service to reread one of the Scripture passages which sets forth the institution of the Lord's Supper, namely Matt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:17-20; I Cor. 11:17-34. The Directory of Worship adds: "Such preparation may well include the study of that summary of this teaching which is found in the Confession of Faith." We have not space here to quote the entire 29th Chapter in the Confession on "Of The Lord's Supper," but the opening paragraph contains a familiar and comprehensive summary of the nature and design of the Sacrament. "Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein he was betrayed, instituted the Sacrament of His body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in His Church unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself in His death, the sealing all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in Him, their further engagement in, and to all duties which they owe unto Him; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with Him, and with each other, as members of His mystical body."

In the Larger Catechism question and answer 171 run, "How are they that receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to prepare themselves before they come unto it? They that receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, are, before they come, to prepare themselves thereunto, by examining themselves of their being in Christ; of their sins and wants; of the truth and measure of their knowledge, faith, repentance, love to God and the brethren, charity to all men, forgiving those that have done them wrong; of their desires after Christ; and of their new obedience: and by renewing the exercise of these graces, by serious meditation, and fervent prayer." This is an admirable statement and worthy of pondering prior to every Communion service.

Let each believer first examine himself as to his being in Christ. Let him ask himself, "Am I, by God's grace, resting upon Christ, and Christ, alone, for my salvation? Am I trusting in Him who fulfilled all righteousness, and who died for my sins? Do I know definitely that I am a child of God?"

Let each believer examine himself as to his sins and wants. Let him ask, "Is there sin in my life? My heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Therefore, 'Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'"

A young lady entered her church one morning and noted that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be observed. Her conscience smote her at once. Only the night before she had disobeyed her mother. How could she come to the Lord's table? Only as she repented. She bowed her head and confessed to the Lord her sin, and sought His forgiveness. Then receiving the assurance of the divine forgiveness through reliance on God's promise she presented herself at the Lord's table and partook of the sacred emblems.

Again, let each believer examine himself as to his forgiving spirit. Let him ask, "Is there anyone against whom I hold a grudge? Is there anyone to whom I will not speak? Is there any one towards whom I feel animosity?"

At a Communion service a Christian lady declined the elements when the elder approached her pew. The elder did not know what lay behind her

decision not to participate in the Communion that day. The thought had struck the lady that morning that she was at odds with a neighbour. There had been a heated exchange of words. She was keenly resentful of what the neighbour had said. There was not charity in her heart towards all men. And so that sabbath she did not join in the Communion service. But a day or two later the thought came to her, "Must I refrain henceforth from coming to the Lord's table because of this unforgiving spirit? May the Lord give me grace to forgive her from the heart." And her prayer was answered.

The purpose of self-examination, obviously, is to discover if there be sin within us, and if there be, that we may repent of sin and amend our ways. It is better, of course, if there be unrepented sin in the life not to come to the Lord's table than to come. But "too often, however, abstaining from communicating is put in place of the discontinuance of the life and practice inconsistent with that holy action. Such abstaining is itself the sign of a further sin, inasmuch as it indicates the absence of that penitence which would have rendered profitable communion possible" (John MacPherson, *The Confession of Faith*).

Again, let every believer examine himself as to his purpose of new obedience. Let him ask himself, "Is it my purpose, God helping me, to live a better Christian life than ever before? Is it my purpose more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness? Is it my purpose more and more to be conformed to the image of Christ?"

With respect to coming to the Lord's table there are two considerations to keep in mind. Some who may wish to come should be held back, while some others who may hesitate to come ought to be encouraged to come. "Such as are found to be ignorant or scandalous, notwithstanding their profession of the faith, and desire to come to the Lord's Supper, may and ought to be kept from that Sacrament by the power which Christ hath left in His Church, until they receive instruction, and manifest their reformation" (*Larger Catechism*, 173). On the other hand, "One who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured thereof; and in God's account hath it, if he be duly affected with the

apprehension of the want of it, and unfeignedly desires to be found in Christ, and to depart from iniquity: in which case (because promises are made, and this Sacrament is appointed, for the relief even of weak and doubting Christians) he is to bewail his unbelief and labor to have his doubts resolved; and, so doing, he may and ought to come to the Lord's Supper, that he may be further strengthened" (*L. C.*, 172).

An aged Christian was overwhelmed by a sense of his unworthiness as the elders began to distribute the bread. He bowed weeping and when the elder came to him he declined to receive the

bread, saying, in tremulous voice, "I am too great a sinner to receive that which is so holy." The venerable Highland minister exclaimed, "Take it, mon, take it; it is for sinners, and for none else that Jesus died."

May the Lord forgive us wherein we have been careless in our preparation in coming to the Lord's table. May He enable us, through private meditation on God's Word and reflection on the teachings of the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, through prayer, and through faithful attendance at Preparatory service, to make adequate preparation so that we may approach His table in a worthy manner.

## The Passover

By EDWARD J. YOUNG

LET ME begin with a personal reminiscence. It was the year 1929, and the city of Jerusalem was under martial law. Riots had taken place, and the hatred between Arabs and Jews had fanned into flame. Jews had been put to death. Fanaticism was abroad. But there were some homes into which the marauders did not enter. These were the homes of Christians. Christians were safe. But how, you may ask, could one tell the home of a Christian? Did it not look like any other home? Did it possess some distinguishing characteristic? Yes, it looked like any other home of Jerusalem, with one exception. On the door of the Christian's home, a blue cross had been painted. That cross signified that the occupant was a Christian, and the marauder passed by.

It was impossible to see this phenomenon, without being reminded of another time when a mark of blood upon the lintel and the two sideposts of the house was a sign of protection. And it was also impossible to see this phenomenon without being reminded that the Cross of Jesus Christ was indeed a protection from the punitive justice and wrath of God.

### The Passover Night

We are to study briefly the institution of the Passover. The Israelites were still in the land of Egypt, when the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, "This month shall be unto you the

chief of months: it shall be the first to you of the months of the year" (*Exodus* 12:2). It was the month Nisan (or Abib), and the time when the Lord spoke was probably about the first of the month. Roughly, it was about the eighth of March that the Lord spake to Moses and Aaron. This month was to be regarded by the Israelites as the most important of their months because of the great event which was about to take place in it. Also, it was from now on to be regarded as the first month of the year. In the old civil calendar it had been the seventh; but from now on is to be the first.

On the tenth day, when a third of the month had been completed, every man was to take a young animal of the sheep or of the goats according to fathers' houses. The family unit in ancient Israel was very important. For each household, the social unit in the subdivisions of Israel, a lamb was to be taken. The lamb must be a male, up to a year old and without blemish. This lamb was to be kept until the fourteenth day. In all probability darkness hung over the land of Egypt during this time, and so, in the midst of such darkness the lamb would be unto the Israelites the sign of deliverance and hope. During this time, without doubt, the Israelites would pause for reflection. They would see before them the lamb, and they would be reminded of the great deliverance which lay ahead of them.

On the fourteenth day of the month just before the sunset, the lamb was to be slain. Let it be noted that all the assembly is to join in this act. The whole congregation of the Assembly of Israel was to slay the lamb. Thus, all the people are priests before God. When the lamb has been slain, the people are to take of its blood and put it upon the two door posts of the house and also upon the lintel. For, by the door the destroyer would enter, and when the blood appeared upon the door post, he would pass by that house and not enter. Thus, the applied blood represents both faith and atonement. It represents faith, for those who have applied it to the door posts have acted in obedience to God's commands. They have believed that if they do what He commands, the destroyer will pass them by. They have, in other words, acted in faith, and the blood is a sign of their faith. The blood, however, is also a sign of atonement. For it manifests that a life has been taken, a life that is sufficient to satisfy the destroying angel. When the blood appears, he will pass over the house.

The lamb was to be eaten that night in the very house on which the blood had been applied. This eating may be regarded as a figure of the people's participation in the pardon and blessing which would come from the atonement and satisfaction rendered. The lamb was to be eaten roast with fire, not raw nor sodden with water. If possible, it was to be entirely consumed, but if something did remain over until the morning, it was to be burned with fire. The Israelites were to eat it with loins girded, as though prepared for convenient traveling; their shoes were to be upon their feet, as though prepared for a difficult journey on rough paths; their staff was to be in their hand, to symbolize their preparedness and readiness for the journey, and they were to eat in haste, as those who did not know when they were to set out.

The reason for these preparations is stated in the words that this is the Lord's Passover. That is, in mercy the Lord will pass over His people, sparing them from vengeance. They are to observe this Passover in obedience to the Lord's word. Furthermore, the word "Lord" is chosen, because the whole transaction was in the hands of the Lord. It was God, and

He alone, who gave the directions for the observance of the Passover. Man was in the receptive condition, and was to do what God commands. Salvation, in other words, is here pictured as by grace. So must it always be. The Israelites were in bondage; if there is to be deliverance, it must be the Lord who will deliver. It is the Lord's Passover.

In a far deeper sense the Christian must look upon Christ as his Passover. For the Christian Christ Himself is the Paschal Lamb. But let it be noted that He is the Paschal Lamb that is appointed by God. We cannot choose for ourselves the offering that we would bring. We cannot approach the judgment seat of God with the blood of bulls or goats or any sacrifice which we might desire. It is the Lord who chooses the one Sacrifice that can indeed put away sin. And thus we see that the paschal lamb in fact was but a type. The blood of the paschal lamb might indeed prevent the destroyer from entering the house and slaying the first born in Israel, but that blood could never put away sin. The blood of the paschal lamb would but point forward to the one perfect Sacrifice that takes away the sin of the world. And that one perfect Sacrifice is chosen and appointed by the Lord.

But how, you may ask, does the blood of Jesus Christ protect us from wrath? The answer is that the blood of Jesus Christ shed upon the Cross of Calvary fully and completely satisfies the Law of God which the sinner has transgressed. The sinner has broken that Law, and therefore the Law demands his death. Justice must be meted out. But the blood of Jesus Christ has been shed in the stead of the sinner and the Spirit of God has applied to the heart of the sinner all the benefits which Christ has obtained for him by His death. The blood of Jesus Christ, in other words, not only fully satisfies the holy Law of God but it also satisfies completely every demand that justice could possibly claim or have. Those who are Christ's are safe. The wrath of God cannot touch them; they are protected. And it is to God Himself that the glory must be given. God alone has devised a means whereby His banished ones might be brought unto Him. He has shown mercy, yet not at the expense of justice. In the cross of Christ mercy and justice have met,

and righteousness and peace are together.

### The Feast of Unleavened Bread

The Passover was to be followed by a feast of seven days' duration, in which the people were to eat unleavened bread. There was a spiritual significance in this. In this particular instance abstinence from leaven was to symbolize abstinence from anything which defiled and rendered unclean and also devotion to God alone. Now leaven is not always a symbol of evil. Leaven in itself is not evil, and the purpose of the Feast was not to teach that leaven was evil. Rather, leaven here stands as a symbol. Conceivably the Lord might have chosen some other object, good in itself, to serve as the same symbol. But the eating of unleavened bread during the week would show that this people was the Lord's and was separated from the world and unto God. The action would teach the people this profound truth. It would turn their thoughts and minds unto the Lord as the giver of their life and salvation. It is thus also that Paul employs the symbol in his first epistle to the Corinthians. Christ, he argues, is our Passover; therefore let us keep the feast. Now Paul speaks of malice and wickedness as leaven, and urges the Corinthians to keep the feast without these, but rather in sincerity.

Our entire Christian life may be regarded as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We too have been in bondage, in bondage not to Egyptian taskmasters, but to sin and its service. There was for us also a Paschal Lamb, even Jesus Christ. His blood has protected us from the destroying wrath of God. We are sheltered; we are safe. We then, are to keep the feast in the manner of those who have been protected by the true Paschal Lamb, even Jesus Christ. Whatever would serve to leaven our lives, i.e., whatever is sinful; we should purge out. The feast is to be kept in the manner prescribed by the Lord. Be ye therefore holy, for I am holy, saith the Lord.

There is something bold and challenging in this account of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Both symbolize the presence of the Lord in saving grace. And the remembrance of the Lord's presence, both in salvation and in sanctification is our great help in this life.

# The Life of Jesus Christ

By LESLIE W. SLOAT

## LESSON 31

### The Crucifixion

SCRIPTURE: *Matt. 27:26-66; Mark 15:16-47; Luke 23:26-56; John 19:1-42.*

HAVING washed his hands of responsibility, Pilate gave Jesus over to the soldiers. They took Him inside the building and further scourged and humiliated Him. Among other indignities, they made Him a crown of thorns and put it on His head, robed Him in a purple garment, and put a reed into His hand. Then they bowed before Him in mock subjection saying, "Hail, King of the Jews". Afterwards they took the reed from Him and struck Him on the head with it.

Though officially out of the picture, Pilate seems still to have had some thought of delivering Jesus. So he brought Him, dressed in this outrageous fashion, out where the people might see. He told them, "I bring Him out to you that you may know that I find no fault in Him". Under the circumstances the sincerity of these words may well be questioned. When Jesus appeared Pilate said, "Behold, the man!" There was no pity in the eyes of the mob. Instead the people let out a yell, and asked that He be taken away. Pilate asked "Why?" and they replied, "Because He made Himself out to be the Son of God". This apparently worried Pilate. One gets the impression that the governor was half-amused and half-troubled in all this. On the one hand his hardened nature made him immune to sympathy toward prisoners, but on the other he had never had a prisoner like this one. He again took Jesus inside the building and questioned Him. Jesus showed no anger. "Those", He said, "who delivered me up have the greater sin". It takes two to make or continue a fight, and Pilate just couldn't be angry at Jesus. He seems really to have tried to release Him, but the mob would have none of it. They threatened Pilate. They cried out that he was no friend of Caesar if he let this man go. Pilate wouldn't risk his political prestige, even for an innocent man. But he had one last sarcastic remark. "Shall I crucify your King?" They are even ready for that one. "We have no king,"

they reply, "but Caesar". And with that, Pilate gave Jesus over to death.

Was Judas there with the crowd watching the proceedings? We are not told, but very probably he was present. And as he watched events, his confidence deserted him. The enormity of his wrong pressed upon his mind. It has been suggested that he thought, by forcing Jesus into this position, that Jesus would have to claim His kingly rights and lead a revolt whereby His true character would be manifest. And when this did not happen, Judas was filled with remorse. Such an interpretation of Judas is probably over-generous. But Judas does seem to have expected Jesus to do something rather than submit. When the decision was made final, therefore, Judas became terrorized. He took the money he had received back to those who gave it, casting the coins at their feet, and then went out and took his own life. They didn't want the money either. So they bought the field where Judas had died, and made it into a potter's field for the burial of poor people. They named it "Acedama", a Hebrew term meaning "field of blood".

According to custom Jesus was required to carry his own heavy cross to the place of execution. But it was too heavy and the procession had not gone far before the Man of Sorrows stumbled under the burden. One Simon of Cyrene was made to carry the cross for Jesus, and so become forever the illustration of the Christian disciple humbly bearing his cross after the Savior. At Golgotha Jesus refused a drink of wine mingled with myrrh which would have deadened the pain, was nailed to the cross and it was set upright in its place. Our Lord's first words as He hung there in agony were not of anguish or anger, but of tenderness, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing". In our opinion these words have reference solely to the acts of the soldiers involved in conducting the execution, and neither bring a general amnesty, nor assure even these individuals of eternal salvation. Others, however, have held different interpretations.

Two thieves were crucified with Jesus. One reviled Him. The other

in his last hour repented, expressed faith in Christ and asked mercy. He received the promise of Paradise, that very day. Mary, Jesus' mother, was in the crowd, standing with the disciple John. Did she remember that she had been told thirty-three years before, that a sword would pierce her own bosom? Perhaps. Jesus said to Mary, "Woman, behold thy son", and to John, "Behold thy mother". We read that John took Mary to his own home and cared for her.

The Crucifixion appears to have occurred about ten o'clock in the morning. Near noon the region became dark. The sun's face was hidden and hidden also was the final suffering of the Son of Man. We do not know the agony He bore as He underwent suffering and punishment for the sin of those He represented there. It was during this time that He uttered the heart-rending cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" The words are mysterious indeed, but suggest that even the comfort of the Father's presence is lacking His own Son now. Yet the Son's confidence is strong. It is "My God" whom He addresses. Again He cried out, "I thirst", and His lips were touched with a rag soaked in vinegar. His final words were, "Father into thy hands I commit my spirit", and then as His dying breath, "It is finished".

A number of things happened as Jesus suffered and died. Besides the darkness, there was an earthquake, gravestones were broken and graves opened. But most significant of all, in the heart of the temple in Jerusalem the veil which barred entrance to the inner sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, was torn in two from top to bottom. No longer would the blood of animal sacrifices bring entrance to that inner sanctuary. No longer was there significance to that inner sanctuary itself. A holier temple, not made with hands, had been entered once for all by a more perfect priest, bearing the blood of a more excellent sacrifice. The shadows were done away. The realities had come.

The Roman centurion was terrified by the earthquake and darkness. He finally cried out, "Truly, this was the Son of God".

Late in the day the Jews asked Pilate to have the bodies taken down, so they wouldn't remain over the Sabbath. Soldiers were sent, and broke

the legs of the thieves. When they found Jesus already dead, they did not break His legs, but one of them thrust a spear into His side. John tells us that blood and water flowed out of the wound. Some medical authorities have claimed this indicates that Jesus actually died of a broken heart, in the literal sense.

Finally one Joseph of Arimethea, a prominent man who had been a secret disciple, went and asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. With Nicodemus helping, he took the body down from the cross, wrapped it in grave clothes, and buried it in an unused tomb in a nearby garden. Women who had been among Jesus' followers were in the crowd that saw the body laid away. They went home and prepared spices so that on the first day of the week they could come and properly anoint the body. What a sense of utter finality there is at the grave.

But some were troubled a little for fear that maybe the story was not finished. Jesus had said something about rising again. Some Jews went to Pilate and asked that a guard be placed at the tomb, to prevent any untoward incident. He gave them leave to use their own temple guard. And so the watch of the soldiers was set. This man was dead. By all the power of human authorities He must stay dead.

Thus was committed the greatest crime of which mankind has ever been guilty,—the murder of God, the Son. Thus was perfect righteousness rewarded in this world. But thus also was performed the greatest act of love and mercy the world has ever seen. For "He gave Himself for our sins". "He gave His life a ransom for many". Let us never forget that though evil men with wicked hands did it, all this came about through the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God". It was ordained from eternity as the means for our redemption. Here is the glory of the shameful cross.

#### QUESTIONS ON LESSON 31

##### Detail Questions:

1. When and by whom were the words, "Behold, the man", spoken?
2. Whom did the Jews acknowledge as their king when Jesus was condemned?
3. What did Judas do after Jesus was condemned?
4. Who carried the cross of Jesus

part of the way to Golgatha? Using a concordance or Bible dictionary, see if you can discover any other information about this man.

5. What were the first words of Jesus from the cross? Give in order the other things He said before He died.

6. What did a soldier do to the body of Jesus as it hung on the cross after His death?

7. Where and by whom was the body of Jesus buried? Tell what you know of Nicodemus. What precautions

were taken to protect the tomb from robbers?

##### Discussion Questions:

1. Jesus Christ never committed any sin. How then could a just God permit Him to suffer and die as He did?

2. If Jesus did not die for His own sin, for whose sin did He die? What significance does this have for you?

3. Can you think of an Old Testament passage which rather accurately describes the nature and significance of the death of Jesus? How do the Jews interpret that passage?

## Further Study of the Doctrines Committee Report

### *The Free Offer of the Gospel, and the Effect of Regeneration on the Intellect*

By ARTHUR W. KUSCHKE, JR.

THE Committee is reporting to the Fifteenth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church on three doctrines: the incomprehensibility of God, the effect of regeneration on intellectual activities of the soul, and the free offer of the gospel. A previous article dealt with the committee's report on the first of these. It remains to consider the last two doctrines.

#### THE FREE OFFER OF THE GOSPEL

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). Salvation is to be received freely, and it is offered freely by Him who says, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22).

There is no dispute among us about the facts of election and reprobation. From the foundation of the world God has chosen some unto salvation in Christ. Others He has passed by and ordained to eternal wrath. But since these things are so, how is it that God freely offers salvation to all, both elect and reprobate, and with the offer reveals a desire that all should be saved? Here lies the question at issue in our church. Some say that in His universal offer God does reveal Himself

as truly desiring the salvation of all, although for His own wise and holy reasons He does not decree to bestow salvation upon all. Others have been reluctant to use the word "desire"; they say that God *commands* all men to come, but they question whether He in any way *wills* or *desires* that all should come.

#### The Committee Report

The committee report says plainly, "The full and free offer of the gospel is a grace bestowed upon all. Such grace is necessarily a manifestation of love or loving kindness in the heart of God . . . The grace offered is nothing less than salvation in its richness and fulness. The love or loving kindness that lies back of that offer is . . . the will to that salvation".

And does God in some sense *will* the salvation of those whose salvation He does not *decree*? This is the very truth revealed to us, for example, in Matthew 23:37, in our Lord's lament over Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" The report says that we have here "the most emphatic declaration on the part of Christ of His having yearned for the conversion and salvation of the people of Jeru-

salem". Moreover His will to bless them is set in contrast with their will: "I have willed—ye have not willed". The will of Christ is opposed to that which actually occurred, and He "therefore willed (or wished) the occurrence of that which God had not secretly or decretively willed".

Ezekiel 33:11, according to the report of the committee, does not reflect upon the hidden will of God's decree, but upon His will as made known to us in the gospel: "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no delight (or pleasure) in the death of the wicked, but rather in his turning from his way and that he live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, and why will ye die, O house of Israel?" It is an oath-supported declaration of God's will toward sinners, that He takes pleasure in or desires their universal repentance and life. The Committee report decides after a full discussion, that the same expression of God's benevolence and lovingkindness toward mankind as a whole, both elect and reprobate, is also taught in II Peter 3:9—"The Lord . . . is longsuffering on your account, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance".

### The Minority Report

The minority report, though brief, takes up many points, and it does not seem needful to consider them all here. But two of the positions adopted call for serious attention: the view that "God has not a will that can be frustrated as well as one that cannot be", and the view that, "the gospel offer . . . is conditional or hypothetical".

The first assertion appears to do violence to the fact that there is a will in God which is grievously rejected by sinners. This is His revealed or preceptive will. And surely it is with this rather than His secret or decretive will that we are dealing in the doctrine of God's universal offer of the gospel. The surprising failure to take note of this fact apparently accounts for a number of errors in the minority report. It condemns the idea that God has what it calls "frustrable desires", as though God's desires to save all were decretive. Samuel Rutherford's admirable polemic, against the Arminian notion that it is God's "intention or decree" to save all, is quoted; but such "intention" respects God's decretive will, not His revealed will. That God desires the salvation of the *reprobate*

is said to be "not . . . preceded by the language of Reformed theologians"; but Rutherford and Turretin, to mention only two, use this language when dealing with God's preceptive or revealed will. The *Complaint* is alleged to say that "there is a logical conflict between the gospel and reprobation", and to "assert or suggest that the Lord's will is irrational" to us, but the *Complaint* does not take these positions and again, a failure in the minority report to discern between God's decretive will and His revealed seems to account for such a misunderstanding.

### MINORITY REPORT

#### The Free Offer of the Gospel

On the free offer of the gospel, the undersigned find themselves unable to concur with the report of the committee for the following two reasons:

1. It is not clear that the exegesis and the conclusions drawn have been conclusively substantiated.
2. The standpoint of the report goes beyond the expressions adopted by the Reformed Churches in the past, and if it should become the viewpoint of our church, might result in the erection of the barriers between our church and certain other Calvinistic groups.

What has been the real point in dispute in connection with the free offer of the gospel? It is not the fact that "God freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation through Jesus Christ" (Conf. of Faith, Chapt. on God's Covenant with Man). It is not the gospel offer as God's revealed Word that is in dispute, but the element within the Divine will that prompts and grounds the offer. Nor is it even in dispute that God desires the salvation of sinners and proclaims to sinners, viewed simply as such, his desire for their salvation. The point or rather points in dispute appear to be the following:

1. Whether the term "desire" is employed after the manner of man or whether it is to be understood literally as implying an emotion in God.
2. Whether God desires the repentance and salvation of the reprobate sinner *qua* reprobate or whether God's desire refers to the connection between the repentance and the salvation of sinners, *qua* sinners.
3. Whether God's desires are to be viewed by us as standing unreconciled

And yet the committee report makes the distinction plain in numerous places. In the exegesis of Isaiah 45:22, for example, the committee report says that it is surely God's "pleasure that all repent and be saved. Obviously, however, it is not his decretive will that all repent and be saved. While, on the one hand, he has not decretively willed that all be saved, yet he declares unequivocally that it is his will, and, impliedly, his pleasure that all turn and be saved. We are again faced with the mystery and adorable richness of the divine will. It might seem to us

with his decrees.

(1) This discussion of emotion is oriented not to the committee's report (which refrains from assertions concerning desire as emotion), but to the passage in the *Complaint* (p. 13, col. 2). That the term desire is employed after the manner of men and is not to be understood literally as implying an emotion in God may appear in view of the following Scriptural principles:

(a) There is frequent employment of anthropopathic language in Scripture, in which grief, anger, jealousy, curiosity, and repentance are ascribed to Deity. Such Scripture passages teach that God acts in a manner which we are taught to view as corresponding to the manner of action of human beings.

(b) When God's free offer of salvation to sinners is understood in these terms, while an amazing and even inscrutable diversity within the Divine will is brought to light, it cannot be said that there is a logical conflict between the gospel and reprobation (*Complaint*, p. 13, col. 3), or that the two should be permitted to stand unreconciled alongside each other. It is not in accord with Reformed theology to assert or suggest that the Lord's will is irrational, even to the apprehension of the regenerate man. Rutherford argues against the Arminians that their view of the desires of God "maketh the Lord's desires irrational, unwise, and frustraneous" (p. 512). The denial of an unreconciled contradiction for our minds between God's desires and decrees is not to be identified with the denial of mystery in the will and ways of God or with the adoption of rationalism.

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FLOYD E. HAMILTON

that the one rules out the other. But it is not so. There is a multiformity to the divine will that is consonant with the fullness and richness of his divine character, and it is no wonder that we are constrained to bow in humble yet exultant amazement before his ineffable greatness and unsearchable judgments. To deny the reality of the divine pleasure directed to the repentance and salvation of all is to fail to accept the witness borne by such a text as this to the manifoldness of God's will and the riches of his grace".

### Is God's Free Offer Conditional?

At the beginning of the minority report it is asserted that "God desires the salvation of sinners", but later this

expression is interpreted to mean that "God desires that if any sinner repent he be saved . . . The gospel offer, in other words, is conditional or hypothetical and as such it is universal".

Here a serious confusion is obvious. To be sure there is a conditional element in the external call of the gospel: the *promise* of salvation is granted only on condition that the sinner repent and believe. God says, If you repent, I promise salvation. The promise on God's part, and the enjoyment of salvation on the sinner's part, do not hold good and do not go into effect without the conditions of repentance and faith. But is God's *command* conditional? No, it holds good as a command regardless of the sinner's obedience. The

same is true with God's offer; it is unilateral, its validity to sinful man does not depend upon reciprocal action on man's part. God does not say, *If* you are in the position of accepting it, then I am in the position of offering you salvation. He says, I offer you this salvation: accept it. He says, Come to the waters, Take of the waters, look unto me and be saved.

The topic in view moreover is not just the offer, but the *free* offer, and the minority report in its title and at other places uses the word "the free offer". To describe God's offer as "free" is to follow the language of the Westminster Standards: "God freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ" (Confession, VII, 3) and "he freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him" (Larger Catechism, Q. 32). The meaning of the word "free" as ascribed to God is given in the Confession II, 1, where in a list of God's perfections He is said to be "most free", and the Scripture proof is Psalm 115:3, "But our God is in the heavens, He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased". God is independent of man. His gospel offer, as "free", does not depend upon man and is not conditioned upon man's acceptance. It is unilateral and unconditional. He makes the offer to all men in their sins before they think of accepting it. To describe His *free* offer as *conditional* or *hypothetical*, as does the minority report, is a contradiction in terms.

It is also a grave impoverishment of the gospel proclamation. The very fact that the divine offer is free and unconditional reveals that salvation must be entirely by God's power and by God's initiative. His free offer does not bestow salvation and does not promise efficacious grace. But it is a valid universal offer. And as free that offer is itself a lovingkindness upon all; and it opens our eyes to God's desire, so plainly declared in His word, that all should be saved.

## II THE EFFECT OF REGENERATION UPON THE INTELLECT

God is pleased effectually to call His elect, says the Westminster Confession, out of their state of sin and death to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ, "enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things

### COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS The Free Offer of the Gospel

(1) We have found that the grace of God bestowed in His ordinary providence expresses the love of God, and that this love of God is the source of the gifts bestowed upon and enjoyed by the ungodly as well as the godly. We should expect that herein is disclosed to us a principle that applies to all manifestations of divine grace, namely, that the grace bestowed expresses the lovingkindness in the heart of God and that the gifts bestowed are in their respective variety tokens of a correspondent richness or manifoldness in the divine lovingkindness of which they are the expression.

(2) We have found that God Himself expresses an ardent desire for the fulfilment of certain things which He has not decreed in His inscrutable counsel to come to pass. This means that there is a will to the realization of what He has not decreetively willed, a pleasure toward that which He has not been pleased to decree. This is indeed mysterious and why He has not brought to pass, in the exercise of His omnipotent power and grace, what is His ardent pleasure lies hid in the sovereign counsel of His will. We should not entertain, however, any prejudice against the notion that God desires or has pleasure in the accomplishment of what He does not decreetively will.

(3) Our Lord Himself in the exercise of His messianic prerogative provides us with an example of the foregoing as it applies to the matter of salvation. He says expressly that He

willed the bestowal of His saving and protecting grace upon those whom neither the Father nor He decreed thus to save and protect.

(4) We found that God reveals Himself as not taking pleasure in or desiring the death of those who die but rather as taking pleasure in or desiring the repentance and life of the wicked. This will of God to repentance and salvation is universalized and reveals to us, therefore, that there is in God a benevolent lovingkindness toward the repentance and salvation of even those whom He has not decreed to save. This pleasure, will, desire is expressed in the universal call to repentance.

(5) We must conclude, therefore, that our provisional inference on the basis of Matt. 5:44-48 is borne out by the other passages. The full and free offer of the gospel is a grace bestowed upon all. Such grace is necessarily a manifestation of love or lovingkindness in the heart of God. And this lovingkindness is revealed to be of a character or kind that is correspondent with the grace bestowed. The grace offered is nothing less than salvation in its richness and fulness. The love or lovingkindness that lies back of that offer is not anything less; it is the will to that salvation. In other words, it is Christ in all the glory of His person and in all the perfection of His finished work whom God offers in the gospel. The loving and benevolent will that is the source of that offer and that grounds its veracity and reality is the will to the possession of Christ and the enjoyment of the salvation that resides in Him.

of God . . ." And yet a view has been held in our church to the effect that "both the regenerate and the unregenerate can with the same ease understand the proposition, Christ died for sinners. Regeneration . . . is not a change in the understanding of these words". This view has also been put in the form, that it is possible in exceptional cases for an unregenerate person "to have the same intellectual understanding of the meaning of a proposition of the gospel that a regenerated person has".

### The Committee Report

In the words of the committee report, the question to be decided is "whether there is such a subjective change necessarily wrought by sin, and such a subjective change necessarily wrought by regeneration, that the respective states of knowledge of an unregenerate and a regenerate man, with reference to the same truth, *must differ*". The expression, "state of knowledge", means the subjective aspect in knowledge, or "understanding"; rather than the objective aspect of "the truth known", which is the same for all men.

The conclusion reached by the committee is that while the Bible says that an unregenerate person may know God, yet it also teaches that his state of knowledge is "radically deficient", and that to suppose that his state of knowledge is immune from the defilement of sin would be "a denial of the totality of his depravity". On the other hand, regeneration brings new illumination and insight into a person's state of knowledge about the gospel, and to suppose that there is any respect in which his state of knowledge is not changed by regeneration would be to deny the pervasiveness of regeneration. A regenerate and an unregenerate person therefore "can never be in the same state of knowledge . . . with reference to any truth of the gospel".

### Scriptural Evidence

This conclusion is based on a study of many passages of the Bible, a few of which may now be mentioned.

*I Cor. 2:14* — "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged". Unbelievers walk "in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their under-

standing" (Eph. 4:17-18). On the other hand "we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 5:20). The new man is "renewed unto knowledge" (Colossians 3:10) and the eyes of his heart are enlightened (Eph. 1:18).

*II Cor. 4:3-4, 6* tells us very plainly, "And if our gospel be hid, it is hid to those that are lost, in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them . . . For it is the God who said, Let light shine out of darkness, who has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ". The gospel has been preached to the lost and they are "unbelieving" toward it, Paul says in the context. Their minds have been rendered blind to its light and glory. "Thus the brightest colors appear only as various shades of gray in certain forms of color blindness". But God, who once said, "Let there be light" and dispelled the darkness, has shined also in the innermost hearts of His people to abolish the blindness there and to give us the light of the knowledge of Himself in the face of His Son.

The committee report in other words is opposed to the idea, which has been such a point of controversy, that the regenerate and the unregenerate may have "exactly the same" understanding or knowledge of the gospel. The report holds that while both the believer and the unbeliever can know the truth of the gospel, their subjective knowledge of it is radically different.

### The Minority Reports

It is a cause for deep thankfulness that the minority reports have avoided the position that the regenerate and the unregenerate may have the same understanding of the gospel. There are two minority reports on the effect of regeneration, which may be called "the longer" and "the shorter". The longer report puts continuous emphasis on "experiential knowledge", which belongs only to the regenerate man; but this "experiential knowledge", it is acknowledged, must include basic intellectual elements, since it is said of the unregenerate man that "the blind-

ness of his soul . . . prevents even a proper intellectual apprehension (thinking) and cognition (knowing) of gospel truth". In other words, with respect to all thinking and all knowing of gospel truth, there is a subjective intellectual difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate. In maintaining this difference the minority reports are in agreement with the committee report.

### A New Development

The minority reports however also add something which is quite new to the debate as it has been publicly carried on in our church. Far from holding that the regenerate and the unregenerate may have *the same* understanding of the gospel, they have swung over to the opposite pole: that is, that the unregenerate man cannot know gospel truth at all. The longer minority report declares that while the unregenerate man may "think" the gospel he cannot experientially "know" it. The shorter report goes so far as to say that "the intellectual powers of the unregenerate" are "entirely incapable of admitting entrance to a single ray of gospel truth".

To explain the issue here it must be pointed out that the Bible confronts us with some passages which say that the unregenerate do know God, and with other passages which say that they cannot know God. The relation between these two groups of passages is understood in one way by the minority reports and in another way by the committee report.

The minority reports would seem to hold that the case is determined by those passages which *deny* knowledge to the unregenerate. The lost cannot *know* the gospel in any sense of the word. Therefore the other passages, which say that the unregenerate do know, must be taken to refer not to "knowing" at all but to something else which may be called "thinking".

The committee report, however, takes the position that, just because the Bible does ascribe knowledge to the unregenerate, we must not say that *all* knowledge of every sort is denied to them. The passages saying that they "cannot know" are understood, on exegetical grounds, as teaching that they cannot have that kind of knowledge which the regenerate have. They can only have a radically inferior type of knowledge. This interpretation is en-



forced by passages which speak of the lost as blind to the riches of glory, the greatness of power and the moral excellence of the gospel. Their knowledge of the gospel is without discernment of these things and therefore defective. So there are two kinds of knowledge: the enlightened knowledge of the spiritual man and the darkened knowledge of the natural man, and the latter is so far different from the former that in comparison it may be called ignorance. Or as the committee report says, the natural man's knowledge of God must be characterized by his "subjective condition as natural. His subjective knowledge then is of a distinct kind; it is natural rather than spiritual . . . The spiritual man, on the other hand, has a subjective knowledge of God which is of as distinct a kind as is his own condition as spiritual; it is spiritual knowledge".

The minority reports' denial of all "knowledge" of the gospel to the unregenerate is founded upon a distinction between "thinking" and "knowing", which may have far-reaching implications. This distinction, in turn, does not profess to be founded upon Scripture but seems to be derived from philosophy. The Bible does not use two different words to describe the intellectual activity of the regenerate and the unregenerate with reference to the gospel. It does not say that the one knows and that the other only thinks. Instead it uses the same Greek word for both. It says that the regenerate man "knows" and it says that the unregenerate man "knows".

"In Romans 1:21 knowledge of God" and in Romans 1:32 "knowledge of the righteous judgment of God is predicated of unrighteous men. In Romans 2:18 it is very probable that the 'Jew' who knows . . . the will of God is also contemplated as an unbeliever." To these observations of the committee report it may be added that II Peter 2:20 attributes to those who fall away and who therefore were never born again, not ordinary knowledge (*gnosis*) but the larger and more thorough knowledge (*epignosis*), and this thorough knowledge on the part of the unregenerate is "the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"! In the light of these passages it is not proper to deny *all* knowledge of God or of Christ to the unregenerate. We may say, however, that their knowledge

is only such as unregenerate people may have; it is without spiritual discernment of the *glory* of God.

### Conclusion

Those convictions which have been set forth among us during the past five

years have caused us to search our hearts and have been the occasion, as in all doctrinal controversies, for much disturbance and considerable misunderstanding. And yet shall we say that the Divine Head of the Church has not meant it for our good?

### COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS Regeneration and the Intellect

1. All unregenerate persons are defiled, corrupt, vain, ignorant, darkened, blinded, and without living impulse toward God, in their intellectual powers and activities. The indictment pronounced by Scripture upon the understanding of the natural man admits of no exceptions within the knowing subject. The natural man's state of knowledge therefore, cannot be regarded as immune from the vanity, ignorance, darkness, even blindness with which his intellectual powers and activities are characterized. To regard his state of knowledge as thus immune would be a denial of the totality of his depravity.

2. The state of the intellectual powers of unregenerate persons does not prevent them from thinking and knowing, from knowing the truths of special revelation, or from being in a subjective state of knowledge respecting those truths. The objective truths known by them are in no way altered by their sin. Their subjective state of knowledge respecting those truths, however, is necessarily and radically affected by sin, since it is an exercise of their own corrupt and darkened intellectual powers.

3. All unregenerate persons are characterized by an intellectual inability to know the light, the glory, the moral beauty and excellence, and the spirituality of the gospel. They are mentally blinded to these things, and are prevented from seeing them by a veil upon their heart. Consequently, their state of knowledge respecting the gospel is radically deficient; they know God's special revelation apart from its light, glory, moral beauty and excellence, and spirituality. As "natural", they lack the affinity for such spiritual excellences, and have no noetic capacity for them.

4. Special revelation alone, without the removal of their mental blindness to the glory and spirituality of the gospel, cannot therefore remove the deficiency in their state of knowledge.

5. Regeneration is necessary if a person is to see the kingdom of God. By regeneration the subjective darkness and blindness with reference to the things of the Spirit of God which is characteristic of the natural man is replaced by new subjective light and insight. Regeneration immediately affects and quickens man's intellect and so into his state of knowledge respecting the truths of the gospel there is injected a new capacity of spiritual vision which does not in any way change the truths concerned but does change, in a very radical way that eludes our detection or analysis, the insight which a man has into the most elementary and central truths of the gospel. There is new light in the most basic movements of his intellectual activity concerning these truths. To suppose that there is any respect in which his state of knowledge concerning those truths is not changed by regeneration would be to deny the pervasiveness and inclusiveness of the regenerative act.

6. The implantation by the Holy Spirit of a new spiritual light brings the mind into a new spiritual frame and capacity, and into affinity with the truths of the Spirit of God, so that the glory and spirituality of those truths are seen.

7. Due to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit the regenerate man is in a "spiritual" state of knowledge with reference to any truth of the gospel, while the unregenerate man's state of knowledge with reference to that truth is not "spiritual" but natural. The former sees the glory and the spirituality of that truth; the latter cannot, and is therefore described in Scripture as being in a state of darkness and blindness. The regenerate and the unregenerate man can never be in the same state of knowledge with reference to that truth; their respective states of knowledge are as distinct as their respective spiritual conditions. Therefore their respective states of knowledge with reference to the same truth must and do differ.

The committee on doctrine has now presented to the church a number of studies, which commend themselves for earnest evaluation in the light of Scripture. In the case of the doctrine of the effect of regeneration and of the free offer of the gospel, it is true that differences of opinion are still brought to our attention. And we do not disguise our judgment that, where the reports differ, the truth, and consequently sound doctrinal progress, is to be found with the positions taken in the reports of the committee. But the substantial progress which has been made gives hope that the differences that remain also may be resolved. We have been brought to a closer study of God's inerrant Word, and we may give thanks that the God of truth, ever mindful of His covenant, has led us into a greater measure of agreement on the basis of that firm foundation which He has provided for our heed and our profitable instruction.

#### A LETTER

To the Ministers and Sessions of  
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church  
Dear Brethren:

The Committee to study certain doctrines has sent out its report to the commissioners to the Fifteenth General Assembly. Toward the end of the section concerning the incomprehensibility of God the committee issues a call for certain unequivocal declarations by those who signed the *Complaint* and by those who signed the *Answer*, declarations which, in the words of the committee's report, will "go a long way to the vindication of the truth, the removal of misunderstanding, and the healing of breaches that have tended to disrupt the unity and disturb the peace of our denomination".

Because it is our earnest desire to bring to resolution the doctrinal differences in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church for the sake of the purity, unity and peace of the Church, we, who were signers of the *Complaint*, now make the following declaration:

Since certain expressions used in the *Complaint* have been understood as skeptical in character and since the *Complaint* cannot disavow all responsibility for producing such misunderstanding of its intent, we gladly affirm that, when the objects of knowledge

are contemplated, human knowledge does have contact with the objects of divine knowledge within the compass of the divine revelation, and that within that sphere of revelation the objects of knowledge as such are the same for God and for man.

Moreover it may not be superfluous in this connection to call attention to an avowal which was made for the complainants at the time when the *Complaint* was originally brought before the General Assembly, an avowal which we now repeat, and which appears on page 6 of the *Minutes of the Twelfth General Assembly*:

"Although various persons have stated that there are elements in the complaint which are personally objectionable, the complainants did not have and do not now have, any intention of including any such elements in the complaint. On the contrary, they deeply regret that any have chosen to make such statements, for they serve only to confuse the momentous issues which are before the Church. The complainants trust, therefore, that the members of the Assembly will accept their avowal, made in good faith, that no elements of this sort are intended to be expressed in the complaint."

Accordingly, while our interest in and concern for the doctrinal issues remain, we deeply regret that our language was not pervasively so precise and guarded as to preclude misunderstandings concerning our fundamental positions and our personal motives.

Respectfully submitted,

John W. Betzold, Eugene Bradford,  
R. B. Kuiper, Arthur W. Kuschke, Jr.,  
LeRoy B. Oliver, Leslie W. Sloat,  
N. B. Stonehouse, Murray Forst  
Thompson, Paul Woolley, Cornelius  
Van Til, Edward J. Young

#### Ancient Bible Manuscript

THE earliest known manuscript of the entire book of Isaiah has been discovered in Palestine. This announcement was made by Professor Millar Burrows of Yale University, Director of the American School of Oriental Research at Jerusalem.

Three other unpublished ancient Hebrew manuscripts have also been brought to light by scholars there.

The Isaiah manuscript was found in

a well-preserved scroll of parchment. Its script shows a marked similarity to that of the Nash Papyrus, believed by many scholars to be the oldest known copy of any part of the Hebrew Bible. It is dated from the first century, B.C. Other complete texts of Isaiah are known to exist only as recently as the 9th century A.D.

All of these ancient scrolls have been preserved in the library of the Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. Mark in Jerusalem. Metropolitan Samuel and Father Sowmy of the Monastery submitted them to the American School for study and identification. The second scroll is part of a commentary on the book of Habakkuk, and the third seems to be a manual of discipline of some sect or monastic order. A fourth manuscript is still unidentified.

The manuscripts have all been photographed, and will be published in due course by the American School.

#### Philadelphia Presbytery

THE Presbytery of Philadelphia of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church met at the Eastlake Church in Wilmington, Delaware, on Monday, March 15th. Among other items of business, Mr. Henry Tavares, a Senior at Westminster Seminary, was examined and approved for licensure. A call from the Community Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Center Square, Pa. was found in order and placed in Mr. Tavares' hand. A committee of Presbytery which has been considering amendments to the Form of Government designed to clarify its requirements in matters of licensure and ordination, submitted a report containing a series of proposed amendments. These will be dealt with by the Presbytery at its next meeting, when decision as to whether to submit them to the Assembly or not will be made. The next meeting of the Presbytery was set for May 3rd, two weeks ahead of its usual time, to avoid a conflict with the Assembly meetings.

#### TEACHER WANTED

Oostburg Christian School is in need of a principal-teacher for 7-8 grades inclusive, beginning September, 1948. Please correspond with Harley Hui-brechtse, Sec., Box 74, Oostburg, Wisconsin.

## Churchill

(Continued from page 118)

with God's people to remember their uniqueness. He wanted them to know that God's greatest acts and the things of universal significance take place nowhere but in the church. He wanted them to remember through the years ahead that though they were the least among the nations of the world, yet there was nothing small or petty in the program that was being enacted through them. We may be a small body in the world but we can stand for something big. Herein lies the secret of success.

But how would Moses speak to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church? I think he could speak in the same way. The O. P. C. was founded on nothing less than the whole counsel of God. It was not a certain view on baptism, nor one interpretation of prophecy, nor some petty quarrel; in fact it is impossible to find anything small that called our church into existence. What could be more comprehensive than the truths of a Reformed Confession? What could be more lofty than the God-honoring principles which shaped our decision.

What is freedom? How much blood has been shed over the question. How the world needs the answer at this hour. Reformed Confessions, speaking from the Scriptures, tell us that freedom is obedience to the right authority, that all authority is subject to the authority of God's Word. This is the Magna Charta of human freedom, and when this principle is violated the lamps of truth are extinguished. It would be hard indeed to find a greater or more important truth on which to stand, and here our church stood to its own hurt. "We should obey God rather than men"; how often these holy words spurred us on, for there is a truth here bigger than all the world. It is startling to note that this sacred principle was violated not in some communistic or godless state, but in the highest courts of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., a church of Jesus Christ.

The whole counsel of God, the main stream of historic, supernatural Christianity, what a heritage it is to be in the line of Orthodoxy. A sincere attempt to bring the Reformation to the church and world of our day, to build

a church according to the blue print of God's Word, to leave nothing out and to add nothing unto it, such was this twentieth century venture. This was no insignificant event for if we have a proper historic perspective, we will learn that these truths and principles constitute the coiled main spring of all that is great and good in Western culture. Such a movement was no mediating position. It was set up in the teeth of powerful and popular trends not only in religion but the whole basic structure of society in our nation, yes, and in the world.

Such being the case, the road marked out for us should be clear to all. There will be many defects in our advance. It will be a hard up-hill fight all the way. Make no mistake about it, the spirit of this age has seeped into the church and into the Christian mind generally. As did the prophets of old, so we also may have to fight many Trojan Horse attacks. The words of Moses should encourage us. How great are the truths; how unique is the position God has given us. He has graciously made us a part of the tremendous history of the hosts of the Lord. Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod.

In the Third Assembly we were attacked, this time behind our own lines. We could so easily have been taken from the main stream of historic Christianity, but the Lord of the Church overruled. And what shall we say of the 1947 Assembly? I think we can say once again that God graciously overruled in such a way that largeness and true catholicity prevailed. At least we can say that the doctrinal questions which came before us at that time were not small or petty. Surely all will agree that no greater questions could be debated relative to the expansion of Christ's Kingdom. God has not dealt with us after our sins nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, so that we stand by grace. It is this same dead lift of grace which has kept us in a great and noble succession.

"Ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?"

"Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that the Lord is God, there is none else beside Him.

"Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes . . ."

## Discernment

(Continued from page 116)

Jews we are not impressed with the beauty of the Mass. We are afraid of a totalitarian church with its claim of infallibility. We are shocked by her Mariolatry and worship of saints. We are disgusted by her formalism and the iniquity it breeds.

But this does not mean that we must oppose everything Rome does. We are on her side in the struggle against secularism. We can applaud when she cries out against the evils of divorce. We recognize that her Legion of Decency has checked the lewdness of Hollywood. In the recent Italian elections we favor her Christian Democrats over the atheistic Communists. It seems to your editor that some Protestants are so prejudiced against Rome that they lose their sense of proportion. Just because she has parochial schools we do not need to go "all out" for the little red school house. The fact that she wants her school pupils transported in public school buses does not prove that this is a violation of the Bill of Rights. Awareness of the political ambitions of Rome should not blind us to the more immediate peril of Communism. Again, we are totally opposed to the Federal Council of Churches because many of its leaders deny the fundamentals of the Christian faith. We regard their claim to speak for American Protestantism as a great peril and rejoice in the unremitting warfare waged against them by the American Council of Christian Churches. But we can agree with Morrison, Oxnam et. al. in their fight against political Roman Catholicism. Granting that Federal Council representatives have attempted to commit the Church to socialistic political propaganda we regard it as lack of discernment for the American Council to carry on counter political propaganda in favor of capitalism.

We rejoice in the battle that our friends in the *Southern Presbyterian Journal* are carrying on against union of the Southern Church with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. We count ourselves on their side in the great battle against modernism and unbelief. But we deeply regret their attempt on scriptural grounds to justify the policy of racial discrimination carried on in the South. We would regard it as lamentable if union with the Northern

Church was voted down on the basis of what to this editor were reactionary politics and sociology.

True Christian discernment is not easy and true Christians will not always agree in their evaluation of the movements of our day but if we would be Biblical the attempt must be made. Sometimes we must criticize; at other times approve. And always we must judge in the light of the Word of God which is the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

J. P. C.

## Editorial

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chargeable in a church court then a protest and an attempt to remove those responsible from office is all that can be done.

The second possibility is to charge the ones responsible with sin before the proper church judicatory—the session, the presbytery, or the general assembly. If the offended one judge that a sin which is chargeable has been committed he must do this if his efforts have failed to bring the offending ones to repentance. This is a serious thing to do and should be done only if he judge the offense to be serious and a threat to an individual soul or to the church. Yet it should not be shunned if it is necessary, and the easy way of simply withdrawing from fellowship is not in any sense a proper substitute for such action.

One's action upon losing a case will have to be determined by the circumstances. The one who charges the offense may be convinced that there was actually no offense—he may agree with the verdict of the court. Or he may still think that there has been an offense, but that it is not as serious as he first thought. Or he may judge that the church has approved grievous sin, in which case he must try to have the verdict reversed. Failing in this he may then judge that the church court was not really a court of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that, consequently, the church is apostate. Only in the latter event will he be justified in withdrawing. Then he not only *may* withdraw, but he *must* withdraw.

All Protestantism needs a new emphasis upon the sacredness of the vows of ministers and church members. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church prides itself upon being a Bible-believing

## Daily Bible Readings

### Week of May 17

Monday ..... *Romans 8:1-11*  
 Tuesday ..... *Romans 8:12-27*  
 Wednesday ..... *Romans 8:28-39*  
 Thursday ..... *Galatians 5:1-15*  
 Friday ..... *Galatians 5:16-26*  
 Saturday ..... *John 16:1-12*  
 Sunday ..... *John 16:13-28*

### Week of May 24

Monday ..... *II Chronicles 16:1-10*  
 Tuesday ..... *Psalms 34:1-10*  
 Wednesday ..... *Psalms 34:11-22*  
 Thursday ..... *Psalms 41*  
 Friday ..... *Psalms 91*  
 Saturday ..... *Acts 9:10-25*  
 Sunday ..... *Acts 12:5-19*

church. May the ministers and members show that by following biblical procedure even when it seems difficult, rather than simply withdrawing when problems arise and the going seems hard. If we shall honor the church as the church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, we shall value our membership in it and withdraw from it only in the event that we are compelled to judge it, in accordance with the Word of God, to have ceased to be a true church of Christ. May God forbid that such a time will ever come in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church!

R. S. M.

## Pan-Presbyterian Alliance

THE western section of the Pan-Presbyterian Alliance met recently at Buck Hill Falls, Pa., for a three day session. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the work of the Alliance and to make plans for the first meeting of the full Alliance, scheduled for Geneva next August. The Pan-Presbyterian Alliance represents more than 40 million members of churches throughout the world holding or professing to hold the Presbyterian system. The Western section comprises seven Presbyterian and Reformed church bodies in the United States and Canada.

Officers elected at the meeting of the western section were: Dr. Edgar F. Romig of West End Collegiate Reformed Church, New York, Chairman; Principal F. Scott McKenzie of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, Vice-Chairman; The Rev. Roy E. Grace of Beverly Hills United Presbyterian

Church, Upper Darby, Pa., Recording Secretary; and Robert C. Liggett of Valley Forge, Pa., Treasurer. Dr. William B. Pugh, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A., is General Secretary. The prominent place in this movement occupied by the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. makes it plain that concerns other than those of orthodox presbyterianism dominate the organization.

One of the speakers at the meeting was the Rev. Dr. Bela Vasady, president of the Reformed Theological Seminary at Debrecen, Hungary. Dr. Vasady declared that Hungary is "the only country in the world where a real religious revival is taking place," despite the fact that political, ideological, economic and social tensions have created a situation almost beyond endurance, and the church must make new decisions continually. Dr. Vasady is at present visiting professor at Princeton Theological Seminary.

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