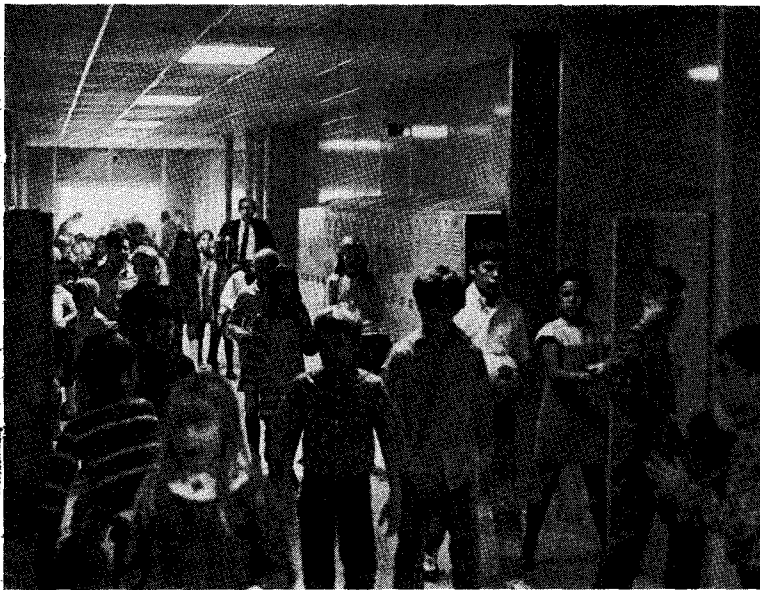


# The Presbyterian Guardian

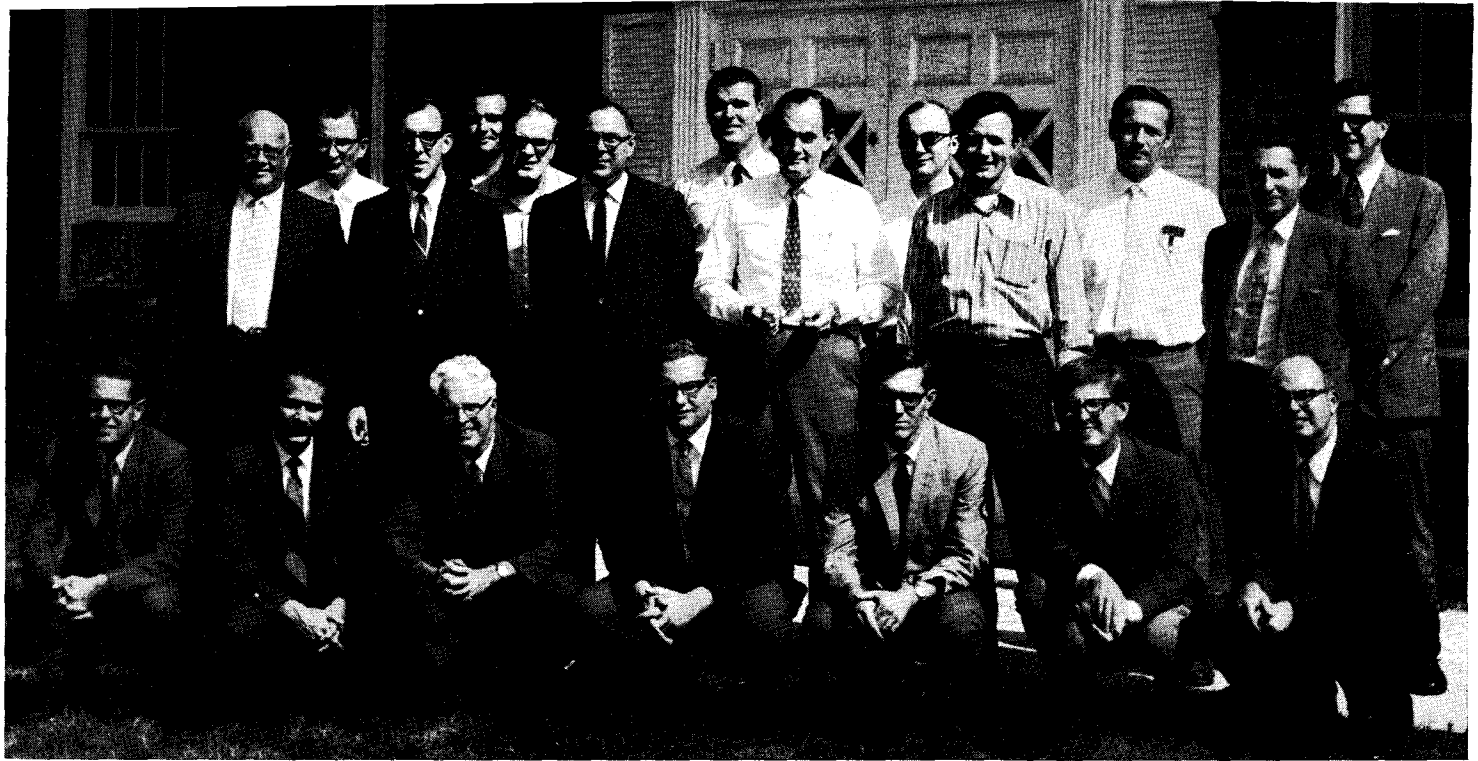
VOL. 39, NO. 6 / NOVEMBER 1970



**PHILADELPHIA MONTGOMERY  
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

*A new Building for "Phil-Mont"  
for God-centered education*





From left to right: Front row: R. Logsdon, elder at Burtonsville; A. Harris, Inter-Varsity staff worker; C. Ellis, pastor at Silver Spring; Vandewaggon, elder in Baltimore; B. Hofford, pastor at Burtonsville; N. Gummel, elder in Silver Spring; L. Vail, pastor at Vienna. Middle: E. De Velde, pastor in Baltimore; N. de Haas, elder in Silver Spring; R. Lauxstermann, and B. Harlow, elders at

Vienna; R. Rogers, from Herndon; R. Wirth, pastor in Manassas; R. Lucas, teacher. Back row: M. Fox, and W. Money, elders in Silver Spring; E. Urban, pastor in Herndon and Leesburg; L. Miller, elder from Silver Spring; S. van Houte, minister; R. Horner, pastor in Lynchburg. Not present: J. Betzold, Army chaplain now in Viet Nam; M. Whitman, pastor in Williamsburg.

## The New Presbytery of The Mid-Atlantic

### Cover Story

## Phil-Mont Dedicates New Building

DRESHER, PA. — On November 15, Philadelphia Montgomery Christian Academy dedicated its new building. Housing grades K-12, the all-steel, all-electric building is the result of hours of effort and the sacrificial support of many.

The dedication service was held in several different rooms of the new building—which has no auditorium as yet—with over eight hundred in attendance. Dr. Joel Nederhood, radio minister of the *Back to God Hour* of the Christian Reformed Church, addressed the gathering.

The Christian Academy is committed to the Reformed Faith, but welcomes children from more than fifty different evangelical churches in the area. It has a faculty of twenty, and 330 students enrolled. The school is located on an attractive twenty-acre site at 1701 Jarret-town Road, Dresher, Pa. 19025.

Vienna, Va. — On September 26, the Rev Laurence N. Vail, pastor of Grace Church in Vienna, convened the newest presbytery of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. As established by the recent General Assembly, the presbytery includes the churches and chapels in the states of Maryland and Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The accompanying photograph shows those ministers and ruling elders who met to begin the new organization.

Congregations are located in Baltimore, Burtonsville, and Silver Spring, Maryland and in Vienna, Virginia. In addition, there are chapels in Herndon, Manassas, Lynchburg, and Williamsburg, and a new one just beginning in Leesburg, Virginia.

The new presbytery elected Mr. Vail as its moderator; the Rev. Barry R. Hofford, stated clerk; the Rev. Richard J. Wirth, assistant clerk; and ruling elder Richard E. Lauxstermann, treasurer. Plans for a family camp next summer were initiated. Preliminary organization of committees was accomplished.

In his convening prayer, Mr. Vail asked God to "enable us as a presbytery to work hard and work together in furthering thy gospel and building thy church." The Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic has a formidable task before it, with many opportunities, and an energetic start toward its goals. May the Lord bless their efforts!

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# There IS a Reason for the O.P.C.

DANIEL DeMASTER

June 11, 1936 is an important date to the members of a certain, rather small church. It is important because that was when this church was established. The church is important because I am a member.

This church, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, is unlike some churches for it has remained true to the Bible and its truths. This church holds to the Reformed Faith, or Calvinism, which goes back to the apostle Paul. It is not something added to Christianity by man; it is Christianity.

But since Christianity has been around for about two thousand years, what makes this young denomination so special? Perhaps its importance can be shown in how and why it was established.

The first members of this small church came from the much larger Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (now the United Presbyterian). This large church once held very strongly to the gospel; but slowly over the years liberalism had crept in.

## How it all began

It started in 1801 with a plan of union between the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists. They wanted to work together so that the settlers in the West could form united churches. But I doubt if it was worth it. During the thirty-six years of this union, the "New School" theology of the Congregationalists crept into the whole church. This theology denied original sin and taught a universal atonement, contrary to the Presbyterian creeds. There were even two seminaries, Auburn and Union, that taught this "New School" doctrine.

In 1903 the Cumberland Presbyterian Church merged with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. To do this, the Presbyterians had to change their creeds to allow for certain Arminian doctrines held by the Cumberland group. The Presbyterians gave up some biblical truths, and no merger is worth that.

## Modernism—20th century idolatry

Before this school year, I thought of modernism as something that disturbed easily-excited ministers of our denomination. But now I think of it as the twentieth-century idolatry, for it really worships man and his reasoning power. The modernist says the Bible is wrong because he cannot explain certain things in it by science. On this basis, he would deny the substitutionary atonement of Christ, Christ's bodily resurrection, his miracles, his virgin birth, and thus the infallibility of the Scriptures.

In 1923 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church said that these doctrines were essential. In that same year, thirteen hundred ministers signed the Auburn Affirmation protesting the Assembly's act. By signing that document they declared themselves as heretics, or as willing to allow heretics in the church. Yet no action was taken against these men.

During all this time only one of the church's thirteen seminaries had remained entirely orthodox. Princeton



*Daniel DeMaster, a member of Bethel O. P. Church, Oostburg, Wisc., wrote this paper for an assignment in Church History last year at Sheboygan County Christian High School where he is now a sophomore.*

Seminary graduated about forty men each year, nearly a fourth of the new ministers for the whole denomination. But in 1929 the seminary was reorganized to fit the demands of the modernists. An orthodox training was no longer available in the church's seminaries. For that reason, Westminster Theological Seminary was established in Philadelphia.

In 1932 it was pointed out that the church's foreign missions board included two signers of the Auburn Affirmation. Some of the missionaries sent out were modernists also. Yet nothing was done. Then in 1933, Dr. J. Gresham Machen led a group of people in forming a new missions board independent of the Presbyterian Church.

The 1934 General Assembly reacted by declaring that anyone who would not support the official missions program was like one who refused to partake of the Lord's Supper. Dr. Machen and those who supported his views rejected this, for it was making the words of men to be equal to the Word of God.

Dr. Machen was convicted by his presbytery of disturbing the peace of the church because he refused to support the official missions board. Machen appealed to the General Assembly, but they again insisted that their word must be obeyed whether it was right or wrong. Dr. Machen was officially put out of the ministry; other orthodox men were also convicted and deposed.

On June 11, 1936, a new denomination was formed separated from the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. forever. The establishment of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was not a glorious event. It was done with sorrow because its founders could not forget that Presbyterian Church which was once so strong and true but now was practically dead. But it was done also with a bright hope for the future.

## Separation from Unbelief

Dear brethren in Christ:

There is a biblical demand for the believer to separate himself from unbelief when that has infected the life of his denomination. But there are certain perspectives that may help us to be more faithful to this teaching of Scripture.

*First*, there must be a keen awareness of the biblical teaching on the sin of schism. The party spirit, the rending of Christ's body, not to be countenanced or engaged in. *Second*, we must always remember to speak the truth in love; a genuine love and concern for those who disagree with us, for those who—in obedience to our Lord and out of love to him and his church—we must separate ourselves. *Third*, we need to be aware of the danger of rationalizing our own particular historical position. This is a tendency particularly on the part of those who have experienced separation in recent times. And it is all the more reason for fellow Christians to study the Scriptures and correct any excesses. *Fourth*, it needs to be recognized that all the churches of the Reformation are "separatist churches," having separated themselves from some other body in obedience to the Scriptures. There is the separation of the New Testament church itself from Judaism, the Reformation separation from Roman Catholicism, separations in the Netherlands and Scotland later, and such modern separations as those within American Presbyterianism. We are all separatists. And the apparent inevitability of further separations in many denominations today calls us to search the Scriptures about this matter with urgency.

### Separation in the New Testament

The first decisive separation in the New Testament by the people of God is that of the church from the synagog.

"And he [Paul] entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus" (Acts 19:8, 9).

The background of Paul's decisive action is a period of reasoning and persuading concerning the kingdom of God. The moment for action comes "when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude." Then Paul takes the initiative: "he departed from them, and separated the disciples."

Certain factors need to be noted. *First*, the Apostle labors within the situation to accomplish results through a vigorous evangelism that reasons and persuades concerning the central issue of God's kingdom. *Second*, the separation is a response to some (not all or many) who harden themselves and are disobedient to the apostolic message, and demonstrate this by speaking evil of the Way (biblical Christianity) before the multitude. *Third*, Paul does not wait for an action on the part of others to expel him, but departs from them himself and separates the disciples as well, going from the synagog to the school of Tyrannus. The principles inherent in this passage are clear and forceful.

The teaching of John is as forceful as Paul's example in the demand to separate from false teaching because of the corporate responsibility that one has. "If any one comes unto you, and brings not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting; for he that gives him greeting partakes in his evil works" (2 John 10, 11).

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### Crisis for RES in '72?

#### Message to the Churches of the RES

The existence of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod is evidence of the strong desire of its member churches to promote confessional ecumenism. The 1963 RES was marked by a sense of urgency which led to organizational advances which aimed at strengthening the RES and facilitating its operation. But already in 1963 the Reformed Churches of Australia wrote to the RES that the Reformed churches in the world were growing apart. The 1968 RES was marked by tension,

and if present trends continue, the RES of 1972 may well be marked by crisis. Sensing this growing tension within and among the member churches of the RES, the Interim Committee decided to address the member churches in a letter to inform them of the crisis situation and to urge them to vigorously promote the aims of the RES. By means of this "Message to the Churches" the Interim Committee wants to repeat emphatically one of the decisions of the previous Synod [in 1968], namely, that the churches of the RES, "supported by what they confess in Article II of the Statutes as their common foundation, ought to embrace one another in mutual trust,

show sympathy for one another's problems and patience with one another's weaknesses, and above all desire to lead and keep one another in the way which the Lord of the Church has given in his Word" (p. 78).

The words with which that Message conclude may also be the concluding words of this report:

"As the churches of the same confession, it is our duty, especially in this time of theological confusion and erosion, to do our utmost in order that the purpose of the RES as mentioned in Article II of the Rules and Standing Orders may be realized. At the same time everything that could undermine or destroy the unity that

Here again the norm or standard is the apostolic teaching with its focus on Christ. One who comes and does not bring that teaching is one from whom the believer must separate. To greet him is to partake (to fellowship) "in his evil works."

Paul also teaches this in words as well as by example: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and turn away from them" (Romans 16:17). Once more we see that the norm or standard is the apostolic teaching which is inscripturated for us in the New Testament. Again the believers are commanded to take a decisive action: "Turn away from them." The reason given is that "they beguile the hearts of the innocent" (verse 18).

And last, but not least, are these words of Paul: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion has light with darkness? And what concord has Christ with Belial? or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has a temple of God with idols? For we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore:

*Come out from among them, and be separate,  
says the Lord,*

*And touch no unclean thing;*

*And I will receive you, and will be to you a Father,*

*And you shall be to me sons and daughters,*

says the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1).

### Separation from unbelief required

The principle set forth here is that of the other passages: separation from unbelief. Even though no organized church context is specifically indicated here, separation from unbelief is demanded because fellowship with God the Holy Father is incompatible with fellowship with unbelievers. The Lord Almighty himself demands the separation of his people from unbelievers.

Certain general principles are clear in these passages. (1) Separation from unbelievers in the church is both taught and demanded by Scripture. (2) Unbelief is defined as "speaking evil of the Way" (Acts 19:9), not bringing the "teaching of Christ" (2 John 9), acting "contrary to the teaching which you learned" and not serving "our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 16:17, 18). (3) Separation is not brought about by the unbelievers but by the believer. Paul "departed from them, and separated the disciples" (Acts 19:9); the believer is not to receive the false teacher or give him a greeting (2 John 10); the believer is to "turn away from them" (Romans 16:17); and God's own command is to "come out from among them, and be separate" (2 Corinthians 6:17). (4) Separation from unbelief is demanded by our fellowship with God and because of the devastating result of continued fellowship with unbelief in the church. Paul cannot remain in a situation where men are "speaking evil of the Way before the multitude" (Acts 19:9); to receive and greet the false teacher means that one "partakes (fellowships) in his evil works" (2 John 11); Paul beseeches the brethren to turn away from "them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling" and who "beguile the hearts of the innocent" (Romans 16: 17, 18); and finally it is because God dwells in his own and they are his people that the call from God to separation comes, and the Father promises to receive those who obediently respond (2 Corinthians 6:16-18).

Separation from unbelief is unto the end of being more faithful sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, of claiming the promises of God our Father, and of "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 6:18-7:1).

Earnestly, in Christ,  
George W. Knight, III

*Dr. Knight is Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis.*

REPRINT: The Guardian will make this letter available in tract form in quantities of 10 or multiples of 10. Price: 10 for 60¢; 100 for \$2.50. Orders must be received before December 31, 1970.

has been given us should be avoided. It is the sincere prayer of the Interim Committee that God may give all the member churches his grace to fulfill this task for the glory of his name (Romans 11:36), for the mutual enrichment of the churches (Eph. 3:17-19), and for the effective exercise of the ministry of reconciliation in this world (2 Cor. 5:18-21)."

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Fred H. Klooster, Secretary  
(Members of the Interim Committee: Prof. K. Runia, President; Prof. F. H. Klooster, Secretary; Rev. John P. Galbraith; Rev. Dr. C. Gilhuis; Rev. P. E. S. Smith; RES General Sec'y, Dr. Paul Schrottenboer.)

*Background note:* The RES is an international organization of churches holding the Reformed Faith, including some from both the Reformed and Presbyterian traditions. (Of those churches most familiar to *Guardian* readers, these are members: the Christian Reformed Church, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church in N. A. or the "Covenanters," but not the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod.)

*Editorial comment:* Member churches are urged to "embrace one another in mutual trust." But the "crisis" that may come to a head in 1972 is due

to actions by certain churches of the RES that have raised doubts about their commitment to the Reformed Faith. The Reformed (Gereformeerde) Churches in the Netherlands are the largest single group in the RES. Yet this body, despite the advice of the RES itself, and the urgings of many other member churches has joined the World Council of Churches; it has also ordained women to the eldership, and so far has failed to act decisively to halt erroneous teaching on the doctrine of Scripture. If the unity of the RES is being undermined, it is due to such acts as these; "mutual trust" can be extended only to trustworthy objects!

# Abortion and the Christian

JOHN M. FRAME

*This article, by Professor Frame of Westminster Theological Seminary, is his own thought. It does not represent the conclusions of the committee studying the question of abortion for the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, though Dr. Frame is a member of that committee.*

At first glance, the question of abortion seems a fairly easy one for Christians to answer. The Bible forbids murder; abortion is murder; therefore, the Bible forbids abortion. At second glance, however, the problem looks formidably difficult, for it is not all that obvious that abortion is really murder. Is the unborn child a human person with the same right to life as any other human person? That is a fairly difficult question to answer from the Bible, if indeed it can be answered from the Bible. Attacking that question demands a technical expertise that many of us do not have. Therefore, we are often inclined to write the whole matter off as impossibly difficult, and as a result we often find ourselves saying *nothing* about abortion, urgent though this problem is in contemporary society.

I would like to suggest that in fact the problem is neither perfectly easy nor impossibly complex. It won't be solved by reference to a Bible verse or two; some careful thinking is required. Yet it is not the sort of problem about which a "layman" should throw up his hands in despair, leaving its resolution to the theological elite. There are some things that all of us as Christians can say about abortion, and say with confidence. There is also room for technical, detailed study. The Scripture does speak plainly enough on some aspects of the problem so that we need not sit idly waiting for the results of the technical studies to come in. Let us look briefly at some fairly non-technical aspects of the problem:

## 1. Try the spirits of today!

The Apostle John calls all Christians to "test the spirits, whether they are of God" (1 John 4:1). What are the spirits behind today's drive to liberalize abortion laws? They are, of course, many and varied. Some claim to support this liberalization out of a spirit of love and concern for the economic, psychological and physical well-being of women and their families. Such a claim is hard to evaluate. It could be genuine love, misguided love, or disguised hatred for God's ordinances. The evaluation we make of this "spirit" will depend somewhat on how the whole problem is resolved in the light of Scripture.

Yet there is another "spirit" abroad in the land, one about which there can be no mistake. This is the spirit that says "an unborn child is purely and simply the property of its mother, for her to do with as she pleases." Any Christian can recognize this spirit. It is the spirit of autonomy, of rebellion against God, of selfishness, of sin. No matter what view we take concerning the precise status of the unborn child, we must affirm as Christians that he is *not merely* the property of his mother. He is a creature of God. Even if he were no more than a rock or tree or

animal, he would still belong to God first, and to man only as to a steward under God. The wanton, senseless destruction of *any* creature of God is wrong.

## 2. The unborn child is human

But the unborn child is more than a rock, tree or animal. In a perfectly ordinary sense requiring no elaborate argument, he is *human*. There are some who would argue that he is only a part of his mother's body, and not an *independent* life. But even if he is "only" a part of his mother's body, he is *human* — no less human than her arms and legs. Since he is human, he is in the image of God; for the "image of God" in the Bible includes every aspect of man, soul, body, and all parts. The Scripture tells us that we do *not* have power over our own bodies to do with as we please (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:12-7:4, a passage dealing specifically with the sexual function). Because we are made in the image of God, the shedding of human blood (except, of course, in situations where such bloodshed is authorized elsewhere in Scripture) is wrong (Genesis 9:6). In view of these considerations, the abortion of an unborn child may never be undertaken casually, and may never be considered except for the weightiest reasons.

## 3. What "right" has the unborn child?

But now, what about the "big question"? Is the unborn child not only *human*, but a *human* being with a full right to life? That is the difficult question with which professional exegetes are wrestling. As of now, I'm inclined to think they won't come up with any fully persuasive answer. But even if we can't answer the question, all of us can and must take some attitude toward it. We must make practical decisions, and practical decisions require assumptions. Do we assume that the unborn child is a human being, or do we assume the opposite? One assumption or the other must govern our behavior. Now I believe that although it is difficult to *answer* our "big question" from Scripture, it is not difficult to show from Scripture what our *presumption* must be. Consider the following:

a) There is no scriptural proof that the unborn child is anything less than a human being from the moment of conception. Exodus 21:22-25 is the only passage even alleged by anyone to furnish such proof, but it does not solve the problem on any respectable interpretation.\*

b) The Scriptures do clearly teach that the unborn child has an independent importance as a *potential human being*, and therefore is something more than merely a part of his mother's body. God has an intimate personal concern for such potential life (cf. Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 51:5). These passages do not prove that the fetus is an *actual* human being, but they do put him on a very special plane.

c) There is no principle of Scripture, science or philosophy that allows us to pinpoint a time between conception and birth at which a human being emerges from something less.

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# The Scriptures and Abortion

THE EDITOR

What does the Bible say about abortion? But first, let us dispense with certain arguments heard today in the agitation for "liberalized abortion." These arguments vary, but may be grouped in two general categories. One concerns the alleged "right" of a woman over her own body to abort an unwanted fetus; the other focuses on certain supposed needs and interests of various individuals and groups in society other than the mother.

If abortion is no more than a surgical procedure like an appendectomy, then discussing the woman's "right" to it may be in order. If abortion is just the removal of an impersonal mass of cells like a cancer, then concern for the needs of the woman, her family, or even the unborn child, and society as a whole, may be brought into the picture.

But to demand that we answer all these considerations first before determining what abortion is in God's sight, completely distorts the problem. If abortion is murder or even if it is a sin of some other sort, these various concerns of the mother, the child, the family, and society, will have to find answers in some other way.

## Asking the right questions

Part of the confusion that has arisen in the discussions about abortion is due to the fact that too often the wrong questions have been asked. For example, the whole debate about when the soul is first added to the fetus is quite irrelevant. In the first place, the Bible nowhere speaks of the "soul" being added to the "body," but sees the human being as a unity of body and soul. In fact, the great horror of death is its abnormality, its splitting apart of soul from body in contrast to the created order of human life.

The question to be asked is quite blunt: Is abortion murder? The Sixth Commandment says, "Thou shalt not kill." The only exception to this is God's sentence of death on those guilty of certain crimes (including that of murder itself). Scripture makes it plain this commandment refers to *human life*, negatively forbidding murder and positively requiring all right means to preserve such life. And the preserving of one life cannot be at the expense of another innocent human life.

The sanctity of human life is not based on certain "naturally" inherent values or qualities in it. This sacredness is solely due to man's being made in the image of God. A human being, a human person, is a human life created in the likeness of God (Genesis 1:26, 27).

## God's concern with conception

The unborn fetus is the result of that union of male sperm and female egg that we call conception. In many of the Scripture references to conception, we find God himself directly concerned.

Ever conceived the first child in history and then says of him, "I have gotten a man from the Lord" (Genesis 4:1). Isaac (Genesis 21:1, 2), Esau and Jacob (Genesis 25:21), several of Jacob's sons (Genesis 29:31-35; 30:17; 30:22, 23), Samson (Judges 13:3, 5, 7), Obed (Ruth 4:13), and Samuel (1 Samuel 1:19, 20) are all conceived as a result of God's intervention. In some cases it is in

answer to prayer; in others it is the outworking of God's redemptive purposes. The climactic instances are the conceptions of John the Baptist (Luke 1:24) and Jesus himself (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:31; 2:21).

What do such references prove? They "prove" no more than that God is concerned about human conception even taking a direct part in making it possible. At the very least, we should be cautious about proposing to interrupt what God may have begun!

## Is the fetus a human being?

This, of course, is the crucial question. Is the unborn child a creature made in God's image, a truly human being? At this point, Dr. Frame's discussion seems quite unsatisfactory. He says, "The Scriptures do clearly teach that the unborn child has an independent importance as a *potential human being*, and therefore is something more than merely a part of his mother's body" (his emphasis). Dr. Frame is stressing the "something more" in contrast to those who speak of a fetus as no more than an appendix. But in doing so, he has introduced a concept of *potentiality* as though it were a biblical concept clearly taught there.

The Scriptures, as a matter of fact, do *not* teach that life in the womb is *potentially* human life. It may be argued, and Dr. Frame doubts, whether the Scriptures *prove* that unborn life is fully or *actual* human life. But this distinction between potential and actual is precisely what we want to know in order to answer our question. To assume it beforehand is to prejudge the whole discussion.

## The unborn child in Scripture

How does the Bible speak about unborn life? There are relatively few instances where it speaks of it at all. But *wherever the unborn individual is mentioned, he is described as a person in language that is used elsewhere of persons already born.*

Esau and Jacob, some time before their birth, are called "children", or literally "sons" (Genesis 25:22). Job is spoken of as a "man" on the night he was conceived (Job 3:3). David very plainly thinks of his prenatal condition as personal, using personal pronouns, and marveling at God's concern with the development of his personal self in the womb (Psalm 139:13-16). The Lord speaks of Jeremiah as a person in his mother's womb (Jeremiah 1:5). Jeremiah himself, in his despair, curses the day of his conception and wishes he personally died then and there (Jeremiah 20:14-18). The six-month fetus of Elizabeth "leaped in my womb for joy" which is descriptive of a human being but of nothing less (Luke 1:44). The unborn Jesus is called a "child" in Mary's womb (Matthew 1:18; Luke 2:5; cf. Luke 2:21). (His being spoken of as a "holy thing" in Luke 1:35 is certainly not an exception, since the "holy thing" itself is to be called "the Son of God." He is the "holy thing" not in some impersonal, subhuman sense, but as the peculiarly holy Person who is the Holy of holies for us.)

(Continued on page 80)

## Abortion and the Christian

(Continued from page 78)

d) From the moment of conception, the unborn child possesses a full complement of chromosomes, thus making him independent of his mother in the crucial genetic sense. Because the child is independent in this sense, the mother's body treats him as foreign tissue and finally "rejects" this tissue in the process of birth.

Let us now summarize: There is *no* way of demonstrating that the unborn child is anything less than a human being (a), at any time between conception and birth (c), nor can such a thesis be shown as probable. There is scientific (d) and biblical (b) evidence that the unborn child has independent significance not reducible to that of a mere part of his mother's body, but is continuous with the personal uniqueness of his post-birth existence. The scientific evidence even suggests that the child is an independent life from the point of conception. All the probabilities, therefore, are on the side of the view that the unborn child is a human being and has a full right to life.

Will any Christian, in view of these considerations, dare to take the life of an unborn child on the ground that "it is not really a person"? To take such a step would be to risk breaking the Sixth Commandment — and since this particular risk has nothing to be said in its favor, such a risk would amount to sheer disobedience. What Christian could take such a step to the glory of God? What Christian could make such a decision "in faith"? Let us not forget that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). We must acknowledge a biblically based presumption in favor of the view that the unborn child is a human being from the moment of conception, and that therefore he has the same essential right to life as any other human being.

### 4. Is all abortion murder?

Does this mean that the killing of an unborn child is murder under any and all circumstances? No. The Sixth Commandment, taken in the whole context of Scripture, does not rule out all killing of human beings. Most of us would agree that Scripture allows for the prosecution of a just war by the civil government. If in such a war some unborn children were destroyed, that would bring great grief; but like other wartime killing of civilians it could not necessarily be regarded as murder.

But are there any special circumstances in peacetime when the intentional, specific killing of an unborn child might be justified? The only circumstance I can think of, where such action might be recommended on Christian grounds, would be where a fetus had to be killed in order to save the physical life of the mother. The Sixth Commandment requires not only abstinence from killing, but also diligent efforts to preserve life. Thus, it is argued, we must choose between two obligations — preserve the mother's life, or avoid killing the fetus. Since the mother is more crucial to the family, church and community units than the unborn child, her life should have precedence over that of the child.

So the argument is made; but it has one serious weakness. We are undoubtedly obliged to take all *lawful steps* to preserve life. But do such "lawful steps" include the taking of another life? Is there any other situation in which we would deliberately kill one person in order to save

another and justify the killing on the basis of the latter person's importance to society? The only analogous case I can think of is where a man kills an assailant in order to save the life of his wife when there is no alternative way to save her. The age of the attacker would probably make no difference; what would motivate the husband is simply his obligation to defend his wife and his love for her. If the husband in such a case is justified (and I'm inclined to think that he would be), then I think he would also be justified in having an abortion performed to save the life of his wife.

But there is too much "probably" and "I think" in this reasoning. We must conclude, therefore, that this question requires further study.

### 5. A warning not to sin

Let us not forget that even complete assurance as to the precise status of the unborn child will not guarantee that our decisions will be sinless. The Bible demands more than external conformity to the requirements of the law; it demands purity of heart, faith and love. Without the love of Christ in our hearts, even a formally correct decision may be sinful in God's sight. Even the legitimate attempt to ascertain our precise responsibility in the matters under discussion can, by a subtle psychological and ethical process, turn into an attempt to find loopholes in God's requirements and to justify ourselves. Let us not forget that the problems we have in this area are, at bottom, the consequences of sin. The battle for better understanding and right decisions is a spiritual battle that must begin in our own sinful hearts.

These five conclusions may be affirmed by all Christians on the basis of Scripture. When we come to think about it, these rather non-technical points say a great deal about abortion. There is no need for us to back off from the national debate. Let us make our voices heard, to the glory of God!

\*On the exegesis most favorable to this claim (cf. Waltke in *Birth Control and the Christian*, Spitzer and Saylor, eds.; Tyndale House, 1969), the life of the unborn child is given less value than the life of his mother. Even this exegesis, however, fails to show that the unborn child is something *less than a human being* — something that must be shown to prove the contention. Furthermore, the most natural interpretation of this passage is even less favorable to the assumption that a fetus is something other than a human being. On this, see the commentary on Exodus by Keil and Delitzsch.

## The Scriptures and Abortion

(Continued from page 79)

Perhaps the most startling reference to prenatal existence is that of David in Psalm 51:5 where he says, "In sin did my mother conceive me." In the first place, David thinks of himself as a person—"my mother conceived *me*." But more important is the mention of sin. It is not his mother's sin, but David's own. This is the psalm of David's repentance after the sins involving Bathsheba. He is aware not merely of certain overt transgressions, but of the sinfulness throughout his whole person. And he traces this condition all the way back past his birth (verse 5a) to his initial conception (verse 5b). He deserves God's wrath and

(Continued top next page)



curse, needs God's forgiveness and cleansing, because he is now and has been a sinner from the very beginning of his existence in the womb of his mother.

Language like this can only have meaning for a human being. If sin is a feature of existence at the moment of conception, then I was a *person* and a *sinner* in God's sight even then. To suppose that sin could be an aspect of something less than full humanness, to imagine that an appendix could be sinful, is to refuse to accept these words of David as having any meaning.

### Is there any distinction made?

But does the Scripture allow us to make some basic distinction between life before birth and that afterward? Is the one less sacred than the other? One passage has been appealed to as providing grounds for such a distinction.

"If men strive, and hurt a pregnant woman, so that her child depart from her, and yet no harm follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if harm does follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, etc." (Exodus 21:22-25).

The question is, To whom does the "harm" refer? It has been suggested that it refers only to some injury to the woman, and does not include any harm or loss of the unborn child. (Even if this were so, it could hardly justify the *intentional* destruction of a fetus!)

But to restrict "harm" to the woman's case is to assume precisely what we want to know. Do the Scriptures make

a distinction between unborn life and that after birth? There is not the slightest hint in this passage that any distinction is meant. On the contrary, the concern of every believing Hebrew was to raise up children. This was tied to the hope of salvation itself, and to the desire to have a part in the physical line of descent from which the Redeemer himself would ultimately come. To suppose that a Hebrew husband would accept the loss of his unborn child without seeking vengeance is simply out of harmony with the historical situation. More to the point, God himself endorsed this concern and promised to prevent even accidental miscarriage so long as Israel remained faithful (Exodus 23:25, 26; cf. Deuteronomy 7:14; Hosea 9:14).

The "harm" is not restricted to the woman. Any "harm" that came as a result would subject the guilty man to punishment, life for life, eye for eye, for whatever injury he caused to the woman or to her child. (And the word used here is the Hebrew word always translated "child.") Since injury to adults is adequately covered elsewhere in the law, it is hard to see what point this case would have had at all if it only included harm to the woman.

### The state of the question

Any human life is sacred. To destroy such a life is to bring the sentence of death upon oneself (Genesis 9:5, 6). Only those guilty of capital crimes" according to God's own law may have their human lives destroyed by other humans. To take human life at any stage of development, for any other reason than this, is to commit murder. Abortion is murder.

## Quarryville Home Ground-breaking

Quarryville, Pa. — On November 1, the Quarryville Presbyterian Home broke ground for its new convalescent unit. The crowd, including residents of the Home and many visitors from Reformed Presbyterian and Orthodox Presbyterian churches, heard Dr. J. Oliver Buswell Jr. speak on "The Christian Home." Dr. Buswell, now retired and living at the Home, rejoiced in the Lord's goodness in blessing the building of Christian family homes as well as institutional homes, and looked forward to that home our Lord prepares for us in heaven.

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# The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITOR

JOHN J. MITCHELL

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## What about abortion?

What do you think about this matter of abortion? It is true, as Dr. Frame points out in his article on "Abortion and the Christian," that "at first glance" most Christians have rather instinctively felt that "abortion

is murder." After a "second glance," Dr. Frame feels that the evidence from Scripture does not permit us to be so dogmatic. Nevertheless, he concludes that the Christian has more than enough biblical support to compel him to speak out in opposition to what is known as "liberalized abortion" today.

The *Guardian* has included Dr. Frame's article because it focuses attention on the most basic aspects of the question. But the editor is not willing to agree with him that a "second glance" at Scripture should leave the Christian with something less than certainty that "abortion is murder." On the contrary, I believe that Scripture is more than sufficiently clear in showing that, in God's sight, a new and distinct life in God's own image begins at the moment of conception, and that destroying such a life is murder.

The act of asking a question puts

a "burden of proof" upon the one who would try to answer it. To ask whether abortion is always, or even usually, an act of murder is to require those who believe it is to prove their belief. This has always seemed rather unfair, but apparently it is unavoidable.

On the other hand, I would strongly urge that the "burden of proof" rests equally on those who ask the question! What reason do you have for questioning the traditional conviction of the Christian church? What consideration has come to light sufficient to overturn the once almost universal law of Western civilization (and even the charter of the United Nations)? What scriptural evidence is there for allowing even the possibility that it might be justifiable to snuff out that gift of God which would otherwise become an individual responsible for glorifying his Creator? There is a real "burden of proof" on

**GIVE** CONFRONT A CHANGING WORLD  
WITH GOD'S UNCHANGING WORD  
**TO THE**  
THANK OFFERING  
... through Christ to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross ... Colossians 1:20



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## Thank Offering—for whom?

"The *Thank Offering*? Well, if it's for people like *that*, you can count me out!"

This was the reaction one pastor heard to the poster shown above. Even if that comes from only one member of the church, it ought to be answered. If it comes from several, then the church has a problem!

What is your reaction? What kinds of people do you see there? What has the *Thank Offering* to do with them? with you?

The whole point of the *Thank Offering*, in the poster's own words, is to "Confront A Changing World With God's Unchanging Word"! Now, wouldn't you agree that today's chaotic, rebellious, violent, polluted, sin-filled world *needs* to be confronted? Wouldn't you agree that only the two-edged Word of God is sharp enough to confront it and turn it from its headlong charge into oblivion?

If these are not the people who need to be confronted with the Word, then who are they? What group in American society should the Orthodox Presbyterian Church seek to enroll? Is the *Thank Offering* only for those with hair-cuts one inch above the ear or skirts one inch below the knee? Is the gospel only for those without sin, without problem, without any doubt about the way things are going

in today's world?

The poster says, in picture not words, that these people need the Word of God. There they are—bearded rebel, bitter old man, malevolent black, angry "liberated" girl, faces from home and abroad etched with the fear and hatred of a sin-cursed world. Or, there they are — human beings, made in God's image, all of them commanded to repent, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved!

Have *you* brought the Word of righteousness and grace to anyone like this recently? Wouldn't you agree that *somebody* should? That's what the *Thank Offering* is for!

I thank God that Jesus said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark 2:17). I thank God that he brought the light of his grace to an immoral woman by a well, to a fortune-telling girl with a demon, to a murderer and thief on a cross — and to me! I thank God that Christ died for me while I was still an enemy! I thank God that there is still the opportunity to preach that Word, to confront the world with its only remedy. I thank God that there is a *Thank Offering*. I pray that it may help some sinners, like these, like me, to hear and to believe!

—J. J. M.

*The Presbyterian Guardian*

those who would hold that abortion is something less than a violation of the Sixth Commandment.

### Some "practical" problems

There are vitally important consequences growing out of this whole question. If "abortion is murder" then those who perform it or have it performed are "murderers." If they are murderers and do not repent, they cannot be a part of the kingdom of God and should not be permitted to remain in Christ's church. That sounds quite harsh, but not if "abortion is murder"!

If abortion is something less than murder, then the church must refrain from condemning as murderers those who voluntarily become involved in it. As Dr. Frame points out, an abortion may very well be the fruit of some other sinful attitudes, motives with which the church should be concerned. But if abortion is ever justifi-

able on biblical grounds, then the church has a positive obligation to give comforting counsel to those who may come within such justifiable limits.

Yet consider the unbearable strain that would exist within a church that cannot agree on this question! A condemned "murder" excommunicated from one congregation might find absolution and comfort in another. The fellowship of the saints would be ripped to shreds. Consider also, from either viewpoint, the spiritual and psychological and even physical grief that could result from pastoral counseling based on the "wrong" answer! It is not an "academic question"!

Since the question has been asked, and since it is by all accounts a vitally serious one, the "burden of proof" is on each of us. Answers to such a question require all of us to search the Scriptures and to pray for the light of the Holy Spirit!

—J. J. M.



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*Captain with the mighty heart — 17*

# THE MODERATOR

HENRY W. CORAY

At the 1936 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., to the surprise of no one, J. Gresham Machen and other members of the Independent Board were suspended from the ministry and from the office of ruling eldership. The condemned churchmen were not permitted to appeal to the Bible or to the Constitution of the Church to justify their stand. Thus, as Ned Stonehouse has pointed out in the Machen biography, "The ecclesiastical courts might solemnly convene in the name of Jesus Christ and might cite Scripture in drafting charges and specifications, but if the accused were to be denied the right of seeking to establish the conviction that the order of an Assembly was contrary to the Word of God, as well as to specific provisions of the subordinate standards, such provision would be vanity and mockery."

Astonishing indeed is the fact that the late Dr. Edward Carnell, then serving on the faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary, himself a Westminster graduate, should tick off a

statement that "No individual Presbyterian can appeal from the General Assembly, and to think that he can is cultic" (*The Case for Orthodox Theology*, Westminster Press, 1959). Patently Carnell confused historic Presbyterianism with Roman Catholic hierarchical rule. The Westminster Confession of Faith, under which Presbyterians operated before that great document "was put under glass in 1967" (as Dr. Clowney has described it) declares that:

**All synods or councils, since the Apostolic times, whether general or particular, may err; and many have erred. Therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith, or practice; but to be used as a help in both (Chapter 31, Section 3).**

Prior to the ruling of the 1936 General Assembly, militant conservatives in the denomination, anticipating the radical action against Machen and others, had established a Covenant Union. The preamble declared that:

**The purpose of the Covenant Union shall be to defend and maintain the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.—**

*(Continued on page 84)*

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that is, to defend (1) the Word of God upon which the Constitution is based, (2) the full, glorious system of revealed truth contained in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, commonly called (to distinguish it from the various forms of error) the "Reformed Faith", and (3) the truly Scriptural principles of Presbyterian Church government, guaranteeing the Christian's freedom from implicit obedience to any human councils and courts and recognizing instead, in the high Biblical sense, the authority of God.

In order to put traction in the stated purpose of the Union a Pledge was annexed with this declaration:

We, the members of the Covenant Union, are resolved, in accordance with God's Word, and in humble reliance upon His grace, to maintain the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., (1) making every effort to bring about a reform of the existing church organization, and to restore the Church's clear and glorious Christian testimony, which Modernism and indifferentism have so grievously silenced, but (2) if such efforts fail and in particular if the tyrannical policy of the present majority triumphs, holding ourselves ready to perpetuate the true Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., regardless of cost.

So when the highest court in the Presbyterian Church condemned Machen and his colleagues for not bowing before its mandate, the question these leaders had to answer was, "Shall we obey God rather than man?" Acting on principle they replied in the affirmative. Having put their hand to the plough they refused to turn back. For this they were driven from the largest Presbyterian body in the world. They were maligned, misrepresented, abused, verbally castigated and in general made a spectacle before men and angels. They took the broadside joyfully.

It is of passing note that not a few evangelically minded men remained in the church. In effect they said to Machen, "We agree with your theological position wholeheartedly, but we cannot go with you in your church policies. We therefore will remain in the denomination and carry on the fight against unbelief."

One is constrained to look back from this point and ask the question, "How goes the battle?" The answer has to be: the battle is over and the mopping up process is going on. The warriors have sheathed their swords. The Silent Majority now looks down

on the shambles that once was a battlefield. Where is there in the (now) United Presbyterian Church a single rallying point, a stalwart uncompromising post where the conflict is raging?

It is significant that Lefferts Loetscher, in *Broadening Church*, has asserted that:

The termination of the judicial cases in 1936 marked the virtual cessation to date of theological controversy. In spite of important internal diversities, the church since 1936 has enjoyed the longest period of theological peace since the reunion of 1869.

Of course.. It has been said that you do not explode dynamite in a barrel of feathers!

On June 11, 1936, there came to birth in Philadelphia the Presbyterian Church of America. At the initial General Assembly, Dr. Machen was elected to the office of Moderator by a unanimous vote.

That Assembly adopted the following resolution:

In order to continue what we believe to be the true spiritual succession of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., which we hold to have been abandoned by the present organization of that body, and to make clear to all the world that we have no connection with the organization bearing that name, we, a company of ministers and ruling elders, having been removed from that organization in contravention, as we believe, of its organization, or having severed our connection with that organization, or hereby solemnly declaring that we do sever our connection with it, or coming as ministers or ruling elders from other ecclesiastical bodies holding the Reformed Faith, do hereby associate ourselves together with all Christian people who do and will adhere to us, in a body to be known and styled as the Presbyterian Church of America.

The nucleus of the church turned out to be a cloud no bigger than a man's hand. Thirty-four ministers, seventeen elders, and seventy-nine laymen enrolled as charter members. (By November the number of ministers increased to one hundred and four.)

In his message to the General Assembly, Dr. Machen said:

If a man remains in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., he must support the propaganda furthered by the boards. That propaganda is in part a plainly Modernist propaganda quite hostile to the gospel. Yet even that propaganda must be supported by a man who would obey the Mandate now so vigorously

enforced. The Mandate says, "Support the official program." If Modernism is part of the official program then, according to the Mandate, you must support Modernism too . . . .

What constrains us to obey Christ's commands as we go from this place; what constrains us to face a world of enemies; what constrains us to separate ourselves from old precious friends? Well, no doubt the almighty power of our King; He is our Maker; we are His creatures. It is His right to rule. Yes, He constrains us by His mighty power. But He constrains us by something else. He constrains us by His love. "The love of Christ constraineth us." "He loved us and gave Himself for us." He bought us with His own blood. What shall we give for Him?

Meanwhile what has become of the name, Presbyterian Church of America? It had to be given up. The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., having in actuality turned its back on the Bible, had no conscience in setting aside the principle laid down by Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:1, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" In civil court it sued the newly organized church for assuming a name which, it said, would cause endless confusion in the mind of the public. The upshot of the proceedings was that the name Presbyterian Church of America was dropped. The new name adopted—The Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Naturally there were many heartaches, tensions and scars when the break occurred. Brother parted with brother, friend with friend, church member with church member. Nevertheless there existed in the freshly constituted communion a great sense of peace and harmony. It was in a way an experience comparable to another situation described by Joel: "The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness." It was like Elim after Marah. With profound relief Machen penned an article in the *Presbyterian Guardian* titled, "A True Presbyterian Church at Last."

But tragically the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, wrapped in swaddling clothes, was to sustain bitter testings hardly anyone anticipated. Rough waters and dangerous shoals lay ahead before the ship would set its prow on a course that would guide it to its desired haven.

# Missions and the Cultural Mandate

THEODORE HARD

*Address presented at the opening exercises of Westminster Theological Seminary, October 7, 1970, by the Rev. Theodore Hard, Th. M., Orthodox Presbyterian missionary to Korea (condensed for publication).*

At the beginning of the Scriptures, we find mankind called to master the earth and its creatures as the steward for the Creator. In God's image and with God's law written on his heart, man joyfully receives the task of culture as both birthright and mandate.

## A problem of contrast?

But a problem confronts the reader as he continues through the Bible. Does the Old Testament emphasize one kind of mastery, while the New Testament stresses another? These rather over-simple contrasts present themselves: (a) Genesis 1, echoed in Genesis 9 and Psalm 8, calls us to make the sub-human creatures subject to the human. But the essence of the mandate for missions in the Gospels calls us to make humans subject to God. Again (b), at Babel the Lord descends to confuse the language of men and to disperse them so as to fulfill the cultural mandate. But at Pentecost God descends to cause men to speak new languages and disperses them to fulfill the mandate of missions. Or (c), the Old Testament pictures God's people developing an earthly domain, conscious of genealogy and geographical borders. The New Testament pictures men being brought under a spiritual sway where geography, genealogy, race and clime are irrelevant.

How shall we speak to this problem? Church history shows us those anti-cultural and ascetic groups who emphasized the "other-worldly." It also shows us those with a "this-worldly" emphasis on a "social gospel." Even in Reformed circles we hear much debate about the cultural mandate, while missions lags behind as a subject for discussion. How are we to relate these two mandates?

The church has been criticized for restricting its interest to the area of individual conduct while it permits the world of society to go its own way. And this is seen as the reason for the rapid progress of secularization today. But can the church lack a social interest today? Above our heads is the daily threat of sudden-doom weapons in the hands of international bandits. In our midst lurks the drug-crazed, the whimsical homicide, and the octopus of organized crime. We even see our citizenry rioting in the streets. Truly, the four horsemen of the Apocalypse have spurred into a gallop.

The church, of course, must do what it always has done — warn the world that these diseases of society come because the heart of man is set against God and is in thrall to the prince of this world. But in her cry to the world to repent and obey the Son of God in faith, what is the church — the Christian community in the widest sense — to say about culture? Augustine and Calvin saw Christ as

the transformer of culture. That tradition, which is also our own here at Westminster, speaks of a transformation of the lives of the saints that will be a light to the world and salt to the earth. But, not all are saved. The great antithesis between the lovers and haters of God continues until the eschatological judgment of both the sheep and the goats. "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" What, then, should be the nature of the saints' cultural and social involvement?

## Culture in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament we immediately see the man in relation to his earthly environment. He is set in a garden to keep it. This is only a temporary headquarters, for he is told to be fruitful and fill the earth. The world outside Eden is described in terms of cultural potential, of its gold, bdellium and cornelians (Genesis 2:13). The absence of shrubs and plants is due not only to lack of rain but to absence of any man to till the ground (Genesis 2:4). The line of Cain introduces herding, musical instruments and metal working. This, says Calvin, is not in itself to be taken as a catalog of their folly and sin, but rather as the cultural contributions given to men by virtue of God's gifts.

The line of Seth caps the age in a cultural feat dictated by God that saves the remnant from the destruction that drowns the world. Noah built a mighty vessel, provisioned with all kinds of animal life, for a one-way launching from the condemned planet. He lands at last as though in a new world, and under the covenant sign of God's bow in the clouds, he worshipfully begins anew.

The Old Testament is full of what might be called "cultural heroes." There is Abraham, the pioneer and tribal patriarch; Joseph, counsellor and prime minister of Egypt; Moses, rescuer of slaves and their law-giver; Joshua, military leader and frontier organizer. Then come the judges, the national liberators in times of foreign oppression; David, the musician-poet-warrior-statesman; Solomon, the builder and sage and author. There is Daniel, counsellor to captor kings in successive dynasties; Esther, the patriot for the time; and Nehemiah, a leader in urban renewal. The deeds of faith by these saints of God were redemptively used by God; they illustrate, *par excellence*, true cultural stewardship.

All these received their calling and gifts from God. David sings of God as the one who enabled him to "run through a troop," and "leap over a wall" (Psalm 18:22ff.). It was God who filled Bezaleel, the builder of God's portable pre-fab house of worship, "with the spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship" (Exodus 35:31). And it was God who gave the spirit of knowledge and intelligence to Daniel and his companions (Daniel 1:17).

## A New Testament reaction?

The New Testament, however, *seems* to present a great

contrast to all of this. It opens with John the Baptist, a wilderness man dressed in hides, eating insects and wild honey, the apparent foe of the cultural establishment. And he introduces the carpenter from Nazareth, the Jesus who itinerates without national or church auspices, who picks followers from "secular" callings, who claims no home address. He is the second Adam, but is not busy with soil or animals; his recorded activity in a garden is not pruning but prayer. When his kingship is challenged by the vested might of Rome he says, "My kingdom is not of this world." He called his followers to cast aside possessiveness toward family, wealth, or status. And his mandate to his disciples sounds quite unlike that of Genesis 1, but was a mandate to disciple the nations.

And we see Paul, the best culturally and intellectually equipped of the apostles, not lecturing in Jerusalem, but itinerating from city to city with a message of eternal salvation by faith in a Christ who will return to judge the world with fire. His letters give scant hint of his classical learning; he shows no interest in the marvels of architecture; his income is derived from the most humble — and intermittent — labor of tentmaking.

### **A biblical combination**

But a second look at the New Testament places cultural activity in a more constructive light. Jesus acted and spoke so as to combine the duty of culture in fruitful relationship with the duty of gospel witness. It is that combination that is our chief interest in this address.

First, we see Christ enlisting his disciples in cultural cooperation even when he is performing miracles. He changes water to wine, but the servants must fill the jars with water. He prepares a great school of fish, but the disciples must work the net — even to the breaking point. He feeds five thousand, but the disciples distribute and gather up the remains. He raises Lazarus from the dead, but others roll away the stone and remove the graveclothes. At Pentecost the miracle of tongues is the work of Christ's Spirit; but it is men who are to speak. And when that charisma is gone, the same speaking must be done by men who have painfully learned today's foreign tongues!

Christ used the cultural means that his contemporaries used. He crossed the lake by boat in order to preach on the other side. He chose the hillside as a vantage point for his preaching. He made a whip to cleanse the temple. So also, Paul travels by ship, makes tents, writes letters, collects relief funds — but all to further the work of missions. In his epistles, he speaks about such cultural matters as how to handle a controversy, problems in sex and marriage, relations between children and parents, wife and husband, slave and master, citizen and state.

Culture is never detached from service to God. Nowhere in either testament is it isolated from its function of serving God. Christ's references to the beauties of nature or the cultural works of men are illustrations of the kingdom of heaven. The physician Luke does not enlarge his account of missionary advancement with descriptions of local culture or even of medical practices. Yet he does speak of the clothes made by Dorcas because this was her service to God. Were these travellers never tourists, never impressed by Parthenon or Corinthian temple? Did they never end a day with enjoyment of music?

Yet Paul urges each man to work hard and provide for his own family. Each Christian in his everyday life is the bearer of culture along with his fellows. We even read, with astonishment, that Calvin interprets Psalm 8 to mean that God has given all the riches both of earth and of heaven for man's use, even suggesting that man's dominion is to extend to sun, moon and stars! Abraham Kuyper believed that human development in every field of culture will carry over into eternity, for "all things are yours" (1 Corinthians 3:4).

### **The commanding Christ equips us**

Certainly, the Christ who commands us to disciple the nations is the Christ who enables us to do so. "All power is given unto me, . . ." The writer of Hebrews pronounces the benediction of the Christ who will "equip you with everything good to do his will" (Hebrews 13:21). This is not just the equipping of the office-bearers of the church, but of all the saints that they may be able to walk in holy conversation before God. It is spiritual equipment coupled with cultural enabling, for it includes hospitality (13:2), benevolence work (13:16), as well as the careful attention to the epistle itself (13:22). Could we read God's Word if we knew no writing? Can we practice hospitality, remember those in bonds, give alms to the poor, without physical means? It is God who "is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8).

On the other hand, the very type of culture we seem to need in missions and relief work has only come with difficulty. The Lord has not made cultural progress easy. Jesus did not spell out the path to removing slavery or dictatorship. He gave no blueprints for government, education, or economics. The Scriptures came to men through the feeble cultural means of the day, where hand-copying made for errors and expense. Preaching waited centuries for amplifiers and radio broadcasting. No medical procedures were suggested — unless we include olive oil — for the treatment of the sick, and it has taken centuries to develop antibiotics, anesthetics, and surgical technique. The hungry poor learned very slowly about fertilizers, hybrids, or insecticides.

We bow in shame and submission under the physical aspect of a curse that does not relent just because we are repentant sons of God. Our bodies return to dust; our bread is eaten with sweat; in pain we bring forth children. Nevertheless we do eat and do have children. And we are comforted by the promise that "if ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him."!

### **The culture-for-missions priority**

In the New Testament context, we are called to perform those cultural activities that directly minister to spreading the gospel, maintaining the saints in their life of witness and love for others, and special ministering to the destitute and suffering. "Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of God the father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unstained from the world" (James 1:27). Our cultural activities must extend to the needs of gospel outreach and the care of those in misery. This is the cultural priority.

Let me react to what I see here after five years spent in Korea. I see your consternation at the accelerating disintegration of morals, social structure, life-styles, and even the natural environment. We had hoped from our affluence to see an efflorescence of better life, health and beauty; instead we find effluvia of poverty, permissiveness, perversion and pollution.

There is now a "theology of ecology," and well there may be. The concern of such "theologians" is not just a silly switch on the proverbial debate over how many angels can stand on a pin's head to a new debate over how many pinheads can stand it in Los Angeles. These men say that "a weak faith in the value of creation tends to undermine belief in the Creator, and *vice versa*. Man is left only with his self-interest, which however enlightened, will not provide motivation for his ecological survival." Formally we may agree with this, but urgently add that a weak faith and a weak obedience to Christ leaves man without the means for his eternal survival as well.

### Everything for the Lord's work

We are strangers and pilgrims in the world, soldiers fighting in enemy territory. The battle is won already, and we are engaged in the mopping up. Let us go forward into fallen Jericho; it is time to put the trumpets down and enter into the victory of our Captain.

What should we say today? I say, Thank God for the cultural advantages, for the rich springs of learning we have. Let these irrigate our studies in theology. By all means let us use every tool at our disposal for the witness and work of our Lord!

Consider the alumni of that peripatetic school of Jesus when the Master sends them out among the wolves to be a witness to the earth-shaking gospel. For three short years they have been learning. They came from common walks of life, and they did without libraries, desks, blackboards, microfilm or Coke machines. (There was one modern note, though, when the Faculty was arrested on the charge of speaking against the establishment!) Yet when they meet their resurrected teacher, he commissions them immediately to teach, to teach authoritatively so as to make disciples of all men. They are sent, despite their own weaknesses, despite the dangers, but sent with a Spirit of power who is within all of us who believe.

Yes, let cultural attainments grace your person, but let it be in areas of usefulness to advance the Kingdom. It is said that Calvin even designed a successful sewage system for Geneva. John Knox was busily engaged in the civil government. John Owen was the chaplain to Oliver Cromwell. John Eliot learned the language of the Massachusetts Indians in order to bring the gospel to them. John Bunyan, though he loved music, spent his "vacation" in jail not by fiddling away the hours, but by writing some of the greatest Christian prose of all time.

### A life-style for the Christian

Is it not time to change our life-style, both as individuals and in our Christian community? I am not referring to length of hair or style of dress! Rather, we need a life-style that suits Paul's picture of the Christian as a straining athlete, a warrior struggling with the fiends of hell, a pilgrim sojourner in this land. How am I to return to

Korea and explain to those impoverished saints that Christians in America eat superbly, are fat, flabby, and die of heart attacks? How can I explain how well we heat our homes, only to catch cold when exposed to the elements? How can I explain the excellent organs and the choirs and the superb hymnals — and the apathetic congregational singing? How can I tell of the zeal of the women for mission outreach and service — and then explain where the men are? Dare I tell them about the equipment in our homes for cooking, washing, and cleaning, and then explain why the missionaries don't have the equipment they need for their work?



Dare I tell the Korean farmer with his acre and a half all about the glories of golf? When his family of six sleeps in one room, seven by nine, with cooked barley for breakfast, dare I tell about the summer cabins with their portable hi-fi, TV, or the cabin cruiser, the guns, fishing tackle, or even of my subscription to *Consumer's Guide*? The slave in the cotton fields a century ago looked for Elijah's two-horse conveyance to the higher ground when he sang, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." We seem to be crooning, "Sing sweet, low chariot" to our radial-tire, wide-track, low-slung, 300-horsepower conveyance to the Pocos. The martyrs of old are said to have "climbed the steep ascent of heaven through peril, toil and pain" (Hymn 489, *Trinity Hymnal*). A revised edition might more accurately sing, "O Lord, to us may it be given to follow by the train!"

In this address I have tried to clarify the outlines and the borders of distinction in relating the cultural mandate to our mandate for missions. I hope I have spoken to our priorities and our posture in this present age. Let me remind you of the life-style set forth by Paul when he said, "What I mean, my friends, is this. The time we live in will not last long. While it lasts, married men should be as if they had no wives; mourners should be as if they had nothing to grieve them, the joyful as if they did not rejoice; buyers must not count on keeping what they buy, nor those who use the world's wealth on using it to the full. For the whole frame of this world is passing away" (1 Corinthians 7:29-31).

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Feb. 71

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## Here and There in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

**Wheaton, Ill.** — Bethel Church in Wheaton has called the Rev. John F. Bettler to be its pastor. Mr. Bettler, presently serving at Trinity Church of Hatboro, Pa., hopes to take up the new duties in Wheaton early in January 1971.

**Franklin Square, N. Y.** — The Presbytery of New York and New England received the Rev. Malcolm L. Wright from the Presbyterian Church of Canada as a ministerial member of the presbytery. Formerly a member of the Mediator Church in Philadelphia, Mr. Wright is now living in New Rochelle, N. Y., and desires to candidate in O. P. congregations.

*A "Nevius Plan" for Maine?* The Presbytery heard a proposal to provide home missionary services for the other small groups in central Maine. The plan, presented by the Rev. Bernard J. Stonehouse, includes elements of the self-supporting, self-propagating program of evangelization used so successfully in Korean mission work. It would place a full-time home missionary in Lewiston to serve the church there and to train and supervise several unordained men who already

desire to use their gifts in the church. Support would come from the Trinity Church, from other groups as they are able, plus aid from the presbytery. [Ed. note: This seems to be one possible answer to the needs of scattered small groups who desire a Reformed ministry but cannot practically be expected to support a pastor on their own. We hope the "Maine-Nevius Plan" bears fruit!]

**Ocoee, Fla.** — The Clarence W. Duffs, retired missionaries, are taking up permanent residence here. Their address is: 1510 Mona Ave., Ocoee, Florida, 32761. Mr. Duff says, "We are enjoying Florida though we do miss Pennsylvania's beauty and our friends there!"

**Los Angeles, Calif.** — Mr. Walter M. Sander, faithful elder in the Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church here, went to his Lord on Friday, September 18. Though converted late in life, Mr. Sander served his Lord wholeheartedly and was faithful in his church attendance until his illness made it impossible. Funeral services were conducted by the Rev. Salvador Solis, assisted by Mr. Sander's son, the Rev. Robert Sander, pastor in Winner, S. D.

**Grove City, Pa.** — The Ohio Presbyterial met here on October 17 in Covenant Church. It was reported that \$2183.63 had been sent to the denomination's missions committees from the presbyterial's "Shares" project.

Mrs. Lorraine Kress, wife of the Rev. Arnold Kress, missionary to Japan, spoke to the group. She emphasized the need for becoming part of the Japanese culture in the missionary work there. In the afternoon, Mr. Kress addressed the group, noting that prayer was "The Most Needful Thing" both in developing our understanding of the Lord's work and will, and in giving us the vision to do it.

**Green Bay, Wisc.** — Four families, under the leadership of evangelist-pastor John Fikkert, have begun services regularly here. Sunday services are at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. at the Packerland Kennel Club, Bellevue Road. The group is under the supervision of the session of Bethel Church in Oostburg. Contact address: Mr. Mark C. Voskuil, 822 Cornelius Dr., Green Bay, Wisc. 54301.

**Note:** The Guardian will do what it can to keep you posted on the news, while it is still news. But we cannot do much until we hear what's going on. Get us the word quickly, and we'll do our part.

**THE PRESBYTERY OF THE MID-WEST**, meeting at the Old Stockbridge Church in Morgan, Wisconsin. From left to right: Front row: Phillips, Mahaffy, Haney, H. Fikkert, De Master. Middle: Moulter, Klokow, Stanton, J. Fikkert (evangelist for new group in Green Bay, Wisc.), Barnett, Voskuil. Back row: T. Engstrom (minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod), Parker, Worst, LeMahieu, Williams, and Roskamp.

