

GUARDIAN

A call to Christian upbringing

Caring for the Lambs

GEORGE W. MARSTON

A gentleman told Coleridge, the poet, that children should be permitted to grow up, and then decide for themselves if they wanted religion, and if so, what religion. Coleridge replied, "Sir, you have given me an idea for my garden, I have decided that next year I will wait until July or August before planting." "Why?" the gentleman asked. This was the poet's answer: "I want to give my garden a chance to decide for itself whether or not it wants to raise weeds or strawberries."

In this article our attention is centered upon that portion of Ephesians 6:4 which reads as follows, "Provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." In this verse the Apostle Paul sets before fathers a God-given obligation concerning their children.

Fathers are charged to "bring up" their children. This means to train them, with an emphasis on the moral aspect of training. Do children need to be trained? The need is obvious. They are not weeds or wild flowers but tender domestic plants which must be cultivated if they are to attain their God-given potential.

Little children are not strong but weak. They

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Effectual Prayer

EDWARD WYBENGA

Persistent Prayer

Luke 18:1-8

By means of the parable of "The Unrighteous Judge" Jesus taught "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." The more severe the trials of life become and the more desperate the situation, the more should we pray for strength and courage to endure. We will then need the help of God as never before. Without it we shall go down in defeat and despair.

The parable speaks of a widow before a judge, seeking justice against her oppressor. The widow is in a sorry plight, poor, defenseless, and abused. Unable to protect herself from the cruelties of the world, she takes her case to the judge and pleads for help, saying, "Avenge me of mine adversary." The woman is not asking for revenge but she is asking for justice; she is asking to be freed from unjust oppression.

But what a strange judge this is! We think of a judge as one who stands for what is right, one who will punish the wrongdoer and free the righteous. But the judge in the parable was not that kind of person. We are told that he "feared not God neither regarded man."

However, while he had no regard for God or man, he did have regard for his own comfort. We hear him saying: "Because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me." He wanted to get rid of her; he was tired of her pleadings; and so it was that he took care of her case.

Now the application of the parable: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, who cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." The argument is this: if an unjust judge will relieve a poor widow for whom he has no regard, how

much more will a just and righteous God rectify the wrongs committed against his children and his elect church which he loves with an infinite love! He may seem to wait long in answering our prayers but when faith and patience have done their perfect work, God will answer. He will answer "speedily," that is, in his own swift time, as soon as his high and holy purposes have been accomplished. God will see to it that justice is done and that the persistent cries of his people are answered.

Do you believe that? Do you believe that God will execute justice and avenge his elect? Many will be in danger of losing that assurance. Therefore Jesus adds, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" The meaning is not: Will there be any true Christians left in the world when Jesus comes again? but this: Will God's people under their prolonged afflictions and persecutions still believe that God will deliver them? Will they grow weary and faint, and cease to pray; or will they persevere in prayer until victory comes? That is the disturbing question. The thrust of the parable is to teach "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

Penitential Prayer

Luke 18:9-14

Effectual prayer is persistent prayer. It is also penitential prayer. The opening verse makes that clear: "And He spoke this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." They were people who thought themselves beyond reproach; people who had climbed so high on the ladder of self-righteousness that they could look down in disdain upon everybody.

An example of such people was the Pharisee in the parable. He was very strict in observing the external and ceremonial aspects of the law. Out-

wardly he was very religious but inwardly his heart was far from God, very far from keeping the law, full of pride and hypocrisy and cruelty.

We see him praying in the temple-court. We hear him congratulating himself before God—he tells God how good he is. True, he begins by saying, "God, I thank thee"; but then he spoils it all by his boasting. He really isn't thanking God at all—he is thanking himself; he is worshipping his ego. His good works had risen so high that he had put God under obligation to him—so he thought.

O, how abominable must all such self-righteousness be in the sight of God who well knows the depth of depravity of the human heart! In that prayer of the Pharisee there is no confession of sin—he was conscious of none; no asking for wants to be supplied—he had no wants!

On the other side of the temple-court, as far away from the inner sanctuary as he could get, driven there by his deep sense of unworthiness, we see a publican standing. Burdened by the guilt of sin, he dare not so much as raise his eyes to heaven. So grievous do his sins seem to him, so oppressive and disturbing to his conscience, that he keeps smiting his breast in sheer self-accusation and despair of himself.

And what does he say? "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner," or, more forcefully, "the sinner" (Berkeley Version), that is, the chief of sinners! If the Pharisee thought himself to be the best man in the world, the publican thought himself to be the worst. He cried for mercy, that is, for reconciliation with God by an atoning sacrifice.

Now, what was the outcome of these two prayers? Let Jesus speak: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The publican went home a forgiven man with the peace of God in his heart. The Pharisee went to his house just as he came—a proud, vain, foolish man.

Persistent prayer, like that of the widow; penitential prayer, like that of the publican—such prayers are acceptable to God and therefore effectual. They will be answered. They bring results.

Caring for the Lambs

(continued from cover)

lack the instincts for self-preservation found in animals. They must be protected and then taught to protect themselves. A little child is not wise but ignorant. He has a capacity for learning but has no ready store of knowledge. He must be taught or learn by the trial and error method.

Our children, moreover, are not naturally good but evil. Holy Scripture teaches us that as a result of the fall, they have inherited from Adam corrupt natures (Romans 5:12), thus it is natural for them to sin. Their evil natures must be restrained by instruction. Even after they are regenerate, they still have within them a remnant of their old nature which must be restrained and a new nature which must be instructed in the way of salvation. Even after they have been converted they must be instructed if they are to live fruitful Christian lives and fulfill their God-given calling.

How shall we bring up our children? In the passage before us Paul has three things to say on this subject.

Provoke Them Not

In the first place he says, "Provoke not your children to wrath." Does this mean we cannot deny their whims, that we must give them everything they want and that we dare not correct them lest we make them angry? Not at all! It means that we must not be unreasonable in our demands or inconsistent in our discipline, that we must live what we demand of our children.

"How can I bring up my son in the way he should go?" asked an anxious father. 'By going that way yourself,' was the reply. Words are easily forgotten but the example of a good life is never forgotten. It behooves parents to keep their tempers under control and let love's winsome ways and wooing words adorn their lives" (*The Religious Telescope*).

To state the matter positively, a Christian environment is a prerequisite for fulfilling this God-given responsibility.

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bility. The truth must be taught both by precept and example. Someone has well said that an illustration is worth a thousand words. The same thing is true when precepts taught are illustrated by consistent Christian living.

Nurture Them

How shall we bring up our children? In the second place Paul says, "Bring them up in the nurture of the Lord." The word *nurture* calls for the total training of the whole child. The physical, mental, emotional, moral, and spiritual aspects of his nature must all be subject to instruction. Our children are to receive the nurture of the Lord. This means that they are to be trained according to God's standard so that in effect the training comes from him through us.

The textbooks from which our children are to be nurtured are, broadly speaking, the revelations which God has given to man in nature and in the Scriptures. The first of these is often called "general revelation" and the second "special revelation." In the former, God has revealed himself through his works of creation and providence. He has also revealed the laws by which his creatures must operate in the natural realm. In his inscripturated revelation, the Bible, God has told us much about his revelation in nature and has given us some of the basic principles which must be applied in that sphere. However, in this Book he is primarily concerned with the revelation of his plan of salvation.

These two revelations should be in full accord wherever they concern the same subject, but while the Bible is the inspired Word of God and thus infallible in every area in which it speaks, the revelation in nature, like the man who tries to understand it, was marred by the fall. Hence it is not completely reliable. This means, generally speaking, that the revelation in nature is to be interpreted in the light of the Bible and not vice versa.

Pre-eminence of Scripture

Paul said, "Bring them up in the nurture of the Lord." What does this require? It requires that we teach our children from the Bible the way of salvation through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ; the duties and privi-

leges of a Christian life; and how to have fellowship with God in work and worship, through the Word and prayer. It means also that we must teach them the nature of the visible church and their relationship to it, both before and after their public confession of faith in Jesus Christ. The church is the Christian community in action — its members helping one another with their mutual problems, working, worshipping and serving together, united in carrying out a God-given program which is international in its outreach with the gospel.

The children of believers should also be instructed as to their relationship to the world. In one sense this is an evil world marred by the fall. There is a constant conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, between God and Satan, the church and the world, good and evil. Our children must be taught their relationship to this conflict. They must be trained to take their place in the army of the Lord, to battle the forces of Satan. They must be taught to battle with confidence, knowing that the victory will ultimately be ours, and that in the end the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord.

In another sense, however, our children should be taught that basically this is God's world (Psalm 24:1), and that their relationship to it is defined in the cultural mandate set forth in Genesis 1:28. Consider this threefold mandate.

God's Cultural Mandate

In the first place, God said, "Be fruitful." This calls for the establishment of the home and the raising of a family, which in turn calls for the ability to support the family and to train the children. In the second place, God said, "Subdue the earth." As a result of the fall, all nature is in a state of rebellion against man. This means that the forces of nature must be subdued, harnessed and put to work. The building of Boulder Dam, for instance, created a water reservoir that irrigates thousands of acres of land.

In the third place, God said, "Have dominion." In order to fulfill this aspect of the cultural mandate, man must know the world which he is to rule and rule the world which he knows, for God and for the benefit of his creatures. This calls for the discovery of the treasures which God

has placed in the universe for the benefit of his creatures. Man must also discover the operational principles contained in the laws of nature if he is to develop these resources.

"Bring them up in the nurture of the Lord." If our children are to fulfill the cultural mandate in a manner pleasing to God, the instruction which they receive in those areas of knowledge included in general revelation ought also to be in accord with the Bible. They must be taught not only the facts which God has revealed in nature but also God's interpretation of these facts. Man is not a creature who has evolved from some lower form of life, whose obligations are limited to the social structure which he has created; he was created in the image of God and commissioned to rule the universe for his Maker. This is his primary obligation.

Our children must be taught not only the principles and the laws which God has revealed in nature but also the manner in which he would have man apply them—for the glory of God and the preservation and good of all his creatures. If nuclear power were used only for its God-intended purposes, a problem which threatens the peace of the world would be solved.

Now, while these God-given facts, principles and laws have been widely recognized, placed in textbooks and taught in schools, in most cases neither the writers of the textbooks nor the teachers have made any effort to tell the children that these are God-given facts. Nor are pupils given God's interpretation of these facts or acquainted with the manner in which God would have them used. As Christian parents we must attempt to see that our children are taught by teachers from textbooks that have these basic goals in view.

Admonish Them

How shall we bring up our children? In the third place Paul says, "Bring them up in the admonition of the Lord." The word *admonition* means correction or punishment. To admonish them in the Lord is to tell them what God thinks of their conduct and to punish them in the manner which he has prescribed. In this part of our text our attention is centered upon an aspect of child-training which is often neglected even in Christian homes. Children must be taught

to obey. God requires obedience to all lawful authority whether it be that of the state, the church, the home, or the school, as long as the requirements are in accord with divine law. Obedience does not come naturally. Children must be taught what is right and corrected when they do wrong.

Some seem to assume that if we love our children, we will let them do as they please. The opposite is true. Our love for our children should conform to the divine pattern of love as set before us in Hebrews 12:6, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." We must correct our children when they do wrong. This is one of the ways in which they learn to do right.

If our children refuse to respond when we show them that what they are doing is contrary to the Word of God or if they refuse to recognize our God-given authority to make decisions in matters not directly commanded or forbidden by the Word of God, they must be admonished. If a rebuke is not sufficient they must be punished more severely. Someone has said that everything in America is run by switches except the children. Some think that spankings are old-fashioned but if our children are to be admonished of the Lord, then we must use the disciplinary methods which he has prescribed (Proverbs 13:24; 29:15).

Cooperating Agencies

Christian child-training calls for the cooperative efforts of three agencies. The church is one obvious agency. We should not send but bring our children to church and Sunday school. If this church is faithful to its calling, our children will be taught the Bible, hear the gospel and benefit from a Christian environment for these two or three hours a week. If disciplinary problems arise they will be dealt with on a Christian basis.

It is evident from Scripture that instruction in the Word of God should also be given in the home. Here our children should also enjoy the benefits of a Christian environment. The foundation of secular, as well as specifically religious, education must be laid in the home. A mother asked this question, "How soon should I begin to train my child?" "How old is he?" asked Xavier. "Five," was the lady's reply. Thereupon he said, "Madam, hurry home, you have already missed

the best five years."

The third agency which must cooperate in the total education of the child is the school. While the task of total education may well have been fulfilled by the church and home in the simple rural setting of Moses' day, when we examine Deuteronomy 6:4-9 in the light of the complexity of modern society, it is evident that even the religious training of our children calls for more time and effort than either church or home can devote to this task. This is even more obvious when it comes to their so-called secular education. The church is not called to this task. The home is not equipped for this work. The children must be sent to school.

Christian Schools

As Christian parents, we must be concerned to see that our children attend schools where they will receive more Bible instruction and where instruction given in what are usually called 'secular subjects' will be in accord with the Word of God. In schools in which our children are to be "nurtured of the Lord" every subject should be taught from a Christian viewpoint, the facts of nature should be related to the God of nature (Psalms 19:1-3) and the children should be acquainted with these facts. God should be given his rightful place in the classroom. He should be recognized as the ultimate authority in every realm of learning. The environment of the school should be in harmony with that of the church and the home. Disciplinary problems should be dealt with on the basis of the Word of God.

"A farmer was walking over his farm with a friend, exhibiting his crops, herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep. His friend was greatly impressed and highly pleased, especially with the splendid sheep. He had seen the same breed frequently before, but never had he seen such fine specimens. With great earnestness he asked how he had succeeded in rearing such flocks. His simple answer was, 'I take care of my lambs'" (*Scottish Magazine*).

Are we taking proper care of the lambs? What kind of training are they receiving in the home, at church and in the schools which they are attending? The Apostle Paul said, "Provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

On November 3, 1964, the people of California voted overwhelmingly in favor of Proposition 14 by a 2 to 1 majority. This Constitutional Amendment, which forbade the state or any agency of the state to interfere in any way with the right of any person to sell or rent in accordance with "his absolute discretion," became the law of California. This was in spite of a massive resistance set up in the months of passionate pre-election campaigning by every one of the major Christian denominations (not including the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which made no statement on the issue), by leading civic and educational groups that usually remain aloof from political issues, and by many of the state's leading politicians (including Senator Salinger, who was defeated.)

Now in retrospect it can be seen how detailed a case study of the problems inherent in expressing active Christian social concern is contained in this particular episode. Both those who voted against Proposition 14 and those who voted in favor of Proposition 14 could in all sincerity claim to take a stand on Christian principles. What choice does a Christian make when there are convincing Christian moral reasons for taking both sides of a social issue, or for taking neither side? This article is intended to help elucidate some of the problems that arise in such a situation.

Housing Act

Proposition 14 itself can be understood only against the background of the Rumford Housing Act. This Act was passed in the closing days of the 1962-1963 legislative session in California and went into effect on September 20, 1963. The Rumford Housing Act declared that discrimination in housing accommodations (solely) on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry was against the public policy. The exercise of such authority by the state was interpreted as part of its police power for the protection of the welfare, health, and peace of the people of California.

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Proposition 14

RICHARD H. BUBE

The provisions of the Rumford Act covered public and redevelopment housing; publicly assisted, owner-occupied, single-unit homes; apartments in structures of three or more units; all activities of real estate brokers and salesmen; and activities of persons or firms engaged in the business of housing or mortgage lending. It did not cover housing operated by religious, fraternal, or charitable organizations not for profit; nor privately-financed, single-family homes and duplexes.

In the event of an alleged case of discrimination in violation of the Rumford Act, the complainant filed with the local Fair Employment Practices Commission office. One of the members of the FEPC was assigned to investigate the complaint. If the Commission decided that an act of discrimination had indeed been perpetrated, it could order the respondent to (1) sell or rent the housing accommodations to the complainant, if they were still available, (2) sell or rent like housing accommodations, or (3) pay damages to the complainant in an amount up to \$500. The Commission had no power to enforce such orders and had to take the case to court if the owner did not willingly comply.

Arguments Advanced By Christians

In the following discussion, we shall limit ourselves to arguments advanced for and against Proposition 14 by Christians only, as they were learned from reading or personal discussions. Thus we hope to focus the attention of this article on the diverse manner in which Christian principles can in practice be applied to a specific social problem.

Those in favor of Proposition 14 were almost uniformly voting in protest against the Rumford Housing Act. Those against Proposition 14 often felt that the provisions of the Rumford Housing Act were not the wisest, but that Proposition 14 did too

much more than simply repeal the Rumford Act.

Arguments in favor of Proposition 14 generally fell into the following categories:

1. The state does not have the authority to pass a law that legislates in the area of discrimination against persons or against personal thoughts. The Rumford Act requires a person charged with discrimination to prove that he was not thinking what the complainant charged him with thinking—admittedly a difficult assignment. Thus the Rumford Act is unfair to the property owner and improperly extends the powers of the state over the free actions and choice of the people. The majority of those using this argument felt that the state should pass no law to prevent discrimination, i.e., that the legal approach per se is not proper for this problem. Thus in a positive sense they also approved of the prohibitions of Proposition 14 against future possible anti-discrimination laws or court actions.

2. The political framework of the FEPC investigation, its dependence on politically appointed men, the absence of a jury trial, and the award of the fine to the complainant, are all assailed as violations of basic American rights and practices. The actual mechanics set up by the Rumford Act to deal with discrimination violates the protection due to an American citizen. The possibility of "professional complainants" whose sole occupation is to uncover situations suitable for alleging discrimination, is an undesirable result of requiring that the fine be a "reward" paid to the complainant.

3. Injury to persons engaging in "harmless discrimination" results from the Rumford Act. Special cases where the owner or renter wishes to maintain a certain national or ethnic background to the people with whom he deals are easily imaginable. In such cases the owner is not guilty of discriminating "against" some people, but

rather he is seeking the freedom to discriminate "for" some people. A person's rights to his property should include such free choices.

4. Some felt more extremely than stated in the above arguments that the right of the property owner to have an absolutely free choice, whether this involved what others might regard as discrimination or not, was intrinsic to both the Christian ethic of property rights, and to a political and economic system based on Christian principles. The freedom of a man to do what he pleases with his property can never be a legitimate concern of the state. On this basis, it is a simple step to interpret the provisions of the Rumford Act as a further attempt by the state to gain such powers as would ultimately lead to socialism.

Opposing Stand

Those who opposed Proposition 14 took a stand on the following arguments:

1. Whatever one's attitude toward the Rumford Housing Act, Proposition 14 goes too far. As a Constitutional Amendment, rather than a simple repeal of the Rumford Act, Proposition 14 also exempts the real estate business from the anti-discrimination provisions of the Unruh Civil Rights Act and provides a continuing prohibition on all efforts of the legislature or of the courts to provide legal remedies for people victimized by discrimination.

2. Because of its nature as a Constitutional Amendment and its continuing prohibition on anti-discrimination legislation, Proposition 14 takes the form of an immoral public pronouncement on a basically moral issue. In effect Proposition 14 establishes constitutional immunity for anyone who discriminates in the sale or rental of their housing *solely* because of racial, religious, or ethnic prejudice. It thereby establishes as publicly acceptable what is unacceptable on Christian principles. It enables a discriminating society to match its social practice with its moral ideals by lowering the ideals to conform to the practice.

3. Racial discrimination based on prejudice in any form is un-Christian. Christianity requires involvement of the Christian in the affairs around him. In a non-Christian heterogeneous society, such as that in which we live, it is the duty of every citizen to consider the welfare of all citizens. The

passage of suitable laws is one proper way for securing and protecting individual rights in a free society. Thus the Christian must be concerned for the legal protection of minorities against the abuses of discrimination. Proposition 14 deprives him of the possibility of meeting this concern.

4. A full understanding of the Christian position on private property rights must include both the right to acquire property and the right to dispose of property. Proposition 14 makes it possible for some American citizens to be deprived of their right to acquire property and establishes an uncontrollable despotism of the property owner. Unqualified Christian support of Proposition 14 violates the biblical concept of private property and seems to give credence to the old caricature of Christianity as the defender of the property-landlord and the establisher of the status quo. This is because in effect Proposition 14 says that the right to control one's own property is more important than the right of all people equally to have the right to acquire property without bearing the stigma of irrational prejudice.

Christian Concern

Confrontation with the above arguments may lead the Christian simply to refuse to face the problem at all. But it would seem that whatever options are open to the Christian, the option of refusing to care is not one of them. *How to care* is a problem that faces every Christian. In this context we may well quote the words of the Editor of the *Guardian*: "We are deeply concerned, however, that Christians—as individuals and as churches—attempt to think and act and exert their influence as *Christians* in this whole matter, as in all of life" (Vol. 33, No. 6, p. 95).

The first step is to clearly agree that discrimination based on prejudice is un-Christian. Although many Christians would agree that this statement might properly be applied to racial prejudice, they are less inclined to include ethnic prejudice, and least of all inclined to include religious prejudice. Where should the Christian stand on this fundamental issue?

If it is granted that discrimination on the basis of some kind of prejudice is un-Christian, what is the Christian to do about it? Surely he must in his own life remove such attitudes and actions that reflect prejudice. How far

should he go beyond this? According to the *Guardian's* summary of their position, the National Association of Evangelicals has stated: "Recognizing that not all men have thus been transformed (by the power of the Holy Spirit), we call upon evangelicals everywhere . . . to support on all levels of government such ordinances and legislation as will assure all our people those freedoms guaranteed in our Constitution" (Vol. 33, No. 6, p. 93).

Difficult Questions

If Christians are to enter into their responsibility as citizens to uphold Constitutional freedoms by supporting and enacting legislation, what kind of legislation is proper? How can a law prevent prejudicial discrimination without being a law against the thoughts of persons? Is such a law so bad that it should never be passed regardless of the good that may result, or are the effects of such a law so necessary that possible abuses of the law must be accepted as a calculated risk?

Let us assume that individual Christians will commit themselves to eliminating prejudicial discrimination from their own lives and from the life of the society in which they live by such means as each may in good conscience before God decide. What is the role of the church, as the communion of such Christians, in this matter? Shall the church, both from the pulpit and in council, consider that its responsibility is met by the faithful preaching of the gospel alone, relying on the transforming power of the Holy Spirit to change men's attitudes and thus solve the problem in some distant day? Should the church address itself directly at least to a clear statement of the principles involved in problems of prejudicial discrimination as they are set forth in this article, to the extent that they are based on the Word of God and the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ? Can the church fulfil its mission in the world without plain and forceful efforts to relate the broad principles of Christianity to the specific problems of today?

These are difficult questions. Indeed this article raises far more questions than it attempts to answer. But they are questions that cannot go unanswered. And the answers that individual Christians and the Christian church propose may well be the most critical answers that they have been called upon to give in some time.

LIFE and the Bible

EDWARD J. YOUNG

LIFE has devoted its entire issue of December 25, 1964 to the Bible. This will put a number of ministers on the spot, for people will come to us and say, "Isn't it wonderful, LIFE has a whole issue on the Bible?" And many are likely to think that here is evidence of a real revival. For our part we do not think that it is wonderful at all. Indeed, we are sorry to see this particular issue of the magazine. This is not because we are not interested in the Bible, but it is just because we are interested in the Bible and love it as God's infallible Word, that we are saddened by this issue of LIFE magazine.

Certain things by way of commendation must of course be said. When judged from the standpoint of attractiveness, the issue is superb. It is extremely well done. In this special double issue of LIFE there are some beautiful pictures and photographs. One can browse among these photographs and pictures and truly find enjoyment. Even one who knows little or nothing about art should begin to appreciate the beauty of some of the masterpieces that are herein portrayed. For these things we are indeed grateful.

It is when we begin to read the text that we find ourselves saddened. This is not because the text is inaccurate or unscholarly, but because of the attitude toward the Bible which it manifests. We might proceed throughout the text, taking exception to many statements, and then seek to discuss each one of them. That, however, would take too long, nor is it necessary. For it is evident that what LIFE has done is simply to present in popular form a certain type of modern scholarship. To do this, the editors have summoned the aid of some of the best scholars of the day, men who are capable in their own field, but all of whom write from certain presuppositions which the Bible-believing Christian must consider fallacious.

Perhaps if we seek to understand

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the standpoint from which these articles are written we can the better understand the entire issue and why, from the standpoint of the historic Christian faith, it is not satisfactory.

Modern Negative Criticism

It is probably not inaccurate to say that most men who call themselves biblical scholars do not accept the Bible at face value. They are scholars, but the scholarship which they represent is negative, for it in effect destroys the witness of the Bible to itself and denies the Bible's statements. If this modern negative scholarship is correct, then the conclusion follows that the Bible is merely a human book and not the infallible Word of God. What dominates the field of biblical study today is a negative phenomenon, and we may denominate this phenomenon "modern negative criticism."

This modern negative criticism of the Bible really has its roots in the eighteenth century, when men were exalting the powers of the unaided human reason and seeking to account for the Bible as a human book.

If, however, this movement or phenomenon had its roots in the eighteenth century, it began to grow and prosper during the nineteenth. Indeed, during this century the root grew and the tree became mighty. If we look only at the field of Old Testament we shall see that the nineteenth century was busy with the activity of those who sought to explain the Bible on more or less naturalistic ground. No longer was it held that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. Instead we were told that the first five books of the Bible consisted of various documents and fragments which a later redactor or

editor pieced together. Consequently, inasmuch as these documents came from a time long after that of Moses, they could not be relied upon as presenting genuine history.

Nor could it any longer be held that Isaiah wrote the entire prophecy that bears his name. Rather, for the most part of the nineteenth century it was held that the book was the work either of two men or of a number of men. Toward the close of the nineteenth century the great "discovery" was made that there were three "Isaiahs" and from that time on "scholarship" has insisted that the book is the work of at least three men, probably a great many more.

Man's Opinion or Christ's

Nor did the book of Daniel escape attack. No longer could we attribute it to Daniel, nor maintain that the abomination of desolation was "spoken of by Daniel the Prophet" (an opinion, incidentally, expressed by Jesus Christ). Instead we were told that the book came from the second century B.C. and that it was the work of an unknown author.

These were some of the points that negative criticism asserted. They were widely accepted by those who were unwilling to accept the testimony of the Bible to itself. Those who listened to the voice of Jesus Christ, however, could not go along with these supposed "insights" and "contributions." Rather, they continued to believe that "Moses spake of me," and that "Well did the Holy Spirit speak through Isaiah the prophet, saying . . ." and that Daniel spoke of the abomination of desolation, as Jesus Christ maintained.

It is the negative view which underlies the pages of LIFE. Hence, we need not be surprised to read of a "Second Isaiah," or that Daniel is a pseudonym of someone who lived in

Prevailing dogma uncritically accepted

Amid the polytheism and superstition of the ancient world the first chapter of Genesis stands out like a fair flower in a barren desert.

the second century B.C. It is all here, the same old critical dogmas, stated baldly in *LIFE* with a dogmatism that would suggest that there was little room for difference of opinion. But this is only part of the story. There has been a development of negative criticism since the nineteenth century, and if we are to do full justice to *LIFE* we must take note of this development.

When the nineteenth century closed, the field of Old Testament studies was dominated by a view of Israel associated with the name of a radical German scholar, Julius Wellhausen. This view practically ruled God out of the Bible, and painted a picture of the development of Israel's religious institutions that proceeded upon purely naturalistic principles.

All was not to remain calm and static, however. Wellhausen could boast, and he did boast, that all scholars were agreed with his conclusions, but truth has a way of catching up with those who deny the Bible.

Stumbling at the Supernatural

For one thing, the easygoing view of mankind associated with the older modernism (of which Wellhausen's views were really one phase) was rudely shattered by the first World War. Then too, the spade of the archaeologist turned up some rather uncomfortable facts. These facts were uncomfortable, not for those who believed in the trustworthiness of the Bible, but for those who had climbed on Wellhausen's bandwagon. Some of these facts are presented in the articles in *LIFE*, and in this reviewer's judgment, they constitute the most valuable part of the issue. More and more it came to be seen that the background of the Bible cast light on the Bible itself, and that the picture presented in the Scriptures was remarkably accurate. Consequently some serious modifications of the older views of Wellhausen have had to be made.

It is probably correct to say that today most informed scholars (and the adjective is not superfluous) accept the general picture of Israel's history given in the Bible as substantially correct. They do not, however, accept the pic-

ture in its entirety. What is the reason for this? The reason, we think, is simply the presence of the supernatural in the Bible. Being unwilling to receive the testimony of the Scriptures at face value, for to do so would be to accept the supernatural, i.e., the God of the Bible, scholars have found themselves facing a tremendous problem. That problem is simply, "Whence came the exalted religion of Israel?"

Israel's Unique Religion

Archaeology shows that the background presented in the pages of the Bible is remarkably accurate. That background negative scholarship is willing for the most part to accept. At the same time, negative scholarship will not receive the testimony that "God spake unto Moses," and that "He made known his ways unto the children of Israel." How, then, are we to explain what we find in the Bible? If we reject what the Bible says on this subject, and that is really what *LIFE* has done, how do we explain the content of the Old Testament?

The answer that is most popular is that the institutions of Israel came into Israel from abroad. They were immediately received, it is said, for the most part from the Canaanites, but they go back to other peoples for their origin. Thus, for example, what we read in the first chapter of Genesis is not a divine revelation but is simply the reworking of an old myth which had been handed down from time immemorial (See the page on Creation in *LIFE*). But this raises some problems. How did the Hebrews succeed in presenting such a purified document to the world? For amidst the polytheism and superstition of the ancient world, the first chapter of Genesis stands out like a fair flower in a barren desert. What was there in Israel that enabled the people to work out such a purified doctrine, when other peoples, far more gifted, and with far greater cultures, could never rise above gross superstition? *LIFE* does not answer this question which it raises, nor can it do so. *LIFE* simply accepts uncritically the prevailing dogma of negative biblical criticism at this point.

It is regrettable that the Bible

should be so mishandled. We fear that this issue of *LIFE* will simply increase the dark cloud of doubt and question found in the minds of many concerning the Bible. We had wished for some clear ringing testimony to the faith of the historic Christian church that the Bible is the holy, inerrant, infallible Word of the ever living and true God. We found no such testimony. And that is a pity. A false and perverted view of the Bible is presented, when what the Bible says about itself is ignored.

But the Bible can withstand even such a mistaken view of itself as this one, for the Bible it not what *LIFE* says it is. Scripture is what God says it is, "God breathed and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work" (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

EDITOR'S MAIL BOX

Dear Sir:

I get a little disturbed when a member of the Southern Presbyterian Church wonders if the death-knell is sounding for the OPC in the South. We ought to learn a few lessons from our own history. At the beginning of our church, we dreamed that the enlightened Northern Presbyterians would stampede into our churches. If we look to the Southern Church as we looked to the Northern Church thirty years ago, we will be sadly disappointed again. It is very difficult to change a man sitting in a comfortable church which his father and grandfather helped establish, and where an evangelical sermon is heard from the pulpit of the local church. The Southern Church is working hard to sew up the local church property, just as the Northern Church did when secession was in the air.

The OPC has a great place in the South. Our church is quite a heterogeneous group. There are former Baptists, Methodists, Roman Catholics, Christian Reformed, Northern Presbyterians, Southern Presbyterians, Evangelical Presbyterians, etc., etc. You name it, we have it.

The OPC will never be built in the South by preaching anti-integration, anti-National Council, anti-Communism. It will be built by a faithful

(continued on page 10)

EDITOR

Robert E. Nicholas



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

The Root and the Fruit: Is There No Connection?

One does not have to read much in the secular press to find frequent references to the morals, or rather, the lack of morality, of the day. Writers decry delinquency from preschoolers to collegians; they shudder at the mounting crimes of violence (the city of brotherly love was beset by a recent period of a murder a day). They deplore preoccupation with sex and in particular with its perversion in books, plays, and discussions.

In all of this wringing of editorial typewriters, however, there is very little recognition of the real cause of moral decline and scarcely anything approaching a solution. What ethical standards are acknowledged, are simply on the level of man's own set of values. Such humanism, rooted in the soil of a sinful heart, will produce nothing but the fruits of corruption.

The thing that is missing, of course, is a recognition of the holy and sovereign God and the revealed moral commandments of the Bible. A generation that no longer regards the Bible as the authoritative Word of the living God will pay less and less heed to its moral precepts. You can't expect to find true ethical standards apart from true religion.

An illustration of what we're saying comes to mind from two recent issues of *LIFE* magazine. In the second issue after the one devoted to the Bible (see Dr. Young's review article in these pages) a signed article in *LIFE* condemned a certain film as "a titanic dirty joke, an embarrassment to audiences." In such a review and at times in its editorials *LIFE*, in righteous indignation, has denounced immorality in films, in business, in politics and

elsewhere in society.

Apparently, however, no connection is seen between the prevalent fruit of corruption and its root in the ever more popularized negative attitude toward the Bible and the God of Scripture, so clearly traced by Professor Young. The detractors of Scripture undercut its authority and relevance to man with every chip of their negative and destructive reasoning.

When men are informed that the Bible doesn't mean what it says, they are bound to lose confidence in its Author. When men are being persuaded from pulpit and periodical that Jesus was mistaken about some things, they don't need a college education to conclude that he may have been wrong about sin and death and hell, too. Given a little room for doubt, the perverse heart of man will find further excuse for indulging its sinful desires.

There is, then, a direct connection between the popular disregard for the Bible's authority and the prevalent state of corruption that disturbs even those who make no claim of Christian concern. Human folly is compounded when those who frown at the corruption persist at the same time in fostering the errors from which it springs.

A low view of the Scripture makes for a low view of God himself. If God is not the righteous Judge of all the earth, he need not be feared. If Jesus didn't really mean that "no man cometh unto the Father" but through him as the only Savior and that others are eternally lost, then it isn't surprising that sinful man prefers to "enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," since he is being told that we're all going to heaven anyway, if there is a heaven.

A negative view of the Bible that leads to a mistaken view of God brings forth the corrupted fruit of a decaying society that begins to wallow in its own filth. But before we can look for a change in popular periodicals when they write about the Bible, we shall have to see repentance on the part of scholars and seminaries, writers and preachers, who are still cutting at the roots.

Intolerant Liberalism

It cannot be pointed out too often that much religious liberalism is decidedly illiberal when it comes to its attitude toward the views and rights of others. One thing most liberals are

agreed on is that the conservative or orthodox viewpoint is scarcely worth noting. Nevertheless, their intolerance sometimes goes beyond merely ignoring their opponents and is unmasked in open efforts to suppress the rights of others.

A recent example of such intolerance is the campaign of letters to the Federal Communications Commission protesting the proposed purchase by Faith Theological Seminary of radio station WXUR, Media, Pa. The attack is directed against Dr. Carl McIntire, president of the corporation, although the president of the seminary is actually Dr. Allan MacRae.

The December 24 issue of the *Beacon* carried photostatic copies of some 40 letters from officials of sundry religious bodies and other organizations. Among them were the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, the Greater Philadelphia Council of Churches, the Committee on Church and Society of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, UPUSA, churches of several denominations, some Jewish and Roman Catholic organizations, the chaplain of Beaver College, the Philadelphia Committee for UNICEF, and others.

The not-so-spontaneous letters to the FCC follow pretty much of a pattern, calling McIntire reactionary, negative, and divisive in his attacks upon the NCC and the WCC, and accusing him of bigotry, hate-mongering, and the old falsehood about being defrocked for violation of his ordination vows. Now all of these opinions and charges are irrelevant to the issue, as even the *Christian Century*, to its credit, and some secular papers, pointed out.

This is not a question of whether Carl McIntire is right or wrong on any particular point, nor of whether he is himself intolerant (Christians must be intolerant of falsehood and sin). It has nothing to do with whether people like a man's personality or whether they agree with his attacks on their favorite institutions. It is a clear question of civil and religious liberty, of freedom of speech.

Regardless of who may be involved, Faith Seminary has every right to insist that its application be not discriminated against on the basis of any controversial differences or religious convictions. It has every right to seek a radio outlet for the preaching of the gospel and for attacking error as it sees it.

There are laws to protect people

from slander or libel or other abuses of freedom. But it is enough to make us all shudder if the attitude revealed by these intolerant liberals should sway the decision of the FCC. The right to disagree; to be controversial, even obnoxiously so, in your opinions; to defend your position and to attack that of others—this is religious liberty.

Nobody is compelled to listen to any particular radio broadcast. Nobody is forced to read this periodical or any other. Nobody has to listen to a certain preacher in this or that church. But these institutions do have the right of free speech.

If one institution or man can be unjustly denied his legitimate right to speak, so may others. If in radio, why not on the printed page? If there, why not in the pulpit? Freedom is indivisible. We all have it or none of us has it. — R. E. N.

MAIL BOX (from page 8)

preaching of Christ and Him crucified. Our main emphasis must never be to court the Southern Presbyterian Church, but it must be to go out into the highways and byways and compel sinners to come in.

One man who has started attending our church was talking with his neighbor about church. His neighbor related that he was going to the big church downtown where all the millionaires, the politicians, and the important people go. "Where are you going?" his neighbor asked. "Oh, we are worshipping out at Ocoec. They meet in the Women's Club. No air-conditioning. Hard seats. Gnats all over the place. The only reason the people go out there is the grace of God."

JONATHAN MALE
Maitland, Fla.

Dear Sir:

Historically, a cross before the eyes of worshippers, in the center of a church auditorium, is a mark of an Episcopal or Lutheran church rather than a Reformed or Presbyterian church. Only in periods of doctrinal decline has such an object been displayed in Reformed or Presbyterian churches.

The Westminster standards (and other Reformed creeds such as the Heidelberg Catechism) prohibit these objects as "superstitious devices" (Larger Catechism, Q. 109). There can be no question of the original meaning of the Westminster divines

(or of Ursinus in Q. 97 of the Heidelberg Catechism).

The second commandment, as explained in Deuteronomy 4, lays its emphasis upon the doctrine of God and his spirituality, in opposing the use, in the worship of God, of all images of created things.

It is impossible to avoid superstitious reverence of a cross, on the part of at least some worshippers, when that object is hallowed by the deepest religious devotion, and is placed in direct vision. Such superstitious reverence is forbidden by the second commandment. The outward visible sign of the death of Christ is not the cross but the Lord's Supper.

It is time that Reformed or Presbyterian churches with crosses should take steps to remove them (Larger Catechism, Q. 108) and that churches planning new buildings should require their architects to adhere to Reformed practice. The true ornament of the church is the pure proclamation of the Word of God and the faithful administration of the sacraments. Beauty may then be readily achieved by architectural development of these, and the other, Scriptural principles of worship.

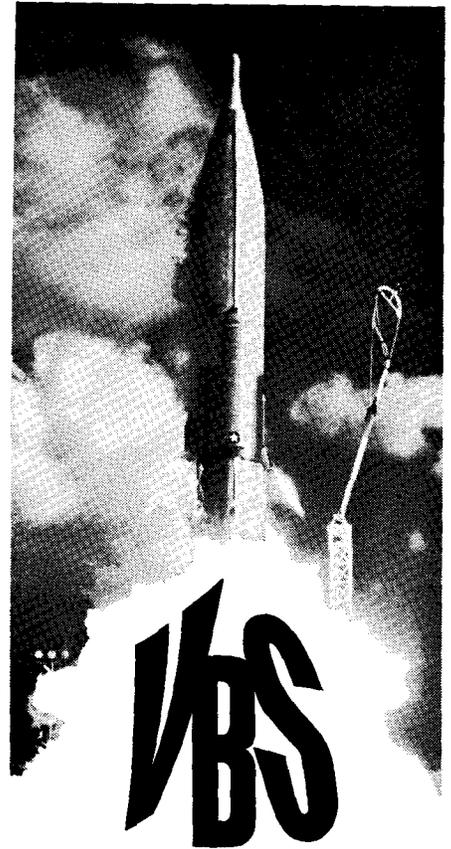
ARTHUR W. KUSCHKE, JR.
Oreland, Pa.

Dear Sir:

I enjoyed Mr. Stanton's article (Is 'Religion' Enough?) in the November issue. I would, however, like to present a dissenting opinion on the matter of the Supreme Court's decisions on religion in the public schools. . . . The argument for Christian schools is not really buttressed by these decisions as they are merely irresponsible intrusions into an area where the Court has no business. It is to the nation's shame and irreparable loss if the Court is not reprimanded by constitutional amendment or congressional resolution.

The question of which religion the local school board is to favor, be it Romanism, Atheism, Buddhism, Calvinism, etc., ought to be a matter for it alone to work out. The intrusion of Federal dictatorship whether by the Congress or the Court into a local community "solves" their religious problems only in the sense that it annihilates the local contestants and establishes the religion of atheistic secularism. It is sort of like curing a headache by cutting off the head.

NORMAN L. JONES, JR.
Artas, S. D.



FOR THE SPACE AGE

No one knows what changes may take place as man continues his probes into space. Will space stations soon replace remote corners of the earth as the new frontiers of science—and of evangelism? What new media of communication will Christ's messengers have at their disposal to spread the Good News?

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Reflections on Reactions

ROBERT K. MORRIS

I have been following, with great interest and strong feelings, the recent discussion in the *Guardian* concerning race relations. I would like, first, to make a few general observations on the discussion as a whole.

One can find in these writings many footprints of what we might call the "either-or people." *Either* you are a patriotic, orthodox Christian, segregationist, *or* you are a pinkish, religious-liberal, integrationist. If you feel attracted to some of the points of view in *both* camps, then you are guilty of detestable compromise somewhere along the line.

We know well by this time how our Communist enemies exploit any issue they can for their own purposes. Still, far too many people are taken in and reason this way: If the Commies say they are for integration, it must be bad. I'll be a real red-blooded American; I'll fight this integration thing like sin. If the "Modernists" plug for integration, then I'll show everybody my true-blue orthodox colors; I'll be a red hot exponent of segregation. (I, for one, dread the day when the Communists wake up to these thought patterns of ours and start advocating things like marriage, fiscal responsibility, and Christian schools.)

Dr. Machen's name was invoked a time or two in the recent discussion. Some seemed sure he might, were he to come back to visit today, dash about the *Guardian* office shouting, "Ichabod!" Dr. Machen had his struggles with the "either-or people." Remember? *Either* you favor the Prohibition Amendment, *or* you favor drunkenness, and also the evil liquor interests. Were Dr. Machen here, he might find fault with some of the logic employed by some of the writers, and he might have his doubts about some of the examples of exegesis of Scripture we have been seeing, but I can't believe he would condemn the editorial policy throughout this present discussion of the race problem.

We have seen examples of rather careless classification of (a) things God forbids, (b) things God allows,

and (c) things God ignores. In the public library we can find musty, dusty, apologies for Negro slavery. John C. Calhoun's speeches on the Senate floor are among the least radical of these. Slavery wasn't immoral. No, indeed! It is a benevolent, yes, a righteous institution. So many of these old defenses for slavery start with, "God really doesn't *forbid* it." Then on to "God is indifferent toward it." Then, as often as not, near the end of the apology, we find that, "God really rather likes it."

This same progression carries over to modern discussions favoring segregation. The progression is tacit in Dr. Smith's article. "I shall examine the question of whether segregation *per se* is necessarily sinful." Then, as we read further, sure enough, Dr. Smith is talking much about such things as the Tower of Babel and how God possibly wants us to carry on the segregation principle. Segregation prevents the spread of sin. Now we have segregation a positive *good*.

Incidentally, aren't there similarities between racial pride and Babel pride? Couldn't Babel play an integrationist tune—let's not have any single, proud, sin-compounding race? Babel could backfire for the segregationists!

Questions Raised by Dr. Smith's Article

"Race" in the sense of Caucosoid, Mongoloid, or Negroid distinctions is one thing. "Race" in the sense of the Israel-Philistine, redeemed-reprobate distinction is something very different. No good purpose that I can see can possibly be served by any discussion which constantly jumps from one of these meanings to the other with no warning to the reader.

Mr. Morris, a 1954 graduate of Westminster Seminary, is teaching in a private school in Spartanburg. He and his wife (the former Elaine Verbage) are the parents of three boys and a girl. His unsolicited paper will likely conclude our series on this particular topic—at least for the present.

Under the sub-topic, "New Testament and Segregation," Dr. Smith is really arguing that the mere *existence* of distinct racial groups is an indication of divine favor of the *continuation* of this barrier. If this principle is true and we carry it to its logical conclusion, we had better toss out anesthetics, drugs, dentures, and Saulk vaccine. Suspect also are electrical appliances, autos, air travel and certainly space travel. These humanly devised extensions of natural God-given powers must then dishonor him.

On this same point: If the passage often quoted from Paul's Athenian address—God has set "the bounds of their habitation"—means what many people say it does, that God wants each racial group to stay put, then we are undone! God intended for the black man to stay in Africa, the yellow man in Asia, etc. Talk about the immorality of the Revolutionary War! The white Pilgrim disobeyed God when his foot first touched the sands of Plymouth shores. No! He fell before that! It began when he rashly left the shores of his own "kind" in Europe.

Perhaps we should consider bringing the Gaffins, Duffs, Hunts, Hards (but not the Uomotos) back to the original bounds of their habitation, the U.S.—or is it England?

In two places, Dr. Smith makes certain predications of Negroes. In areas of much crime "the Negro race has played a leading part in this increase of crime." Which Negroes? If there is such a thing as *racial* guilt, I'm resigning from the white race. After all, white men for centuries dragged black families from the "bounds of their habitation" in Africa, shipping entire families under frightful conditions, to be sold like cattle in America. White men wiped out six million Jews. White men kill their presidents. They kill little girls in Sunday schools. Of course I am being very unfair, just as unfair as those who make predications concerning Negroes in general, saying Negroes, *per se*, commit many crimes, or should be kept out of churches, schools, restaurants, motels, and parks, or simply kept "in their place."

Then there was a passage about Negroes going to white churches, not to worship, but to cause trouble. As to these Negroes who possibly come to white churches only to prove a point, I would ask two questions: Is it just possible that their point is a good one

and should be made in *some* way if not in this particular way? If you felt that the motives of the Negro worshippers were questionable, what about the motive of the white worshippers who want to keep them out? Surely it is not primarily to carry out the divine plan going back to Babel. I would like to discover the real point of some of my fellow whites in some of the racial positions they take.

How can Dr. Smith harmonize his approval (even with his "Not the Lord, but I say" qualifications) of separate pews for colored worshippers, with a statement later on? There he recalls our Lord's admonition to seek *humbly* the lower seat. I can see it now! Insisting on *both* of these could lead to a token of humility in the sanctuary even better than foot washing. What a picture—white worshippers, humbly sneaking into the Negro pews! The only other possibility I can think of by way of harmony of the statements is that the Negro areas would be places of very high honor. No, then the Negroes should humbly seek entrance to white areas. I guess I just can't figure it out.

Personal Observations

May I close on a personal note. We came to South Carolina to live about a year and a half ago, and I pass on our general impressions for whatever they are worth. First of all, we feel a greater loyalty to our town and state than we anticipated. We like the people more than we expected we would! We thought we'd find two

violently opposed camps in the race issue, but no one seemed to be talking about it.

As time went on we found at least six distinct, quite silent, camps of white people on this issue, with various overlaps. There are very few of those of whom a fellow Southerner once said, "They have to have something to look down on, and brother, if they don't own li'l ole houn' dogs, that ain't easy!" Then there are a few white Christians, sweet and harmless, who allow that separation of the races is the somewhat unhappy, but clear, will of the Lord. There are a few others, just as sweet and harmless, who feel, on a religious-liberal basis, that segregation is immoral. There is no doubt a potentially violent auxiliary wing for each of these last two groups, but as yet no KKK or freedom riders have been by this part of the South, so these remain unignited.

The largest group of all, in my opinion, is an inarticulate but active group, largely secular in their thinking. Many are nominal church members but feel that the churches, liberal and conservative denominations alike, are rather fumbling, bumbling organizations. Among these peoples foolish traditions are weak enough and fair play strong enough to enable them to consider themselves integrationists. In general they oppose much that characterizes big government, labor unions, criminal-coddling, and sit-ins; they generally favor such things as a tougher policy toward Communism and more individual and state respon-

sibility. These were, in the main, pro-Goldwater people last November.

Within the past two years Spartanburg has integrated the lunchrooms downtown, our beautiful new library and high school. Our local men's college, Wofford, declared the school open to qualified Negroes (and a number of churches throughout the state promptly cut off financial support in the most rapid and decisive action that they had taken in many a year). Nearby Clemson University admits colored students. These modest but real accomplishments were made without the help of churches, liberal or otherwise. There were no freedom riders, sit-ins, or invocation of civil rights legislation.

There is one especially disturbing thought expressed in some of this discussion—the notion that the church should remain silent on the racial question. The church has already been too silent, too long, in too many areas. The church wails about secularism in our society, yet the church backs away from issue after issue. Secular forces step into the vacuum and pretty soon we have governmental diaconates and unpopular civil rights bills.

Where is the great Reformed ideal—the Christian world and life view—hiding? What have we come to when some of my fellow Christians suspect my patriotism or theology when I say I would be most happy to have the Herbert Olivers as next door neighbors and the young Olivers as students in my classroom and as classmates and chums for my children?

RIGHTS IN GENERAL

JOHN C. RANKIN

With the subject of *rights* so much to the fore as it has been of late, of a sudden we found a new and special interest in it. Presently, so it seemed, rights were breaking out all over the place. And it dawned upon us that there is such a thing as *rights in general* as well as civil, private, public, majority, minority, property and human rights. The more we thought upon the matter the more we were struck with the fact that rights as such is a subject, as we used to say, to "conjure with."

A multitude of questions arise and

press for attention when we think of rights — questions of whose? and what? and why? and what to do? In certain circumstances the question may arise as to whether to claim or relinquish them, to resist their invasion or, as the road signs sometimes say, to "yield" the right of way. The Savior said, "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." One may well conclude that the full range and extent of the subject as a whole is beyond all comprehension and description. For included are not only all the rights of the creature but also

all the rights of him who is the Creator-Lord of all.

As for the rights of men and things, all of which are in absolute subordination to the rights of God, consider the realm of the inanimate creation. Do the heavenly bodies have a right to their places, to all their motions and configurations? Do the land masses and the seas have theirs? Gave not the Lord "to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandment," namely, "Hitherto shalt thou come but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed"? What then does this mean but that the continents have their rights under God and the seven seas have theirs?

And what of the animate creation, the lower orders of the living creatures? Do dogs and cats have rights?

One would think so to see what pampered pets are sometimes made of them! More seriously, remember God's covenant with Noah and "every beast of the earth" (Genesis 9:8-17).

Coming closer to ourselves, there are individual rights and social; rights in and of the home, the church, the state and of society as a whole. Take the home for example. Do not husbands have their rights (such as they are and what there is of them) and wives theirs? What about the rights of the parents versus those of the children (at least in some homes, if not in others); the rights of the son in distinction from the servant; of the host, from the guest?

Life, Liberty, and Pursuit

To come back to our own selves again, we say that "we the people" have our rights, namely, "to life, liberty and the pursuit of" whatever legitimate objects we may have in mind. But then, we cannot overlook the force of that word "legitimate" and must perforce bear in mind that not only society in general and the state have something to say, but also he who alone is the Lord of all has the first and final word to say about what we may or may not do. "The right to life," we say. Yes, but not if blood-guiltiness has stained our life. Whether the state says so or not, there is no further right to life under God.

As for "liberty," what about the restrictions which more and more are being placed upon what we fondly call our liberties? Where are the rights and privileges of other days? Do we not sometimes envy the birds "that fly in the freedom, that fills all the space twixt the earth and the sky"? Prize as we may our precious, ancient, blood-bought liberties, they are more and more subject to curtailment, if not suppression.

Observations of the kind just considered remind us that this subject of rights is not only vastly intriguing; it is also deeply serious. And the details are endless. One great need would seem to be to set all particulars in right and true perspective in relation to the total view. Of course the rights of God come first. Except for the rights given to us of God in his grace all the so-called rights of men melt away into nothingness. For, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" What indeed, except for the mindfulness of the Almighty toward him!

Rights and Responsibilities

We may not linger, but in addition to those rights of men listed above, regard the following. There is the right to personal possessions and their enjoyment; the right to individual initiative, private enterprise and personal liberty under law. There are all the rights of personal self-realization and expression. There is the right to agree or disagree; the right to know; to stand by ones personal beliefs and convictions, to contend for the faith; the right to judge (legal) and to judge righteous judgment (moral); the right to stand up for ones own or another's rights; the right of association or disassociation, of integration or segregation. There are rights civic, social, political, economic, religious, ecclesiastical; the rights of the spirit as over against those of the flesh.

Always in close connection with our rights and liberties is the whole matter of responsibility and duty. "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." "Render therefore to all their dues."

We are faced with the fact that the Bible divides the members of the human race into two parts—the righteous and the wicked, the saved and the lost. So the question comes as to the rights of these two kinds or classes as they stand in the sight of God. The sin-situation being what it is, what moral right do sinners have to any of their so-called rights?

As for the believers, the whole sum of Christian doctrine bears directly upon the rights conferred upon us under God in his mercy and grace. Furthermore the Bible speaks explicitly in terms of our rights: "The meek shall inherit the earth," and of the "right to become the sons of God," and the "right to the tree of life."

But what about the rights of the impenitent? There is a sense in which in the here and now all men alike are "under grace," while God holds back his wrath.

As we have seen, two major subdivisions of the subject are to be distinguished. Men, it may be, have their God-given rights under God. But infinitely transcending and over-riding any and all rights of any and all creatures are the rights of God.

Conscious of the fact that orthodox belief and conviction will readily supply what needs to be said at this point, we nevertheless suggest the following.

(1) First, the right of God to be God, as he is, and according as he is revealed. He is absolute and ultimate, infinite and perfect. "God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth." He is, and has a right to be, the one only living, true and triune God; self-existent, self-contained and altogether self-sufficient. And of course God has a right to be what he is simply by virtue of what, in and of himself alone, he is.

(2) Here the doctrine of creation enters in, and who can gainsay the fact that the Creator has a right to his own creative action and to its outcome. God has an absolute right to his creation in its every aspect and dimension, inclusive of every individual person and thing.

(3) Finally, he has a right to all that pertains to himself in relation to his own creation. To him belong all the rights of his own eternal plan and purpose in it all: the right to fore-ordain, for his own glory, whatsoever comes to pass; the right to preserve and govern all his creatures and all their actions.

The Rights of God

God has a perfect right to his own self-revelation and to its inscripturation in his most holy Word, in opposition to all human speculation and opinion. On the ground of what he has revealed and communicated he has full right to absolute and perfect faith and obedience in subjection to him and his Word.

More particularly God has a right to save or to leave unsaved, to bless or to curse, to have mercy on whom he will have mercy and whom he will to harden. He has sovereign right to give or to refrain from giving, to give or to take away as seemeth good in his sight, to raise up or to cast down, to kill or to make alive, to build or to destroy; in short, to do according to all his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

The Lord's portion is his people and he has a right to save his people, to bless his own inheritance and to remember them and lift them up forever. Let us, therefore, ever endeavor to render unto him all that humble reverence, love and praise which is his due. He is the Lord, and beside him there is no God!

Letter from Aunt Polly

DEAR YOUNGER FOLKS:

When we visited many of you we told you how long the school day is for school children on Taiwan. They have to work so hard to pass government exams that they do not have much time for church and Sunday school. Their holidays are being cut short, too. It was, therefore, a very happy thing that two years ago they were given a holiday on December 25 to celebrate the adoption of their national constitution.

About the time this letter reaches you, Chinese boys and girls throughout the world, even in New York and San Francisco and other American cities, will be making last-minute preparations for the biggest and happiest holiday of their year. It is the Chinese New Year, which comes on February 2 on our calendar. The holiday period will last as much as a month for some, but only a week for those who are doing poorly in school, or who have to prepare for entrance exams to junior or senior high and college.

February 2 on our calendar will be the first day of the first month of the new year, according to the way the Chinese have reckoned time for thousands of years. They reckon the months by the revolution of the moon around the earth.

In these present days of communication by radio and travel by jet plane the Chinese have been brought very close to the rest of the world. So for business purposes they use the same calendar that we do. In America we reckon time by the revolution of the earth around the sun. Now many calendars published in Asia have the two time systems, the solar and the lunar, printed together. At a glance you can see what the day is in both the Western and the Chinese way of reckoning time.

Both Chiang K'ai Shek's (Jang Kai Shek) Nationalist government on Taiwan and Mao Tsi Tung's (Mau Dz Dung) Communist government on the China mainland have tried to wean the Chinese from their old, old calendar. But the people have held on to that familiar calendar except where they have been forced to leave it in order to get along in our shrinking world. Perhaps you wonder why. Well, just as our calendar is filled with holidays of Christian origin, so the Chi-

nese lunar calendar is filled with religious feast days. Every month has some religious festival. To give up their calendar would be to change the culture and customs of the Chinese peoples for centuries.

Foremost on the list, of course, is the Chinese New Year. It covers the first three days of the first moon and is celebrated in lavish style. Stores and factories are boarded or barred up. Should one be open you can be pretty sure that the family of the owner is taking care of it. Every home expects its children to be present for supper on New Year eve in order to be up early on New Year morning. It is then that they take part in a ceremony venerating the ancestors and elders, grandparents and parents who may be present.

Just as there are differences in the manner in which you celebrate Christmas and in the way your neighbors celebrate it, so there are differences in the way Chinese families celebrate the veneration of ancestors. Some simply write the names of ancestors on paper and bow to them. Others who follow closely the traditions of old will set out food for the spirits of their dead ancestors. They will burn candles or incense and kowtow (Chinese is ke toe)—go down on the knees and hit the head on the floor three times—in front of their elder relatives, ancestor's pictures, or names of their ancestors written on a tablet.

Christians do not take part in this ceremony, for it is generally thought of as a worshipful veneration. Often at New Year time, therefore, parents may be very unhappy or even angry at a member of the family who has become a Christian. Let me tell you about a young man named Fah Hsien.

In the summer of 1962 this young man, through the witness of an uncle, became a Christian. He was a very strong Christian from the beginning. Several months after Fah Hsien's conversion he came to teacher's college in Taichung to study to be a grammar school teacher. He stayed two years and during that time he attended gospel services with almost perfect regularity. There are seven regular services held each week in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church's Reformed Gospel Bookroom in Taichung. That is how we got to know him so very well.

He never told us, however, what had happened to him on the first New Year morning of his Christian life. His uncle told Uncle Dick about it several months afterwards. On that first New Year morning of his Christian life—1963 on our calendar—modest and unusually quiet Fah Hsien refused to take part in venerating his parents and ancestors as it was done in his household. His father became very angry and drove him from the house. He spent his vacation visiting friends and slept in the small church in his village.

There is no such thing as work for students during vacation on the overpopulated island of Taiwan. What could Fah Hsien do for food? Well, the Lord provided that month for him just as God will provide for all who trust him. As I have said, he had been very faithful upon the worship services. He had also become a teacher of children's Bible classes, so we had given him a student's Bible when he left Taichung for his vacation. As I was wrapping the Bible for him, something inside seemed to keep telling me that since this fine young Christian was so poor we ought to give him something for his bodily needs too. I drew out a \$100 bill (Chinese)—about \$2.50 in your money—and placed it in the Bible. And that turned out to be enough to keep him in food for a month when he was put out of his home!

We prayed much for Fah Hsien's parents during 1963. The next New Year day his father was not at all unkind while the ceremony was going on. Later, however, he became drunk while celebrating with some of his friends. In this drunken state he came home and set the bed on fire in which Fah Hsien was sleeping. Fortunately he had not fallen soundly asleep and jumped out and escaped before the flames came through the bedding.

I pray just about every day for this precious young man, who was my right-hand-helper for nearly two years. I am wondering and waiting to hear how his New Year will pass this coming February 2. It will be his third as a Christian. I think we should all be praying very much for Chinese Christians, especially for the younger ones, at their New Year season. Uncle Dick and I will be praying for them. Won't you join us?

Lovingly, AUNT POLLY GAFFIN
Abington, Penna.

THE BIBLE FOR OUR TIMES

"Zacchaeus . . . today I must abide at thy house . . . And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner" (Luke 19).

Our Lord was not very class-conscious. He could enjoy a rendezvous with a religious ruler one day and minister to the needs of a degraded woman the next. So we are not surprised to find Jesus as a self-invited guest in the home of a notorious sinner. Christ came "to fulfill the law" and he did so in the most explicit manner. However, he was not bound by custom. Nor did he find it necessary to curry favor with man at the expense of losing the approval of God.

The Lord Jesus knew full well that God is no respecter of persons. He was sure that divine grace is not restricted to the wise of this world nor to the mighty. He realized that the wealthy, the famous, or even the morally upright do not have a corner on heaven. If heaven were reserved for such, Jesus would never have been found in Zacchaeus' house that day.

Another time Jesus made it crystal clear who are acceptable in God's sight. He said, "I am not come to call (those who think they are) the righteous, but (those who know they are) sinners to repentance" (Matthew 9:13).

Prayer: Lord God, help me to respect those whom thou dost respect. Grant me the love of the Savior for them. Forbid that I should be a stumbling block in their path. Keep me from being so full of pride that I cannot invite one of thy little ones to come to thee who art almighty. Give me grace, I pray, to give them a warm welcome to thy church. This I ask through Jesus Christ. Amen.

RALPH E. CLOUGH

Let's Make It Two Years

EDWARDS E. ELLIOTT

"The General Assembly shall meet at least once in every two years." This is how the Presbytery of Southern California would have the Orthodox Presbyterian Church rewrite its constitution (F.G. XI, 7, Proposed F.G. XVI, 4). Other Presbyteries have offered such an overture before. But such overtures were usually beclouded with other ideas, such as restructuring the Assembly into a representative body.

With the growth of the number of ministers and elder-commissioners who have access to the Assembly and its travel privileges, it surely seems sensible to take some steps toward modification. But whom shall we exclude? It is at this point that the Assembly has been baffled. No minister would vote for his own exclusion, ordinarily. None of us would exclude the Seminary professors. Nor would we exclude the previous moderator or clerks. None of us would exclude the general secretaries of the Standing Commit-

tees. And of course, none of us would exclude the ruling elders. By what formula shall we slice the Assembly?

Until a formula is worked out, we had better think along another line. It was John De Waard who once said to an Assembly, "Gentlemen, you are meeting too often!" Robert Marsden once had it in mind to schedule the Assembly a little later each year, until finally we could skip one altogether. But he found himself frustrated by the constitution.

In 1964, the Assembly convened in April. This year it will convene in July. The following year, after perhaps nine months, it will again convene. There is no way to avoid it. But after that, there is, if the overture is adopted.

Now why is it desirable to extend the gap between Assemblies to two years? It may not always be desirable, and the Assembly would have a perfect liberty to adjourn to meet within a year for regular work. But the cost

in money, time, and energy should be considered.

What does an Assembly cost? The answer given by the Rev. Robley Johnston is "Six Dollars a Minute!" The \$5000 travel fund covers only a fraction of the true costs. The salaries of the men who are gathered is also a large factor. It is not a vacation week. It is all business, and for this the church picks up the tab.

What does an Assembly do? Much of what is done, is routine. This routine business would require no more time if it were done every two years. The election of officers, the handling of requests for early departure with travel compensation, the listening to fraternal greetings, responses, and reports concerning half a dozen related churches, the listening to institutional pleas, the erection of committee classes, the setting of date and place of next Assembly (a surprisingly major time consumer), all fall into this grouping. Of course, the time of eating, sleeping, and recreation would be practically the same.

What effect would this gap have on the work of the Standing Committees? The Presbytery of Southern California requested that article 52 of the Rules of General Assembly be amended to allow election to six-year terms instead of the present three. The truth is, the church must place great trust in the accumulation of experience built up in the pool of available men who readily can attend meetings of committees and sub-committees. And it is not uncommon for individuals to build up 20 years of background in committee work. Whether such men are elected to serve three years or six years, makes little practical difference. These are the men who are doing the work, term after term.

What would be the effect on cases appealed to General Assembly? In recent years, such appeals have been negligible. But the Assembly is not beyond the reach of an urgent appeal. If there is the prospect of a continuing problem, the Assembly can adjourn to take it up later. It conceivably could also meet in special session.

But this amendment proposed by the Presbytery of Southern California, would give the Assembly the liberty not to meet every year. And this liberty is important, as a first step in the inevitable restructuring of the General Assembly.

THE CHANGING SCENE

HENRY W. CORAY

Charles Hodge (1797-1878) has been labeled the "Nester of orthodoxy." Sprung from hardy Huguenot stock, he received his formal education at Princeton College and Seminary, studied abroad and eventually took a post on the faculty of the Princeton school of the prophets. He held forth under the ponderous title of Professor of Exegetical, Didactic and Polemical Theology. He wrote a number of commentaries, but his opus magnum was his *Systematic Theology*, a compendium of Reformed doctrine still widely studied. He also originated the scholarly journal, *The Princeton Theological Review*, now unfortunately out of circulation.

"Three thousand divinity students sat at his feet to learn their theology — more parsons, Presbyterian and otherwise, than were trained by any other American in the nineteenth century," John Oliver Nelson says of him. "Thousands more drank deeply from his *Systematic Theology*, in three volumes. Like a mighty army, preachers, teachers, and college presidents bore forth from Princeton town the somber banner of Charles Hodge, to an incalculably great part of the nation. No other alumnus of Princeton College, possibly excepting Woodrow Wilson, shaped so deeply the thought-molds of his day."

Most people of Reformed persuasion seem to lean away from movements sometimes called revivals, or awakenings. It is interesting that Charles Hodge in his college days experienced a renewal of spirit that left a mellowing mark on him all through his life. Of that stirring on the Princeton campus President Ashbel Green wrote in his report to the trustees: "The divine influence seemed to descend like the silent dew of heaven, and in about four weeks there were very few individuals in the College edifice who were not deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of spiritual and eternal things. There

was scarcely a room; perhaps not one; which was not a place of earnest, secret devotion."

Student prayer meetings were formed. "Charles," records his biographer, "seemed to demonstrate a new buoyancy and warmth . . . He was deeply excited about his Christian faith, eager to tell others about it, finding in it a personal allegiance which brought his whole life into focus."

Modern students could profitably take a page from this segment of the career of Charles Hodge. Could it be that in the changing scene of today's intellectual life, bands of students might be given vision to unite together in prayer that there should be "a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees," a sweeping movement of God's Spirit that might turn the hearts and minds of collegians to the One in whom are laid up all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge?

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In a recent issue of *Christian Century* Leroy Davis has an article in which he indicates that there is a definite split developing between the pulpit and the pew. And Robert McAfee Brown, Professor of Religion at Stanford, in *Presbyterian Life* comments on this same rupture. Admitting his disappointment on the outcome of the California vote on Proposition 14, a political issue with moral implications, Dr. Brown writes, "What is discouraging, however, is the astonishing distance that was revealed between the pulpit and the pew. Al-

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**I have read of the marvelous disappearing acts
Performed by your magicians Houdini, Blackstone and Thurston,
But what impresses me even more
Is the miraculous suddenness
With which your merchants, advertisers and radio pitchmen
Cause the word "Christmas" to vanish from the American scene
On December the twenty-sixth.**

—The Old Chinese Philosopher

The Presbyterian Guardian

though church leaders spoke with virtual unanimity, the message did not get through. Church members went to the polls and voted exactly the opposite of the moral consensus proclaimed by their priests, pastors, and rabbis. There must be a sober moment of truth among churchmen as they ponder the implications of this fact, and realize how inconsequential their voices have become in the public arena."

What never seems to occur to many frustrated church leaders is that, having drifted from the authority of the Word of God, substituted a man-made theology thereby creating a vacuum in the souls of laymen, why should these same laymen take seriously moral and political pronouncements sounded from the pulpit? Isn't it just possible that the laity is sharper than these ecclesiastics realize? And shouldn't the widening gap between pulpit and pew cause the messengers of the prophetic message, instead of building up a resentment against listeners, to start taking inventory by a new approach: "Let us search and try *our* ways" ?

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In the April 22nd edition of the *Wall Street Journal* there is printed this statement:

Asserts the Rev. Eugene Carson Blake, speaking for the Presbyterian Church: "Prayer is cheapened when it is used as a device to quiet unruly children, and the Bible loses its true meaning when it is looked upon as a moral handbook for minors."

Since Dr. Blake has publicly repudiated the great biblical doctrine of justification by faith, this is not surprising. One wonders what in Blake's mind the "true meaning" of the Bible really is.