

GUARDIAN

Psalm 124

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
now may Israel say;

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
when men rose up against us:

Then they had swallowed us up quick,
when their wrath was kindled against us:

Then the waters had overwhelmed us,
the stream had gone over our soul:

Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us
as a prey to their teeth.

Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare
of the fowlers: the snare is broken,
and we are escaped.

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

A Noble Confession

EDWARD WYBENGA

Peter Confesses Christ

Luke 9:18-27

Pushing northward from Bethsaida Jesus and his disciples came to Caesarea Philippi at the foot of Mount Hermon. The region round about afforded an impressive view of the beauty of God's handiwork in nature. Fertile valleys, rolling hills, mountain peaks, wild flowers, fields of wheat, groves of fruit trees — it was a lovely sight to behold.

Into this somewhat secluded region, in Gentile country, and away from Galilee and Judea, Jesus and his disciples retreated. Jesus had reached a kind of turning point in his life. The pinnacle of his popularity had been passed. He was now descending on the way that would take him to Jerusalem and the cross. Therefore Jesus considered this a fit time and place to confront his disciples with an urgent question, and to disclose to them some of the dark experiences that lay ahead on his path.

After earnest prayer — for it was ever Jesus' manner to hold converse with God, and to pray for his disciples — Jesus confronted them with the question: "Who do the multitudes say that I am?" — the people who had seen his works and heard his words. The disciples answered, "Some think you are John the Baptist, or Elijah, or one of the Old Testament prophets come back to life again." Thus it is evident that the people saw in Jesus something more than an ordinary man, yet they did not see in him the Messiah predicted in the Old Testament Scriptures.

Then Jesus directed a personal question to the disciples themselves: "But who say ye that I am?" It was important that they should face this decisive question. They must be clear in their own minds concerning the person of Christ. Upon this would depend their salvation. If they had a

correct view of Christ all would be well. If their views were erroneous all would be lost. "Who say ye that I am?" he asked.

Peter, being more self-assertive than the rest, spoke the mind of all the disciples when he answered: "The Christ of God," or as given more fully by Matthew: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (16:16).

That was a noble confession. It contained the very foundation of the Christian faith and religion. No wonder Jesus replied, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church" — not merely upon the man, Peter, to be sure, but upon Peter in his representative capacity as confessing the Messiahship of Christ. This is the rock-foundation upon which Jesus would build his church — the confession of Peter.

"Thou art the Christ" — that is, the anointed One of God, the One predicted by the Old Testament prophets to be the Savior. "Thou art the Son of the living God" — an expression equivalent to asserting the deity of Christ. Jesus was more than Messiah; he was very God, having the life-giving power of God inherent in himself.

This is the true confession of the true church of all time: that Jesus is the Christ, the predicted Messiah who would come as the "Lamb of God" and who would "give his life a ransom for many"; and further, that Jesus is truly God who appeared in human flesh.

Upon this solid foundation the church (i.e. the whole body of believers) is built; and upon this foundation the church stands. Therefore Jesus adds these words of assurance, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). The gates to a city were symbols of strength. So the gates of hades are mighty and strong. No one who has once entered

through these gates into the realm of the dead is able to break through them to enter again into the realm of the living. Only Christ can do that. Thus he has proven himself to be stronger than the strongest. In him and through him the power of the church exceeds the power of death, for Christ is the life of the church and he is the victor over death!

After Peter, as spokesman for the others, confessed Christ as the true Messiah, the time had now come when the disciples should be told what the Messiah must do to redeem his people. He must suffer and die and rise again. This was more than the disciples were ready to receive. They could not yet see that messiahship and suffering must go together. They thought it should be associated with earthly glory and political kingship. Therefore Peter again spoke up for the rest, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee" (Matt. 16:22).

Unconsciously Peter's well-meant words were words induced by Satanic lure to draw Jesus away from the cross, thus to defeat the whole redemptive plan. Jesus saw the danger. He was aware of the tempter's sly approach through the seemingly kind words of Peter. In a flash Jesus turned upon him and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Matt. 16:23).

The word Satan means adversary or opponent. Peter was acting the part of an opponent seeking to frustrate Jesus in carrying out his work as Savior. Therefore Peter had to be corrected. Far from avoiding the cross, Jesus would face it and conquer through it. At the same time he would remind his disciples and us that there is also a cross for us. Self-denial is required for true discipleship. We must surrender our will, our affections, our ambitions to God. The cross is a symbol of self-denial, suffering and shame — but also of death. Thus a disciple must be ready to give up all in the service of Christ.

But suppose a person is not willing to do that, what then? Jesus tells us in vv. 24 and 25. Unless we are willing to sacrifice the lower life for the higher, we shall lose both in the end.

Baptism in the New Testament

ALBERT G. EDWARDS

Many earnest Christians have been captivated by voluble sermons asserting that it is wrong to baptize infants. And the consistent thrust of such messages is that baptism is never spoken of in the New Testament as belonging to infants.

Now this is a matter of concern to us, and should be to every Christian. We want to do what is right according to the clear teaching of Scripture. We should never try to conform the Bible to our practices. We should rather do all we can to conform our practices to the Bible. In administering baptism to an infant, are we sinning or are we being obedient to the Word of God? Does the New Testament require that infant children of Christian parents be baptized? Or does it say nothing about such baptism, as many would have us believe?

Judge for yourself as we consider together Acts 2:38, 39 and its context. This is a very significant passage. It is the first instance in the New Testament of the administering of Christian baptism. What this passage has to say throws a great deal of light on the proper administration of baptism in the New Testament age.

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call (Acts 2:36-39).

These words were the concluding exhortations of Peter in his great sermon at Pentecost, the day on which

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the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church, thus qualifying every individual Christian to be a witness to Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8).

The point of Peter's sermon was that this outpouring of the Holy Spirit was proof-positive that Jesus, whom the Jews had crucified and who had risen again from the dead some fifty day earlier, was not an imposter, but that he was what he had indeed claimed to be, the Son of God, sent by God to save his people from their sins.

You can imagine how you would have felt if you had been one of Peter's audience, an audience composed of many who had cried out to Pilate against Jesus saying, "Crucify him, Crucify him!" — an audience which had stood around the cross mocking Jesus and saying, "He saved others, himself he cannot save."

These people were absolutely undone by Peter's message. They were "pricked in their heart," we read in v. 37, and now, for the first time, realized that in Jesus God had sent them a Savior — and they had rejected and crucified him!

Was there any hope at all left for them? Gladly would they have called to the mountains, "Fall on us and save us from the wrath to come!"

But to their utter surprise and marvelous joy, Peter spoke words of comfort and hope to them. There was hope! "Repent," he said, "and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And then, in v. 39, he gave them the reason why there was still hope, even for those who had sinned as wickedly as they had. (Notice that the verse begins with the word *for*, which indicates that what is about to be said is presented as the reason for what Peter has just fin-

ished saying.) The reason why there was still hope for repentant believers was this: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

As we look at these two verses carefully, we shall notice that they set forth the basis for baptism, and tell us to whom it applies. We shall also notice the essential harmony of this passage with the rest of Scripture, both New and Old Testaments.

"The Promise" the Reason for Baptism

What reason does Peter hold forth to these people as the basis for baptism? Notice what he says. "Repent, and be baptized . . . for the promise is unto you . . ."

Whatever "the promise" is — it makes no difference at this point in our consideration — whatever "the promise" is, it "is unto" them. That is, it still applies. It has not been withdrawn by God, even though they crucified his Son. (Amazing — the grace of God — isn't it!) The promise is still in force. Not even their terrible wickedness could force God to change his mind about holding "the promise" open still.

No matter what "the promise" was, the fact that it was still in force assured Peter's audience that there was hope for them if they were to repent and be baptized.

In other words, Peter says that the basis for repentance and baptism is that God's promise, whatever it is, still holds good. It is important to keep this point clearly in our minds. It is God's promise that is the basis for baptism as set forth in the New Testament. No matter what "the promise" was, the fact that "the promise" is still in effect is the New Testament basis for baptism.

In Acts 2:38, 39 Peter also points out that baptism is the sign and seal of "the promise" for believers in this new age. The reason baptism should

be applied to repentant Christians is that "the promise" applies to them. Baptism thus serves as a sign and seal of "the promise" for those to whom it applies.

Baptism, the Sign of "the Promise"

To sum up the teaching of this passage as we have considered it so far, we see that baptism is to be administered because "the promise" (whatever it is) is still in effect, and that baptism is the sign of "the promise" in this New Testament age.

If our understanding of this passage is correct so far, the question still faces us, "To whom is baptism to be applied?"

Notice what Peter has to say: "Repent, and be baptized . . . for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Clearly, Peter points out that baptism is to be applied to those to whom "the promise" applies. "Be baptized . . . for the promise is unto you . . ."

This is a vital point. It is necessary to see this very clearly.

Baptism is to be administered to those to whom "the promise" (whatever it is) applies.

Adults, Peter said in v. 38, enter into the enjoyment of "the promise" through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ alone as Savior. Therefore they are to be baptized because "the promise" is theirs. They are not baptized — now follow carefully — they are not baptized because of their faith or their repentance, but because now, through faith and repentance, "the promise" applies to them. Only secondarily can baptism be called a sign of faith, according to this passage. It is first of all a sign of God's promise, into which we enter through repentant faith.

Is not this exactly what Peter asserts in the passage we are considering? Can one properly take his words in any other way?

To Whom Does "the Promise" Apply?

If baptism is to be administered to those whom "the promise" applies, the question is, To whom does "the promise" apply in this New Testament age?

Notice again what Peter says in v. 39: "Repent, and be baptized . . .

for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

It applies to those who repent.

It also applies to their children.

It applies to penitent believers and to their children, whether they are Jews, or whether they are Gentiles (those who are afar off, cf. Ephesians 2:11-13).

If repentant believers should be baptized because "the promise" still holds good for them, then, in like manner, their children should receive the sign of "the promise," because, Peter says, "the promise" still holds good for them too. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children . . ."

On the basis of this clear statement we see that the New Testament requires the baptism of the children of repentant believers. "The promise" applies to them as well as to their parents. So also, then, does the sign of "the promise."

What Is "the Promise"?

Now, what promise is this that Peter refers to?

We shall need to consider other passages from the New Testament in connection with this passage to find this out. In doing so, we shall see the harmony of the teaching of Scripture on baptism.

"The promise" was one which was apparently so familiar to Peter's audience that he did not have to identify it in any other way than just to say, "the promise." There was no mistaking it. Peter had only to say "the promise," and his audience knew exactly what he meant.

"The promise" was also one that had apparently been in effect up till now. It was not a new promise, for if it had been, Peter would have had to identify it a lot more carefully than he did when he just spoke of it as "the promise." Neither was it some promise long forgotten, concerning which Peter had to refresh their minds by some words of identifying description. Peter did not identify this promise by any words of explanation. He just spoke of it simply as "the promise."

For these reasons it appears that "the promise" spoken of in v. 39 is not the same as "the promise of the Holy Ghost" mentioned in vs. 16-21, and again in v.33. That promise was one which had not been in effect until

now (it had just taken effect), and it was one concerning which they needed information. Notice in v. 33 how Peter, even after his extensive description of that promise in vs. 16-21, still refers to it not simply as "the promise," but "the promise of the Holy Ghost."

It needs to be remarked at this point that even if "the promise" were to be identified with "the promise of the Holy Ghost" it would still make no difference to the conclusions arrived at so far. Because "the promise" (whatever it is) applies to both believers and their children, so does baptism, which is set forth here as the sign of "the promise."

A Well-known Promise

"The promise" apparently was one on which Peter's audience had been depending consciously until they were made aware of their sin in rejecting their Savior. It was a promise which apparently cheered them greatly (v. 41) when they learned that it was still in force. It was a promise which Peter needed to refer to simply as "the promise," without any other identification whatever, with the full assurance of being immediately understood by his audience.

Light is thrown upon "the promise" when we remember that Peter's audience was almost completely, if not entirely, Jewish (vs. 14, 22, 26). Therefore "the promise" was one that every Jew must have known and cherished.

That the Jews did, in fact, lean heavily upon some specific promise is brought out in the words of Paul before King Agrippa, "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of *the promise* made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come" (Acts 26:6, 7).

Here we see what we have noticed also in regard to the promise mentioned by Peter. Paul speaks of a promise that was very ancient, and yet one continually in the forefront of their thinking, one on which the Jews rested very heavily. It was a promise which needed no identification at all. Paul says it is a promise made of God to the Jewish Fathers.

A Specific Promise

Paul very clearly pinpoints "the promise" in Galatians 3:29: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to *the prom-*

ise." The verse is very specific. Notice that those who belong to Christ are said to be heirs of "the promise." Did not Peter say the same thing when he said, "For the promise is unto you"? Notice also the use of the phrase "the promise" without any need of further description, just as Peter used the phrase in Acts 2. Paul says that the heirs of "the promise" are Abraham's seed. He thus points out that "the promise" was that which God made to Abraham in Genesis 17:7, which was so important that God made a covenant to keep it forever. In Genesis 17:7, God said to Abraham, "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."

It is hard to avoid noticing how similar the terms of this covenant promise are to the terms of the promise that Peter, in Acts 2, says is still in effect. In Genesis we read that the covenant is "unto thee, and to thy seed after thee," and in Acts 2 we read that the promise is "unto you, and to your children."

We thus see that the promise which Peter, in Acts 2, says still applies to repentant believers and to their children, is the promise God made to Abraham long before, the promise on which all the Jews based their hope, though many did so improperly (Cf. John 8:37-39, Matthew 3:9, Romans 9:6-8). Many trusted in the promise improperly, Paul points out in Romans 4:16, because the promise applied only to those who had "the faith of Abraham," and not to those who did not have that simple trust in the promise of God (Romans 9:6, 7). God had made a solemn covenant to keep this promise forever, and it was this promise that Peter said was still in effect. The promise was in effect for those who would repent and be baptized.

Having said all this, and though it is quite clear that the promise that is in view is the promise made by God to Abraham, the point that needs to be emphasized is still this, that no matter what the promise in view was, it was simply "the promise" that is set forth in the New Testament as being the basis for baptism. "Repent, and be baptized . . . for the promise is unto you."

In the Old Testament age (or Old Covenant age, cf. Jeremiah 31:31-34,

Hebrews 8:6-13), circumcision had been the sign of the promise. But now, in the age when God's salvation promise was no longer restricted to the Jews, but applied to both Jew and Gentile, the sign had been changed to one which could be given to every believer and not restricted to only a few, as before.

The Sign — Old and New

That the meaning of both baptism and circumcision is the same can be seen from Romans 4:11, where circumcision is called a "sign" and "a seal of the righteousness of faith," which is exactly what baptism is; and from Colossians 2:10-12, where baptized Christians are said to have been circumcised by the spiritual circumcision of Christ, that is, buried with him in baptism. How could the terms "circumcision" and "baptism" be used interchangeably in this passage if they did not have the same meaning?

When Peter, in Acts 2, said, "Repent, and be baptized . . . for the promise is unto you, and to your children," his point was that the salvation promise God covenanted to Abraham

long ago still holds good in its essential details, with the only exception being that it is no longer restricted to Jews, but now applies to both Jew and Gentile.

This may seem obvious, but it needs to be mentioned, because some would try to say that the promise certainly may apply to children, but only when they have themselves come to years of accountability and have personally committed themselves to Jesus Christ.

Applied to Children

Such a view falls when we consider the details of the promise as given to Abraham, which promise Peter says still stands.

In Genesis 17:7-12, after making the covenant promise to Abraham and to his seed, God sets forth circumcision as the sign of the covenant (v. 10). Paul, in Romans 4:9-13, points out that Abraham was entitled to receive this sign only after he personally had trusted in the promise of God. Circumcision was thus a "sign" and "a seal of the righteousness of faith" (v. 11). And yet this sign, which was a "sign" and "a seal of the righteousness of *faith*," which Abraham himself was entitled to receive only after exercising personal faith in the promise of God — this sign was commanded by God to be given to Abraham's children at the tender age of eight days, when they could hardly be said even to be aware of God's promise, much less to exercise personal faith in it (Genesis 17:12).

Abraham, though he may not have understood how a sign *he* could receive only after personal faith in God's promise should be applied to his infant children, nevertheless believed God and obeyed *him* in administering the sign of the covenant to his infant children. It may be that he saw more clearly than many do today, that God is pleased to work in families. Would that there were more Christians today who would believe God and obey *him*, instead of putting their own or other people's ideas ahead of God's Word!

Baptism Does Not Save

In applying the sign to children of the promise, the Bible does not teach that every one to whom the sign is applied is saved. Salvation is by grace alone, quite apart from any good works or baptism. In the case of Abraham, though all his children received

FOR A CHILD'S BAPTISM
 With joyfulness, O Lord, we come,
 Moved by thy grace so free,
 In trust that rests upon thy Word
 And cleaves, in Christ, to thee:
 Cleaves to thy promise, Lord, to be
 On earth, in heav'n above,
 A God to us and to our seed,
 Through Christ, thy Son of love.
 Into thy covenant, our God,
 We enter solemnly,
 To love and live before these eyes.
 So Christ, not us, they'll see.
 In love to nurture and to teach,
 By precept and by word,
 The way of life and holiness
 To bring him to thee, Lord.
 What condescension! Thou dost
 stoop
 To bind thyself to give
 Thy Spirit, through the Word thus
 taught,
 And make his soul to live.
 By seal and token, blessed Christ,
 We bind ourselves with thee,
 To bring into the Father's house
 This child thou died'st to free.
 To keep our pledge, O Lord, we lean
 Upon thine arm of might;
 Perform its doing in us, Lord,
 Who seal it in thy sight.
 Amen.
 Lionel F. S. Brown
 (May be sung to St. Anne)

*Baptism is to be administered to those
to whom the promise applies.*

the sign of the promise, of his children we are only told that Isaac was saved, that is, that only Isaac received the heart of the covenant promise. The others shared its fringe benefits, its outward privileges such as having the Word of God taught to them, being in a godly home, and enjoying the various other privileges which children of Christian parents enjoy that children of non-Christian parents do not share. Because even the outward privileges were theirs they received, as children of a believer, the sign of the promise which even in this limited way applied to them.

This is to teach us that we are not to despise our birthright in the covenant, as Esau despised his (Hebrews 12:16, 17). Even the external privileges of the covenant promise are a great blessing from God which relatively few share. How unspeakably great, then, is the heart of the promise, even salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ!

What Is the Conclusion?

Peter's point in the passage in Acts which we have been considering casts quite a different light on the whole matter of baptism. Some have rather confidently said that the New Testament does not specifically state in so many words that children of repentant believers are to be baptized. Therefore, they urge, the baptism of infant children of believers is sinful. The passage we have been considering states, to the contrary, that since the promise belongs to the children of repentant believers, as well as to the believers themselves, so does baptism, which is the sign of that promise.

Why is it then that some do not want their children to receive what the Bible says belongs to them?

One should expect that if children were not to receive baptism, a specific statement to that effect would need to be made. But if such a statement were made, it would contradict the clear teaching of Peter's sermon in Acts, and of the rest of God's teaching about the promise in the Old Testament. No such statement has been made and, indeed, none really could be made, for God does not contradict himself. Rather, we find that the New

Testament states positively that children of believers should receive baptism, and we find at least seven cases in the New Testament in which *whole* families were baptized. Were there *no* children in *any* of these?

We find it hard to shut our ears to the wonderful words of Jesus to the little Jewish infants, all children of the promise at least externally, when he said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such (the Greek word used does not mean "of ones like these" but "of these very ones") is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14).

Does "the Promise" Apply to You?

We need to emphasize a point that is often glossed over. That is that the promise belongs only to *repentant* people and to their children. Many a person comforts himself in a false

hope, thinking that he is secure in God's promise, when as a matter of fact, he is not at all conscious of his sins or repentant of them before the Savior. A person who is not aware of his sins, who does not repent of them before God, and does not sincerely turn away from them, earnestly looking to Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins, has no part in the promise.

It is vital for such a one to recognize that he is in the same predicament as Peter's respectably wicked audience on the day of Pentecost. It is necessary for him to repent of his sins, to turn from them to Jesus Christ for forgiveness, and thus to enter into the full enjoyment of God's gracious promise of salvation. Then, and then only, does the promise apply to him and to his children.

Let us, as Peter urged the people on the day of Pentecost long ago, place our grateful trust simply and entirely in the gracious promise of God's salvation in Jesus Christ. This promise holds good today as it did in ages past, for repentant believers and for their children.

THE CHANGING SCENE

HENRY W. CORAY

In an exhilarating and analytical piece in the *Post*, "Why do we Read Fiction?" Robert Penn Warren has some interesting things to say. Breaking down the response to his own question, Mr. Warren suggests that conflict, suspense, escape to the wonderful dream world, identification with the actors, self-knowledge, adjustment to a confused world, or lack of it, searchlights on human experience — these are the elements that constitute the appeal of fiction. It might be instructive in passing to point out what Randall Stewart does in his book, *American Literature and Christian Doctrine*: "One of the chief writers of our day, Robert Penn Warren, has advised young writers to read their Bible and mark it well."

In both the fields of common and special grace, fiction has an important place. Take, for example, our Lord's parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke fifteen. Is it not fiction at its very finest? It contains all the ingredients of a great story. The problem is posed

in swift, brush-like strokes in the first four verses of the parable. You see the eager youth who has thirsted for excitement now a completely disillusioned boy, homeless, helpless, miserable. Were you and I to read the story for the first time we would be gripped. How is this going to come out? Here we have not only action but suspense. The poignant soliloquy, the resolution, the return, the moving reconciliation with the father; the sequel: the older brother in the field sulking like Achilles in his tent — the basic materials are all there to make up the literary gem that it is and melt the heart of the reader. Even love comes into the picture, have you noticed it? Oh, it's an unrequited love, or lust, a will-o-the-wisp fling that mocks the disenchanting prodigal like the echo of laughter against a brass wall: "Thy son . . . hath devoured thy living with harlots."

When George Meredith was asked who Willoughby (one of his fictional characters) was in real life he an-

swered, "Myself am Willoughby." And when with unveiled face you behold as in a mirror the magnetic glory of divine love that induced the return of the native who began to "draw down beams from the reconciled countenance," you cannot but say, "Myself am Prodigal."

* * *

Mr. Spurgeon used to say, "There is as much holiness in a laugh as in a cry." Who will dispute the proposition? Consider, for instance, some of the rich and ready wit in that treasury of salty counsel, the Book of Proverbs.

Do you know any beautiful women possessed with not a scintilla of sense? So did the inspired writer of Proverbs. "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman without discretion" (11:22). Are you acquainted with lazy people? So was Solomon. "As a door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed. The slug-gard burieth his hand in the dish; it wearieth him to bring it again to his mouth" (26:14, 15). In your circle of friends are there any antenna-clingers? It isn't a new thing. "Better to dwell in a corner of the housetop than with a brawling woman in a wide house" (21:9). Yes, there were Harriet Craigs in those days too. "Better to dwell in the wilderness than with a contentious and angry woman" (21:19). These passages ring with overtones of reality; no mere theory here. There's nothing like a shrewish woman to turn a man into a pole-sitter or desert rat.

Is the instinct for self-preservation strong in you? It was to the Assembler of Ecclesiastes also. "A living dog," he asserted, "is better than a dead lion" (9:4). Are we compulsive gossipers? Let's take a warning from the same writer. "A bird of the air shall carry thy voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter" (10:20). Are lifeless insects a source of annoyance to our sensitive olfactory organs? Verily, misery loves company. "Dead flies putrefy the perfumer's ointment" (10:1, Berkeley Version).

All of which points up the truth that our great Creator has nothing against humor. There is a wholesome therapy in laughter. "A merry heart is a good medicine" (Proverbs 17:22). "Laugh," advised Matthew Green. "Laugh and be well."

NURSERY — NEEDFUL, NEGLECTED !

Everyone is thrilled to see a new young family coming up the church walk, and is anxious that they enjoy the chapel, and their worship time with us. Yet what provision have we made for this couple as they start downstairs with their two most precious possessions, a toddler and a newborn? Are they stuck in the kitchen or a dark corner? Does someone hurry to find out whose turn it is to have nursery? Or perhaps no provision at all is made.

The couple must wrestle for an hour in and out of the worship service; and afterwards exhausted, frustrated, and embarrassed, leave for home wondering, "Why go when I don't get anything out of it, and neither does anyone around me?" These are the very ones who most need to hear the instruction.

This age group is no less important than any other age group. Our elders are to have charge over even these "little ones" and should see to it that an efficient nursery committee is established. How important this is for evangelism when the pastor can say as he calls, "We have a good nursery for every church function. Just come and bring your children." This also eliminates the 'split family system' which usually operates on the principle of, "You stay home this morning with him, and I'll stay home tonight."

Our women need to see this as part of the *entire church life*, and take their turn in charge of the Savior's little ones, if they are able. The 'I'm stuck in the nursery' attitude *can* be overcome when we serve to the glory of God.

Here are some suggestions of a practical nature which may help a nursery committee.

1. Have a separate room set up:
 - a. Clean, neat.
 - b. Good equipment such as crib, playpen, table and chairs, bottle warmer, cupboard or bureau for toys and sheets.
 - c. Dutch-door, so that children may be handed over, and none may escape without notice.
2. Have rules posted:
 - a. No sick children.
 - b. Listen to mother's instructions.
 - c. Change linen.
 - d. Leave room neat.
3. Have rotation schedule posted in entry hall.

Put gifted men to work on an inter-com system. Your nursery room may or may not be situated so that it is separated from the rest of the worshippers by a sound-proof glass partition, but those in the nursery ought at least to be able to hear the service. Remember that they too are a part of God's congregation.

One final word: we are thinking about a *nursery*. As soon as these tiny tots are able to be in the service without disturbing others, they should be with their parents. This will vary, even with children of the same family, but in general the earlier the better. The church does not need to provide a *kindergarten* during the worship hours!

AMY SOLIS

So the voracious Billy-goat
While wandering about a studio
in Hollywood
Discovered a bright tin containing the
film Ben Hur.
He promptly devoured both can and
contents
And lay down to doze.

A friend who had witnessed the action
Sidled up to him and said,
"Well, how does it set with you?"
"All right," said the well-fed one,
blinking,
"But I must say
I didn't like it as well as the book."
The Old Chinese Philosopher



OPC Administration Building

The Committees and the Churches

An article in another journal recently noted that certain denominational boards "seem to many ministers to be regarding them—the ministers—increasingly as means to an end." Whether or not this attitude prevails at all in our situation, it does point to a danger that we must beware of and resist—the danger of a reversal of some of the functions of the church and its committees. The question is that of the proper relationship between the church, in particular its local congregations and their pastors, and its standing committees. The working out of this relationship will reflect something of how well, in this area, our practices conform to the biblical concept of the church.

It ought to be very plain that Christ's commission is a task assigned to the church. The responsibility for making the gospel known belongs to the church, first locally, then in ever-widening regions even to the uttermost parts of the earth. This obligation to preach the gospel, to send out missionaries in the homeland and across the seas, to teach the truth of God's Word by the printed page and in every possible way, is at the center of the church's work. The church may not neglect this task, whether or not any committees exist.

Means to an End

Committees (Home Missions, Foreign Missions, Christian Education, General Benevolence, or any others) are simply a means to the God-given end. It is not the other way around. It is the church, through its general assembly, that has brought the committees into being. The committees

have no independent status, no self-appointed programs to be thrust upon the church. They do not exist for their own sakes at all.

No, the committees have been erected solely as a means through which the task of the church is to be facilitated. They are channels for cooperative effort on the part of the whole church. They seek to provide such initiative as may be necessary to carry out their mandates. They act as clearing-houses for evaluating ideas and deciding on orderly procedures, trying to keep the over-all program in perspective. The committees are agencies for receiving and disbursing funds contributed to maintain the work. As stewards they are to give account of their faithfulness and to inform the churches what accomplishments the Lord has made possible.

What *ought* to be, however, is not always what actually happens. The committees, faced with obligations that must be met—to say nothing of opportunities abounding on all sides, are often diverted from their primary functions. Their general secretaries are forced to become salesmen and promoters and fund-raisers, not by choice but of necessity. The local reaction is sometimes heard that it is these committees that have a program to put across and "they are always asking us for money to support it." Isn't that how it often happens, brethren—and sisters?

But surely that isn't the way any of us want it to be. When the committees have to 'sell' a program or try to raise or 'extract' money, they aren't getting the work of the church done.

At best they are trying to get ready to do it. They are, in fact, undertaking a job that belongs to the whole church—to you and me, the responsibility of providing the resources for the task. The proper job of a committee is to help the church carry out the commission which Christ has given to his church, by producing literature or considering new fields or thinking through the missionary problems or encouraging the workers or the hundred and one other tasks that cry for doing.

Source of our Persuasion

Let's return to the heart of the matter. It is the Word of God, faithfully taught and preached, which alone is to 'sell' God's people on their responsibility. A hundred letters from Philadelphia will fall on deaf ears and bring only growing resentment if a session in California or a man in the Dakotas or a Sunday school teacher in Maine isn't fully persuaded that Jesus meant what he said about our worldwide task. The command comes from Christ, not from some committee. It is the Bible that tells us that we are to give, not grudgingly or of necessity, but willingly, purposefully, and regularly, as God has prospered us.

It is not the committees but the congregations that ought to be accepting more responsibility for the work of the whole church. If there is any pressure it ought to come not from the 'top' but from the urgent concern of pastors and sessions and deacons, yes, and from all members, that our Lord's mandate must be fulfilled.

The committees, in turn, will then be able to think more and more in terms of being agencies of service for the entire church. They will keep the churches informed of the needs, to be sure; and they will search out and call attention to new openings on mission fields at home and abroad, to available literature for Christian education and evangelism, and to ways of helping the poor and the distressed. In short, they will devote their energies to expediting the work of the church in every possible manner. They will also make frequent reports so that all the people may pray without ceasing and continually rejoice in what God is doing through the church's witness.

Vision of Stewardship

The church fears, and rightly, any small group that seems to be telling it what to do. It does not wish domi-

The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

EDITOR

Robert E. Nicholas



All correspondence should be addressed to The Presbyterian Guardian, 7401 Old York Road, Phila. 26, Pa.

nance by committees. It resists tendencies toward a hierarchy (presbyterian style) which it has seen develop in other bodies. But such dangers appear, inevitably, when local churches fall short of their full responsibilities. The principles of stewardship must be inculcated. The best place to do it is at the grass roots, in our homes and Sunday schools and churches. If it isn't being done there, then the committees will have to try to do it—with the likely result being a feeling in the congregations that "Philadelphia is after our money!"

Stewardship in its broadest sense is a central theme of the Bible. Any failure to emphasize it is to fail to teach the whole counsel of God. Any tendency to resist this scriptural emphasis is disobedience to the will of God. But when a pastor aids his people in catching a deeper vision of what a tremendous task Christ has given to his church and what an important place each one of us has in that task (whether it be next door or half way around the globe) then stewardship will be seen in its biblical perspective: our burden for the lost will grow, our churches will become centers of personal witness for the Savior, and our zeal that people everywhere be taught the truths of God's Word will be intensified. Then too, and only then, will voluntary, systematic, proportionate giving from the hearts of the redeemed come forth cheerfully. We shall know the real joy of gifts of love and sacrifice. Then there will no longer be a "financial problem"—for a spiritual awakening will have turned it into a glad response to growing opportunities.

Our general secretaries will be able to reduce their fund-raising efforts and

to increase their labors in the actual business of the church. There will be fewer 'duns' and more 'thank you' letters. Committee meetings will be less disturbed by "Where do we get the money?" and more concerned with how best to use the generous gifts of the churches for the spread of the gospel.

The committees and the churches will then find themselves in a relationship which is both correct and harmonious. Instead of resentment there will be rejoicing on all sides. Rather than a growing sense of frustration there may come an increasing fruitfulness in the work of the Lord, as the windows of heaven are opened in an outpouring of divine blessing. Our committees may well come to be regarded in the eyes of the church as the devoted servants they desire to be. More and more they will be remembered as bearers of glad tidings to the churches of what God has been pleased to accomplish through his people.

R. E. N.

What Makes a Thank Offering?

People have asked, "How can I know whether I am really sacrificing enough for the work of the Lord in missions and the printing of Christian literature? Should I give till it hurts?"

The answer is a resounding NO! Give *beyond* the point where it hurts to the point where you are able to find real joy in giving. Many people stop too soon in their giving. They find only pain. They give only till it hurts. And because they find only pain, they get to feeling sorry for themselves. They begin to despise people who they think have not done what they have, and to resent persons they feel have equalled or outshone them.

Giving should be a matter of joy, of gratitude, of humility. We must learn to give beyond the point where we feel sorry for ourselves to the point where we begin to sense the deep joy that comes from being honestly grateful to God for giving us his wonderful love, his marvelous care, his tremendous salvation, and his only Son.

—from "Tidings" of the
First Orthodox Presbyterian Church,
Portland, Oregon

EDITOR'S MAIL BOX

Dear Sir:

Thank you for Mr. Mahaffy's timely article. It is indeed a pity that so many Reformed Christians have been beguiled by political 'liberalism' — the dominant ideological movement of the past thirty years, and the philosophical cause of our national shipwreck. In Mahaffy and Rushdoony the OPC has two able defenders of biblical economic and political principles.

NORMAN JONES
Artas, So. Dak.

Dear Sir:

I sincerely thank you for your general invitation of reactions to the views developed by Francis E. Mahaffy in his article "Why I Am a Conservative — Theologically and Politically" in the October *Guardian*.

It seems to me that the essence of Calvinism is freedom — freedom of thought, action, and expression within the bounds of God's moral law. I am appalled therefore by this expression of a prevailing trend among Christian people to equate Christianity with a conservative political position. It must surely be obvious to the Christian who attempts to be biblically oriented that he is called upon to make individual judgments in each political and economic issue. No single political position therefore would always coincide with the right moral choice.

It is just such unbiblical exclusiveness which renders ineffective the appeal of the gospel to modern man. If we are going to demonstrate effectively that the gospel is pertinent and applicable to modern man and his problems, we must abandon such attitudes, which seem to make Christianity obsolete and unintelligible in today's world. In Christian sincerity,

PHYLLIS H. REIF
Glenside, Pa.

Pro and Con

Dear Sir:

It was indeed very encouraging to read Mr. Mahaffy's article in your October issue. For years I have been completely at a loss to understand the inconsistency of those who say "I am a conservative Christian" and yet at the same time are liberal in the political, economic, and social fields. It is high time these people take time to sit down and itemize what it means to be

a conservative Christian and then take the list and ask themselves whether they are applying these principles in their political, economic, and social life.

I believe every true Christian should take an active and definite stand on the issues of our present time (of course, these stands must be in accordance with the infallible Word of God) . . . The Bible has the answer to every problem or question we have. The Word of God is eternal — not just applicable to one period of time in history — neither is it just for Sunday sermons, but for every action of our individual life, seven days a week. I cannot understand how a conservative denomination can tolerate members who do not apply these biblical truths to their daily living . . .

Sincerely yours,
MRS. CLYDE G. MILLER
Fairfax, Virginia

The Role of the State

Dear Sir:

I am glad that you have invited comment upon the article by Francis E. Mahaffy in the issue for October 1962.

The state is an institution established by God. Therefore, its role is one which may be deduced from Scripture and which does not vary fundamentally from age to age. As is plain from the Old Testament it is a broad one. The twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus is a good example of this. Here commandments are laid down by God through Moses for the enforcement in Israel of agricultural regulations, of land tenure laws, of laws concerning the purchase of houses, and of rules concerning interest on loans and concerning slavery.

The basic difficulty in the *Guardian* article appears to be that these functions of the state are not recognized. The state is specifically restricted to the punishment of evil-doers. Even if one limited oneself to considering the Roman state, which was commended by Paul in Romans thirteen, a passage referred to in the article, that state did not limit itself to the repression of evil. A well-known example of its activity is road-building.

If the modern state were limited to the repression of evil, how would our roads be constructed? Is it conceivable that private enterprise could effectively build the road in front of every man's

door as well as adequate interstate highways? If it did, how would traffic regulations be imposed and enforced? Unless it can be shown that it is inherently more moral for the driver on the right to have precedence over the driver on the left (or vice versa), the state could have nothing to do with setting up traffic regulations. If I built the road in front of my house myself, I could then require traffic to pass to the left before my house and my neighbor could require it to pass to the right in front of his house. To such absurdities are we reduced, if the state cannot set up traffic regulations.

This is but one example of the duties which the Scripture assigns to the state and which the state ought to undertake if it is not to be negligent before God. The Bible provides that the state must be concerned with the temporal well-being of its members.

Sincerely yours,
PAUL WOOLLEY
Chestnut Hill, Pa.

Henry Edwin Wade

Henry E. Wade, a charter member of the Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles, and an elder for more than 20 years, entered into the presence of his Savior on October 15, 1962, in his 89th year. Funeral services were conducted by the Rev. Michael Stingley in Monrovia, where the Wades had resided for many years. Mrs. Wade, who is 89 years of age, survives.

Mr. Wade was regular in his attendance at meetings of the Presbytery of California until quite recently and served for about a decade as treasurer. He was a commissioner to a number of General Assemblies. Born on January 1, 1874 in Rockport, Indiana, he grew up on a farm and later was graduated from the Briggs-Stratton Business Institute in Louisville, Kentucky. He went to Houston, Texas, where he began his work as an accountant, and there met and married his wife. The family moved to Los Angeles in 1925.

Converted in an old-fashioned Methodist Church, he was active in Christian work from that time on, and took his family into the Presbyterian Church nearly 50 years ago. His son, the Rev. E. Lynne Wade, wrote these words from Guam: "He was always a

faithful steward of the Lord's material bounties, and I can never remember a time when he was not an example of love to Christ and loyalty to him, his Word, and his church. He always took us to every service at every church we belonged to. He was a sinner, yes, but a wonderful example of the grace of God and the development of all the graces of Christian character in a sinner. I am thankful beyond expression to have had such a father and I rejoice in the eternal blessedness which is surely his now in the presence of our precious Savior."



Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wade
This snapshot was taken in 1956 in Iowa while the Wades were on an auto trip.

Reformed Men to Meet

Fred C. Shotwell, a systems engineer with the Missile and Space Division of G. E., is featured as the speaker for the third annual dinner rally of Reformed men planned for Saturday, December 8 at the Calvary Reformed Presbyterian Church, Willow Grove, Pa. Mr. Shotwell is a member of the Community Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Center Square, Pa. Besides the two denominations mentioned, the Christian Reformed Church and the Evangelical Presbyterians are represented on the joint committee of sponsors.

MY NAME IS PETER

William L. Hiemstra

My name is Peter. I would like to step out of the pages of history and Scripture to tell you about myself. I trust that the Holy Spirit may quicken your souls as I give my personal testimony in order to show the greatness of God's grace and power. I want to be honest. I want to speak as God, through the Holy Spirit, has written of me. There will be the black, the gray and the white; they're all there. But I want you to know that I became a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Or to use language more familiar to you of the twentieth century, I was a sinner saved by grace.

I was born in Galilee. My father was a fisherman; so was my brother Andrew. Andrew and I owned a boat. We fished with nets. We were in partnership with James and John, the sons of Zebedee. My brother Andrew first became a disciple of John the Baptist. One day Andrew called me in a very excited manner saying, "We have found the Messiah." John had pointed him out saying, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." Andrew had followed Jesus and had spoken with him.

I allowed myself to be led to Jesus. Andrew introduced me. Jesus looked at me. He was to look at me at other times in my life and I shall never forget the way in which he looked at me. I was strangely silent, and you know how unusual it was for me, the impulsive, impetuous Peter to be silent. But I was overcome by Christ's majesty. I can still hear him say, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas." I didn't feel very much like a "rock" many times in my life. I failed the Lord so often. You remember how I lacked faith to walk to him on the water, and I was too proud to have him wash my feet. I was one of those who fell asleep at Gethsemane. And then you remember my denial outside the high priest's palace. Even after Pentecost I was still

weak. I became involved in a controversy with Paul about eating meat offered to idols. But I am getting ahead of my story.

I was much impressed with the power of Jesus. I became familiar with his power through the experience of the miraculous catch of fish, after toiling all night and catching nothing. Following Jesus' instructions we caught much fish. Seeing the greatness of Jesus made me more aware of my sinfulness so that I had occasion to say, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." I was amazed to hear Jesus say, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." I didn't know then about the long, hard struggle to be a good servant of Jesus Christ.

In my life of discipleship, I had the privilege of witnessing the healing miracles of Jesus. I also heard his words of wisdom, some of which I did not understand at the time, but upon later reflection, I understood the words previously spoken as they came to have greater meaning for me.

Confession

I must tell you about my experience at Caesarea Philippi. The Lord asked us as his disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" I spoke for the group since I was accustomed to do this because of my natural impulsiveness. I said, "Some say — Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." Then Jesus asked us the big question — the question that every man must face, "But whom say ye that I am?" I spoke clearly, without hesitation: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." I sensed something of the importance of the words as I spoke them. How glad I was to hear Christ's words, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in Heaven!"

I was happy in the service of Christ.

I was so distressed when he said that he "must needs go to Jerusalem to suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes." He said he would be killed and be raised again the third day. I couldn't believe this; my love for him would not allow it. My expectations for him were so different, and so I opposed the Lord. It was difficult for me to hear his words of admonition and rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense to me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." It was so very difficult for me to control my impulsive nature. I had this disposition to be outspoken; I often failed to think clearly before speaking. Maybe some of you have this same difficulty.

Misunderstanding

With James and John I was on the mountain of Transfiguration with Jesus; in love and in ignorance I suggested that we build three tabernacles — one for Moses, one for Elijah, and one for Jesus. I was not concerned to have one for myself. It was such a wonderful experience; the Lord's face did shine as the sun. I didn't know then that which I learned later, that Moses and Elijah were talking with Jesus about his decease to be accomplished at Jerusalem. Indirectly I was suggesting that Jesus not suffer and die for the salvation of sinners.

It certainly is very humbling to have so much of my life written in the Bible, but I had to learn, even as you must learn, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." It was even difficult for me after Pentecost, but I did make progress. I showed some of the same character traits when Jesus wanted to wash my feet in order to teach humility and service. I was surprised that he would do this menial task of washing the feet of his disciples; yet not one of us offered to do it. We thought it was too menial a task for disciples. In surprise I said, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" I don't know why the others allowed it; perhaps they were afraid to object. I said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet!" Again I was extreme and over-confident, and the Lord humbled me, when he said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Then I said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." That was another extreme statement, but Christ was very

patient with me. I feel sure he will be patient with you, too.

After the Passover supper Jesus told us of his death. He said his disciples would flee and be offended. I said, in effect, "The others might, but I won't!" So with characteristic boastfulness, I said, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." I recall hearing him say, with a voice of sadness, "Verily I say unto thee, that this night before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." I confidently replied, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." It surely is a humbling experience to tell so much about myself, and yet God exalted me in due time. I recall so vividly his words, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

Denial

In the garden of Gethsemane, I fell asleep. The Lord wanted my companionship, but I failed him. I impulsively cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest; and again the Lord corrected me. He healed the slave. I fled for fear, and followed from afar, as I remembered my pledge of loyalty. I denied the Lord in the courtyard of the high priest's palace. I wasn't expecting the question; it caught me off guard. I was afraid, and in my fear, I lied. Others may have had a similar experience. The maid's question was put to me without warning, "Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?" I said impulsively, "I am not!" When the question was put to me again, I found it too difficult to change the previous answer; then I had to resort to enforcing my denial with cursing. Perhaps some of you do that, too; in addition to the sin, it was a sign of weakness. I was struck to the quick when I heard the cock crow. Jesus had been right; again I had been wrong. How shamefully I had wronged him. I was full of inner conflict. When the Lord turned and looked at me with a look of love, I went away and wept bitterly. I had tears of anguish, remorse, sorrow and bitterness. If the Lord had looked at me with a look of anger, it would have been easier for me; but his looking at me with a look of love made it more difficult because I had been forgiven before asking for forgiveness. Because of the crucifixion I could not confess how I had repented; this grieved me greatly.

Douma Publications plans to print in December a booklet containing three monologs by the Rev. William L. Hiemstra, who is a chaplain at the Pine Rest Christian Hospital. Designed especially for reading by the sick and shut-in, the booklet is entitled "Three Bible Characters Who Faced Illness" — My Journey Toward Light, I Was Sick for 38 Years, and Gentile of the Gentiles.

Copies may be obtained from Douma Publications, 5218 Division Ave. So., Grand Rapids 8, Michigan, for 25c each (10 or more, 20c each; 100 or more, 15c each).

But how glad I am to report that things changed for me. How I rejoiced to hear that the Lord thought of me on the resurrection morning! Christ appeared to me privately and he assured me of the forgiveness of my sin. Not much is mentioned in the Bible about this; it was such a personal matter that it is covered by a single statement. I think I would prefer not to say anything more about it.

But there was also a public restoration, a three-fold question — "Lovest thou me?", which caused me to think of my three-fold denial — "I know him not." It wounded me, humbled me, and yet it healed me. The Lord restored me publicly so that no one could say afterwards that I was inferior to any of the other disciples or apostles. No one in the church would be able to point an accusing finger at me concerning the denial because they would know that the Lord had forgiven and restored.

Testimony

So you see there was not all gloom in my life. After my true conversion God was pleased to use me mightily. I was among those in the upper room mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, who continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. I gave myself to the ministry of the Word and prayer. God used me. You can understand how God could use me to write what you find in my first letter recorded in your Bibles, chapter 1, verse 19: "We are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." It was the kind of redemption I needed; the same kind that you need. I never tired of speaking of my gra-

rious Lord. I recall that I wrote in my first letter, the second chapter, the 22nd verse, concerning my Lord, that he was the one "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." I always recognized that I had much sin and that there was guile to be found in my mouth so that I needed a perfect Savior.

I was given apostolic power. I used it to heal Aeneas of palsy at Lydda. I used it to preach to Cornelius. I used it in the Pentecostal sermon. I felt a great thrill course through my whole being when I said with courage, in the face of great opposition, "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." How different this was from "I know him not!"

I was used by the Holy Spirit to write the words, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." I trust that you will read the two letters I wrote as a mature Christian; there you will see that I profited from my past experiences, as I had occasion to write in I Peter 5:6, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." You can understand how I could write that out of my experience.

I wish you could avoid many of my faults in your life. Won't you ask Christ to help you? I wish that you might share my praise, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you." I trust you will hear my closing words: "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever."

New Addresses

The Rev. George W. Hall, Jr., 37 N. Race St., Middletown, Pa. (ordained by the Presbytery of Philadelphia).

The Rev. Donald F. Stanton, 629 Center Ave., Oostburg, Wis.

*That men for the ministry may
be more effectively prepared to...
expound...defend...and proclaim*

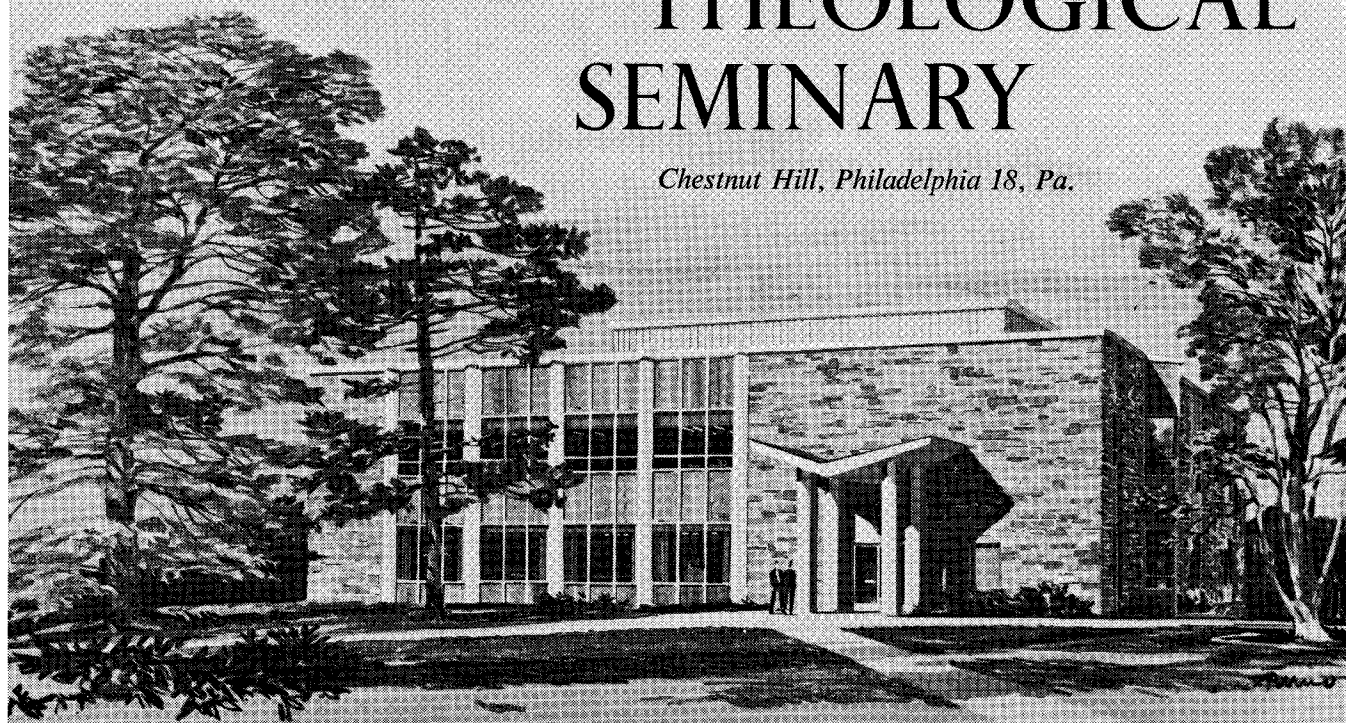
ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD

Westminster Theological Seminary looks forward with joy to the opening of a New Library Building in the Spring of 1963. Designed along attractive contemporary lines, this new addition will have 23,000 square feet for 110,000 volumes, numerous carrels, faculty studies, microfilm equipment, and conference rooms. Thus Westminster, in her sustained effort to advance the cause of Biblical Christianity, will more adequately meet the needs of a rapidly increasing number of students drawn from all over the world and from 30 Protestant denominations.

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WESTMINSTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia 18, Pa.



A Sabbath in Sonora

Rose early to prepare for Communion and Baptism. (Communion set recently purchased by family emptying children's piggy bank. Shopping for a baptismal font in a baptistic world is an experience!) Drove to our rented hall, set up service on old library table in front of pulpit.

9:00 A.M. — Drove to funeral parlor. Had received emergency call to hold funeral services for 20 year old youth who was killed while riding a stolen motorcycle (had a long crime record). Funeral chapel filled — many young people. During preaching and graveside services there was uncontrolled crying and sobbing, mostly by over-dressed girls: it was the sorrow and weeping of those who have no hope. Preached on Psalm 90, and the text, "To Whom Shall We Go?" (Funerals, and anything, held on Sunday.)

After committal service, had to leave people weeping among the tombs and rush back to morning service. Was 'shook up'; made mistakes. But the Lord helped. Communion meditation on Leviticus 14, "The Two Birds"; special emphasis on that live bird dipped in blood and set free in an open field. Received an entire family into the church. The mother and two young people were also baptized. Left out some of the Directory but managed to get the names right — very wonderful family, very precious service. Do you believe Jesus Christ . . . ? Yes. Is it your desire to be baptized in this faith? Yes. Words softly spoken. What music!

After service, conference with couple about marriage.

6:00 P.M. — Our first young people's meeting with the young people out visiting homes before the meeting: that does something to a meeting.

Had advertised Youth Evening Service, with special sermon for young people. The text? The same I had used at the morning funeral — "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

After service, had long talk re tongues movement springing up here. Some from involved church had called. (Why tongues? Perhaps defeatism; can't take it any longer.) Made preparation for next Sunday's after service

The Rev. Robert K. Churchill continues to serve as stated supply of the Community Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Sonora, which was organized last spring. Pending the installation of elders-elect, Mr. Clarence Westra of Stockton has been serving on the session. Property is being purchased as a site for a proposed building when funds are available.

Roundtable Discussion.

Home, in front of fireplace. Read C. S. Lewis book in preparation for Roundtable Discussion in December — a C. S. Lewis evening. And so to bed, but not to sleep. What of that home we visited recently? — we walked into a Bible Class, Jehovah's Witnesses trying to trap a family — How far? Had a chance to witness for Jehovah Jesus. And that house, where the middle-aged man had only a short time to live. Had never heard of the forgiveness of sins. At the door with a choking voice — "thanks for the prayer." Alas, he has Presbyterian church connections — will be hard to reach.

In Cuba the rockets. Our nation, grave already dug — destroyed not by rockets but by godlessness. Hundreds of homes visited, never attend. Half asleep. I had to leave them weeping loud among the tomb stones. Women crying on men's shoulders, faces vacant, dumb. Church lot surveyed Saturday for building; churches should have strength and beauty verging on terror — but no funds, not One Cent.

Drifting voices — "We can't stay to church, not with this boy; maybe on Easter." "No more church for us, my husband's reading 'Witness' books — church is a sin." — All those cards sent out . . . none came.

Why does Hell yawn

And wait assured

While blood is falling from open wounds

And strivers with the night are weeping?

Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son and your only Savior from sin? Yes. Is it your desire to be baptized in this faith? Yes.

Here, hard by the Gates of Hell, it's been a good day.

R. K. CHURCHILL

New Jersey Presbyterian

Saturday, October 20, dawned bright and beautiful. This was my day away and I was looking forward to the fall meeting of presbyterian in Garfield. More than 80 of us were welcomed at the Community Orthodox Presbyterian Church with a cup of coffee and a sweet bun and greetings from Miss Alice Tolsma. Mrs. Ray Commeret presided over the executive committee before the morning meeting.

Following devotions on the subject of prayer led by Mrs. Joan Heerschap, Mrs. Elizabeth Price moderated a most enlightening panel discussion on "Suggested Mission Programs for Children and Youth." Representatives from the Garfield, Fairlawn, Morristown, and Vineland societies participated.

At the business meeting after lunch it was decided to give \$25 to the guest speaker and the remainder of the regular offering, after expenses, to the Committee on Foreign Missions. The gifts came to \$222.24. A special love offering of over \$60 was taken for the work of the Rev. Lynne Wade on Guam because of his grave financial needs. Mrs. Richard Barker announced that she had prepared a missionary program based on Mr. Wade's labors in Guam, and that she would be happy to make the material available to any interested groups that requested it from her at 676 Summit Ave., Westfield, N. J.

Another recommendation was that instead of sending Christmas cards to members of our churches we give the money that would have been spent to the Price Memorial Fund for the publication of tracts and other Christian literature.

The afternoon message was brought by Mrs. Donald Taws, a message of real blessing as she told of a typical week in the very hot, extremely humid climate of Eritrea, with a constant battle against flies and roaches. (Then and there I made a silent promise never to complain of small annoyances again!) Mrs. Taws said one of the things you miss most is the close fellowship of friends, especially when you are the only missionaries of any denomination in a seaport city the size of Massawa.

Massawa is a city built on islands with most of its inhabitants Arabs or

Tigrinyas. (Beth Taws, seven in November, was with her mother and was dressed as a typical Tigrinya girl.) A typical week begins with a Sunday morning service in Arabic for Moslem men. The evening service in the Taws home is in English and Tigrinya for teen-agers. On Wednesdays there is a Bible story and filmstrip for children and grownups. Bible classes in both English and Tigrinya are held on Fridays in the bookstore. In speaking of the bookstore Mrs. Taws urged prayer for its witness, and also for the Birds who are in Massawa at this time. Twice a week Mrs. Taws has had a sewing class in her home for school girls, and she displayed some 'gospel mats' these girls had embroidered in the Tigrinya language.

The spring meeting of the New Jersey Presbyterial is planned for May 6, 1963 at Immanuel Church, West Collingswood, with Mr. Taws and Mr. Bruce Hunt as guests.

(MRS.) JOYCE RASBOLD

Presbytery of California

Paradise Hills Church of San Diego was host to the fall meeting of the Presbytery of California on September 26-27. Fraternal greetings were brought by the Rev. Paul Veenstra, of Classis California of the Christian Reformed Church, and by the Rev. R. D. Stuebbe, of Eureka Classis, the Reformed Church in the U. S. Missionary Edwin Urban, of the Presbytery of Wisconsin, home from Taiwan, was also seated as a corresponding member.

Two men were received from other presbyteries after examination in theology: the Rev. Ralph Clough, from New Jersey, whose installation as pastor of First Church, Manhattan Beach, was arranged for October 7; and the Rev. William Bomer, from the Dakotas, in whose hands was placed a call from Greyfriars Church, Torrance. Plans for his installation on October 21 were approved.

Two licentiates completed their examinations for ordination. A call from First Church, San Francisco, was placed in the hands of Robert W. Newsom, and plans were made for his ordination and installation on October 10. Arrangements for the ordination and installation of Michael D. Stingley as pastor of Westminster

Church, Los Angeles, on October 14 were approved. Elders John Reynolds and L. Barker were elected to supplement the session until the spring meeting. William Shell, of First Church, San Francisco, a May graduate of Westminster Seminary, was taken under care of presbytery.

Presbytery urged its sessions to commend to the churches the financial plan for augmenting the support of the Rev. Lynne Wade which he suggested in the July-August issue of the *Guardian*. Correspondence is being continued with the Board of Foreign Missions of the CRC and the Committee on Foreign Missions of the OPC with regard to Mr. Wade's labors on Guam.

An overture to the 30th General Assembly was adopted proposing an amendment to the Form of Government, VIII, 3, by the addition of this sentence: "Voters at congregational meetings must be communicant members, at least 18 years of age."

Action was taken to inform the Women's Presbyterial that the Presbytery is grateful to God for the zeal and faithfulness manifested by the Presbyterial, particularly in the furtherance of the cause of missions, and does not recommend changing the women's meetings from semi-annual to annual occurrence.

Presbytery declared in a letter to

the Presbytery of Central Mississippi of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. concerning Mr. David Moore: "that since 1955 he has been a candidate for the gospel ministry under the care of this Presbytery, that he now has been graduated from Westminster Theological Seminary, and through the years has demonstrated a growing zeal and ability for evangelism. We commend him highly, and it is our regret that he is not at present to serve in our communion."

A by-law was suspended in order to change the date of the spring meeting from April to the fourth Wednesday and Thursday of February, 1963.

Winter Rally in the Poconos

Dr. Edwin H. Palmer of Westminster Seminary is to be the speaker at the annual Machen League Rally at Pinebrook in the Poconos December 27-29. All New Jersey and Pennsylvania Machen Leaguers 13 years or over are invited to join in the outdoor winter recreation, the use of the new indoor swimming pool, six meals beginning Thursday evening, and down-to-earth messages on the theme of "A Closer Walk with Christ." Total cost is \$14.50 with \$3.00 registration due not later than December 20.

FAULTLESS

(Jude 24-25)

How can it be that one so full of faults shall
faultless be?
That one so weak and stumbling shall from falling
be kept free,
Presented then before the Lord with joy
in purity?
How can it be? You wonder as do I —
until we see
That Jesus bore our sins in his own body
on the tree:
There shed his blood that we might be redeemed
at Calvary.
And thus with grateful praise we join in this
doxology:
To Him, wise God our Savior, now and ever
more shall be
Dominion, power, glory, and eternal
majesty.

R. E. N., SR.

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ICHABOD

From Shiloh men carried Jehovah their God
To fight the Philistines on Aphek's red sod,
But great was the slaughter and great was the shame,
For Israel no longer revered the Lord's Name.
And one with torn garment escaped from the fray
To tell the Shilohans of God's judgment day.
The wail and the shrieks pierced Eli's old ears,
The message of gloom had exceeded his fears.
His sons who had scorned his uprighteous desires
Were slain in the judgment of God's wrathful fires.
The ark of the covenant, paganly brought
To struggle with pagans, and paganly sought,
Was captured and carried to Dagon their god
Whose house and whose service was found in Ashdod.
Then Eli fell backward and gave up the ghost
And lay in the stillness of death by his post.
And when his son's wife was informed of their death
She bore her last son and gasped her last breath.
But ere her sad soul had returned to her God
She whispered the name of her child: *Ichabod*.

*The glory of God now from Israel departs
And sadness prevails in their sore chastened hearts.*

CALVIN A. BUSCH

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Spring-in-Fall

Autumn marches slowly —
No rush of wind, no sudden freeze;
She enters calmly —
Cool nights, warm days, leaves sere on trees:
Winter's spring-in-fall!

BOYCE SPOONER