
BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

J. G. VOS, Editor and Manager

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**BLUE
BANNER
FAITH
AND
LIFE**

VOLUME 15

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NUMBER 1

**Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the
young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under
feet.**

Psalm 91:13

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The Wigtown Martyrs

(Author unknown)

On Solway sands the tide flows fast,
The waters swiftly rise;
Alas for him whom lingering there
The rushing waves surprise!
Full quickly must he hurry thence,
Full swiftly must he ride,
Who tempts his fate on Solway shore
And races with the tide.
Past Wigtown Borough to the sea
The Blednoch River goes,
With many a pool and shifting shoal
Across the sand it flows.
Ah! Blednoch's stream and Wigtown bay
Have sights of sorrow seen,
When ships were stranded on the shore,
And boats have shipwrecked been.

There many a time has woman wept,
And wrung in grief her hands,
When loved ones she longed for have been
Found dead on Solway's sands.
But sight so strange was never seen
As when those martyrs died,
And gave their life on Wigtown shore,
And perished in the tide.
For many years ago 'tis now,
'Twas in the month of May;
The level sands were smooth and dry,
The tide out in the bay:
'Twas then the brother of fierce Graham
Of Claverhouse rode down,
With Winram, Strachan, and with Cultron
The Provost of the town.
And cruel Grierson of Lagg

The persecutor came,
To do that day by Blednoch's bank
A deed of sin and shame.
At ebb of tide two stakes of wood
Were driven in the sand,
And fastened there two prisoners were,
At Grierson's command.
An aged widow one of them,
And one a maiden young;
And thus amid the rising waves
The virgin martyr sung:
"To Thee I lift my soul, O Lord,
My God, I trust in Thee;
Let me not be ashamed; let not
My foes triumph o'er me."
The aged widow was the first
Drowned by the rising tide.
"What think you of her now?" in scorn
The persecutors cried,

"What think I of her? In that saint
Whose soul is on the wing
I see but this", the maid replied:
"My Saviour suffering."
Still ever deeper flowed the tide;
The billows higher rose,
As there that young defenceless girl
Was tempted by her foes
To buy her life by breach of faith
To Him who was her Lord;
Oh, she was young, and life is sweet,
And it was but a word.

Yet was temptation vain. She chose
For Christ to suffer wrong;
And still amid the rush of waves
The men could hear the song:
"Let not the errors of my youth,
Nor sins remembered be.
In mercy, for Thy goodness, Lord,
Do Thou remember me."
By this the waves rose to her lips;
The voice that sung was still.
They raised her head: "Pray for the King!"
"God save him if He will",
She answered. Then they dragged her forth
Half drowned amid the tide.
"Will you renounce the Covenant?
Abjure your faith!" they cried.

She raised her eyes nigh dimmed in death:
"Renounce my Saviour? No!
I'm one of Jesus' little ones.
I pray you, let me go!"
They let her go. The waters closed
Above her youthful head.
One of the glorious martyr throng,
One of the deathless dead.
Her name shall never be forgot,
While Blednoch's waters run,
And Solway kindles into gold
Beneath the setting sun.
They speak it oft in Scotland's homes;
'Tis told in far-off lands,
How in the bloom of youth she died
Upon the Solway sands.

And souls are thrilled, and hearts beat high
To hear the story told,
How nobly she maintained her faith
In days that now are old;
And how she kept her trust in God,
And how she scorned the foe,
And how she lived and how she died,
So many years ago.

Note: Margaret MacLachlan, a widow aged 63, and Margaret Wilson, a girl of 18, were drowned in the tide at Wigtown, Scotland, in the year 1685, because of their loyalty to Christ, His Crown and Covenant.

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Sketches of the Covenanters

By J. C. McFeeters

Chapter XL

The Societies. — A. D. 1682.

After the death of Cameron, the Covenanters of the Cameronian type formed themselves into societies for the worship of God, for their own spiritual edification, and for the defence of the Covenant. Half a dozen families or more, having the same faith, spirit, and purpose met together on the Sabbath day, to engage in social worship. This was called a society.

These were days of woeful declension. Defection had swept the great body of Covenanters from their basis. Under the strain of persecution and the snare of the royal Indulgence, many ministers and people had abandoned wholly, or in degree, Reformation grounds. The Society People alone refused to make concessions by which truth would be suppressed, conscience defiled, or any divine principle surrendered. They stood by the Covenant, and accepted the consequences, including hardest service and greatest sufferings.

The Society People have been censured for exclusiveness; they refused to associate with others in the worship of God, and would hear no ministers except their own. But why? Consider their reason, then let them be judged. These people stood alone simply because they had been left alone; these soldiers of Christ had been deserted while holding the ground won by their fathers at the cost of much blood. They stood where the Lord Jesus Christ had placed them, defending His royal rights. Should they then be reprimanded for not joining in the general stampede? What saith the Lord? "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

From the fortress of the Covenant these veterans of Christ heroically waved the Blue Banner, declaring to their brethren, and to the world, that by the grace of God they would never surrender. They were the real Covenanters, the true blue, the old stock. They were not a faction; they were the remnant. They stood on the original ground; the others had broken the Covenant and had departed. These were the core, the center, the substance, the personnel, the integral force, the organized body, the visible form, of the Covenanted Church in

those days. The Societies were the continuity of the Church that had flourished in the days of Knox, and took on later and greater glory in the times of Henderson. They were the same Church, holding the same faith, the same Covenant, and the same services.

The Society People were not the branch; they were the trunk from which the branches had fallen. The branches were strewn around; but the trunk, though broken and disfigured, was still deeply rooted in Covenant soil, and full of life.

The persecutors more than ever concentrated their fire upon these people. They were pursued and shot like game. Liberal rewards were offered for their leaders. Yet they stood by their Covenant; they would not yield an hairbreadth. Fidelity to Christ swallowed up every other consideration; it was the burning passion of their lives.

These societies were numerous, extending over a wide area. They were held together by delegations which met quarterly. By this means harmony of spirit, purpose, and action was preserved. They stood like a square of veterans, facing the enemy on every side. They even took aggressive steps, delivering in the most public manner their testimony against the tyranny of the king and the defection of the Church. The minutes of these General Meetings have been preserved; they furnish interesting reading.

After the death of Cargill these people had no minister. A few ministers, like Alexander Peden, were still untainted, but they would not join these strong-headed Covenanters in their war against the king. They regarded the Society People as extremists and fanatics. The societies suffered more seriously from reproach and misrepresentation by the brethren than from persecution, though that was growing fiercer every day. But these were men who reckoned with conscience and with God, not with consequences nor with men. Fidelity to Christ was their first and only choice.

These immovable Covenanters were now undergoing the severest trial of faith. They were hunted, seized, tortured, shot, hanged, destroyed, in the most infernal manner. They were shown

neither mercy nor justice. But the most crushing distress was the reproach heaped upon them by retrograde Covenanters. By these they were defamed as dangerous men, disloyal to their country and a disgrace to religion. All the ministers, through fear or with scorn, had forsaken them. This was harder to endure than fire, gibbet, and sword combined. They issued a pathetic call to the pastors to come back and tend this flock of God. The call was like the wail of lost children crying for a father's care and pity. It contained these assuring words:

"We will hear all ministers, whether in houses or fields, who will preach according to the Word of God, our Covenants, Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, that will embrace this, our call."

The call was presented to as many as could be found, and was declined by every one. These that declined their call were the ministers, who, twenty years previous, had been expelled from their churches because they would not abandon their Covenant and submit to the king. And these were the people who had followed them into the wilderness, gathered about them in great Conventicles, enjoyed wonderful Communion under their ministry, and adventured their lives in their defence. Now the flock was forsaken; the shepherds had fled.

These people, however, were not to be desprised. They were numerous; a few years later, upon an emergency, they mustered a regiment for their country's defence without the beat of a drum, and announced that another regiment or two would follow if needed. They were courageous; they gave a most aggressive testimony at Lanark against the king and the defections of the times. They were intelligent; they ably defended their principles and position both in speech and in print. They were consecrated; they make their appeal always to God, to the Covenant, to conscience, and to the enlightened judgment of Christendom.

The General Meeting resolved, in 1862, to educate four young men for the ministry, among whom was James Renwick. These were sent to college. Renwick was ordained in 1684.

Each society endeavored to hold a meeting every Sabbath for Divine worship. This went far to supply the spiritual nourishment which the ministers had failed to give. The "Society" is a sweet memory, lingering still in the hearts of some of our aged people. There are Covenanters who can yet recall the old-fashioned prayer meeting, then known as the Society which descended from the times of persecution. They can remember how half a dozen families, sometimes more, sometimes less, came quietly together on Sabbath morning to one of their homes. The atmosphere, within and without, was pervaded with holy awe. A quiet joy, subdued with gravity, beamed in all

faces. The largest room in the house was crowded with men, women, and children; the chairs were supplemented with boards, cushioned with quilts, for seats. At 11 a. m. the worship of God began.

Order of exercises:

A Psalm announced, a blessing invoked, singing the Psalm, reading a chapter, and prayer by the leader.

Bible verse announced, statement of doctrine, and remarks.

A second Psalm, chapter, and prayer.

Reading in the Confession of Faith or in a sermon.

A third Psalm, chapter, and prayer.

The children reciting Psalms and Questions.

The Shorter Catechism recited by the whole house.

A fourth Psalm, followed with a short prayer.

Adjournment at 3 p. m.

These societies were the deep roots of the Covenanted Church. By means of them, she became thoroughly indoctrinated in the Word of God and His holy Covenant. In these meetings the elders became like ministers in the knowledge of Christ, and the people like elders. The feeble in Israel waxed strong as the house of David, and the house of David as the angel of the Lord. There were giants in those days.

The Covenanted Church must revive the society spirit and exercises, if she would recover her vitality; she must resume these spiritual athletics if she would feel the glow of healthy vigor. These roots have suffered decay; therefore the trees are easily upturned. When Social worship of God characterizes the Church, the people will take on strength and be able to stand amidst the spiritual landslides and general defection that characterizes the times in which we live.

Points for the Class

1. How did the Covenanted Societies survive the general defection?
2. How did they succeed when they had no ministers?
3. What separated them from others in worship?
4. What caused them the greatest grief?
5. How did they entreat the ministers to come to them?
6. On what terms would they have received the ministers?
7. How were the societies unified?
8. How did the General Meeting provide a ministry?
9. Give a description of an old-time prayer-meeting.
10. Why should these exercises be revived?

Chapter XLI.

The Daughters of the Covenant.

The persecution of the Covenanters brought into display the rarest virtues and highest qualities of womanhood. Many women chose to give up their happy homes, and wander in solitudes, dwell in caves, suffer in prisons, hear the death sentence, and go to the gallows, rather than violate their Covenant with God. They cheerfully accepted their full share of service and sacrifice in Scotland's struggle for civil and religious liberty. They faced the terrors of that conflict with a noble spirit; they were man's worthy helpers in those trying times. Thousands of incidents of feminine heroism might be cited; we have room for merely a few.

The Covenanter's marriage, in those days, was both serious and romantic. The bride always loves to open her eyes upon rosy prospects, but persecution in that generation shattered the beautiful dream. Her future was then like a landscape, over which storm followed storm, with only alternate blinks of sunlight. Husband and wife were in jeopardy every hour; to-morrow the wedding gown might be the winding sheet. When John Knox found the woman of his choice, he said, "My bird, are you willing to marry me?" She replied, "Yes, Sir." Then tenderly and firmly he added, "My bird, if you marry me, you must take your venture of God's providence, as I do. I go through the country on foot, with a wallet on my arm, and in it a Bible, a shirt, and a clean band; you also may put some things in for yourself; and you must go where I go, and lodge where I lodge." "I'll do all this," she blithely answered. They lived long, and were happy in the bonds of that blessed wedlock. Once as they journeyed across the country, she took the hand-baggage, and hastening ahead sat on the hill-top awaiting his coming. As he came up she humorously said, "Am not I as good as my word?"

The women often showed fidelity to Jesus Christ and His Covenant that amazed the persecutors. They scorned the suggestion of relief for themselves or their families that would compromise the truth of Christ. John Welch, of Ayr, lay in prison fifteen months because his preaching did not please the king. The dungeon in which he was confined is yet pointed out in Blackness Castle, a dark, dismal, pestilential vault. A recent traveler said that he had gotten enough of its horrors in five minutes to do him. But poor Welch had to abide there "five quarters of ane yier." Mrs. Welch visited the king in person to plead for his release. "Yes," said the king, "if he will submit to the bishops." "Please Your Majesty," said Mrs. Welch, holding up the corners of her apron, "I'd rather keep his head here." The faithful wife was willing to witness her husband's execution, rather than have him betray the cause of Christ or break his Covenant with God.

Many a martyr got his inspiration for duty from God, through his noble wife. When James Guthrie came to a difficult task, he seemed to hesitate. Great interests were involved. May he not modify a certain ministerial action so as to save his life, provide for his family, and continue to shepherd his flock? Who would not pause in presence of such a serious consideration? His wife, observing his perplexity, came into his presence with a cheery countenance and an assuring voice, saying, "My heart, what the Lord gives you light and clearness to do, that do." The light carried him into the service; the conscience was set free from the temporary disturbance; yet the decision brought him to the scaffold; it placed upon his brow the martyr's crown. The worthy wife sadly went into widowhood, and the children into orphanage, through that strong, womanly spirit which could brook no deviation from duty.

The women frequently were placed in embarrassing positions. In marriage they were not always equally yoked. When the husband was a persecutor, faithfulness in the house and fidelity to Jesus required the highest wisdom on the part of the wife. Lady Anne Rothes occupied such a home. Both she and her husband were born Covenanters. The Covenant principles were bred in the bone, instilled into the thoughts, and impressed on the conscience, at the parental fireside, at the family altar, in the house of God, and at the Table of the Lord, while they were under the care of their parents; but the young man forsook his father's God, dishonored the Covenant, and cast off religion. He became a profligate and persecutor. The woman, through the abundant grace of God, remained true to the Covenant. Her position, however, involved her in many a dilemma. The wedlock that promised to be a blessed union proved to be a galling yoke. The husband was placed in power by the king, and granted the title of duke. On one occasion, when entertaining Archbishop Sharp, the two grew merry over their plan to put certain Covenanters to death. The tender-hearted woman, sitting with them at the table, was greatly distressed, yet she wisely concealed her feelings. Having the information, however, she was able to send out timely warning to the Covenanters. In this way she saved their lives, not once, nor twice. Rothes, too, in his better moments, assisted her in protecting the persecuted. When about to send his soldiers to apprehend the Covenanters, at times he would say to her with a twinkle in his eye, "My lady, the hawks will be out to-night, so you had better take care of your chickens."

The women of the Covenant were compelled to pass through many painful scenes. Often their hearts were heavily burdened, yet they were mightily sustained by the Holy Spirit. Captain John Paton, after a wonderful record on the battle-

field in defence of the Covenant, won his last fight on the scaffold. He went joyfully to his death, glorying in victory through his Lord Jesus Christ. As he stood on the platform from which he would soon step into eternity, he held forth his well-worn Bible, from which he addressed the crowd that stood around the gallows. Then bidding farewell to earth, and welcome to heaven, he commended his wife and their six children to the care of his Covenant God. At this moment, the sorrow-stricken woman, reaching up her trembling hand, received from him his Bible with a blessing—a double token of her husband's deathless love. Then in the twinkling of an eye, she saw his body twirling in the death struggle, while his soul entered into glory. That Bible is still preserved at Lochgoin.

The horrors which women deliberately faced, in their devotion to Christ and His servants, seem almost incredible. How great the love of woman whose heart God's love has filled! How deep, how tranquil, how inexhaustible, how majestic, how like the love of Jesus is the love of that woman whose heart rests in her Covenant God! It is measured in part by the stupendous tasks she accepts and the crucial emergencies she endures for the sake of others. When Robert Baillie, burdened with years and weakened with disease, lay in prison waiting for his sentence, his wife was ill and unable to visit him. But the angelic heart of her sister, Lady Graden, then found its opportunity. The authorities would permit her to visit the dying man, only on her consent to become prisoned with him. She agreed to the conditions, and entered the dark sickly cell. His pale face was quickly lighted up with her presence, and the Word of God, which she read to him in the dim candle-light. Night and day she watched over him with sympathetic interest. At length he was brought out for trial, and sentenced to die. She accompanied him to the gallows; stood by him when swung off; saw him cut down; watched while his body was quartered and prepared for shipment, to be placed on ex-

hibition in four cities. And when the service of love was fully finished, and neither hand, nor tongue, nor eye could do anything further she went home to console her sick sister.

And what shall we say more of Isabel Alison, Marion Harvie, Margaret Dun, Barbara Cunningham, Janet Livingston, Anne Hamilton, Margaret Colville, Marion Veitch, and the long list of worthy women, which the pen of man will never complete?

The Covenanted Church is largely dependent on the women for spirit, courage, fidelity, and activity in the service of Christ. The grace of God, abounding in the women, will cause the Church to arise and do valiant work. When mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters beam with devotion to Christ and His Covenant; when their voice is resonant with holy courage in the Lord's cause; when their lives are sublime with deeds of heroic faith; then will the Church become "beautiful as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Jesus said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Points for the Class

1. In what spirit did the women endure the persecution?
2. Give an incident in courtship.
3. Describe the loyalty of Mrs. Welch, both to her husband and to the Covenant.
4. Relate Mrs. Guthrie's spirited advice to her husband.
5. Tell about Mrs. Paton.
6. What were some of the difficulties faced by Lady Rothes?
7. Describe the service of devotion by Lady Graden to Robert Baillie.
8. How is the Church dependent on women, for spirited and successful work?

Preaching and Teaching in the Ministry of Christ

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

Jesus was born, among other things, to be a teacher. As He said to Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (John 18:37). His first recorded saying was the word spoken to His parents when they found Him in the temple: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49).

As He was born so also He was educated to be a teacher. Taught of God and man, He was also self-taught as none other has ever been. At each stage of His growing life he

was "filled with wisdom" according to the measure of His mind and heart at the time. As He grew He "increased in wisdom" until the day of His appearing unto Israel. Consequently when the time for teaching came He was fully prepared, for He had been fully taught. So it is no wonder that we read that He "began to preach" and observe to what a large extent His activities in this respect are spread before us in the Gospel story.

The first words of His public life were spoken to John when He presented Himself to be

baptized of him: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

After the temptation in the wilderness He returned to the scene where confessions of sins were being made and God was working in many hearts. As He reappeared in the region of the Jordan where John was baptized we see the actual beginning of His teaching ministry. It appears that it began and continued for a time in the form of private conference and interview. However the faithfulness of His adherence to the worship of the synagogue soon led to the expansion of this ministry into public address.

The record states that He came "preaching and teaching," and reads in part as follows: "Jesus came . . . preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel'" (Mark 1:14,15). "And Jesus returned" and "taught in their synagogues" (Luke 4:14,15). Presently we come to the more comprehensive statements of Matthew and Luke. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 4:23, cf. also Matt. 9:35). "And it came to pass that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:1).

A little reflection will show that two words are used to indicate the form and substance of His public speaking at this time. The first of these is the word "preach." Very soon, however, another word is introduced, the word "teach." After that both words occur singly or together, and often apparently quite interchangeably. And yet, as they occur in the original, it is apparent that there is a difference in the meaning. Closely associated though they are, there is evidently a definite distinction in the sense.

John the Baptizer was the original "preacher," of whom it is said that he came "preaching." Incidentally to this he also "taught." However preaching was the right word for his ministry, for it meant "to proclaim as a herald," and John as the herald and forerunner. One does not teach a royal proclamation, one proclaims it. On the other hand one does not herald admonition and instruction; they are taught.

The kingdom came in its final form in this present world in and with the coming of the King, and John proclaimed it. But in the nature of the case who else could preach the kingdom of God as the King Himself? So Jesus was heralded, but He also heralded Himself. In his every word and deed He presented Himself as the Messiah-King. Thus we see how the word preaching as used to characterize His public speaking was "preaching" in the primary sense of the word.

Such has ever been and is the case with all true preaching. It ever was and still remains essentially the proclamation of the Christ and of the truth as it is in Him. On the other hand, as sinners are converted and disciples made, the Saviour has many things to say to them. This accounts for the companion terminology of "teacher" and "teaching." Only in the sense that Christian preaching is also teaching and Christian teaching is also preaching are the terms to be used as interchangeable.

So the original form and content of the message was the proclamation of the kingdom. It was the public announcement of what was taking place in God's new day, the blessedness of what God was doing and giving and had brought forth for men and their salvation—all to His own glory and praise.

Coupled with it was the call to repent and believe. "Repent" was the term which signified the necessity incumbent upon every earnest seeker after God to go down to the bottom of the sin-situation as personally affected by it. It meant a descent to the lowest depths of personal shame and contrition from whence to look up to the Saviour-King and live. Only by so doing could one be received, and receive and be gathered into the Kingdom.

"On broken hearts the Lord attends;
To spirits crushed salvation sends."

As Jesus went about all Galilee converts were made. Many from among the throngs that heard Him speak responded to the call, were drawn to Him and gathered into the kingdom. Convicted of their sins, they believed on Jesus as the Christ. United to Him by faith they experienced the saving power of the grace of God in Him. Conversion was the tight little gate of entrance to the Christian way that put them on the narrow way that leads to life. Rescued from eternal destruction they received the gift of eternal life through Him.

Conversion, however, was only the beginning. Thereafter, as followers of the Christ, it was their privilege and duty to sit at Jesus' feet and learn of Him. This, of course, is the explanation of the teaching given in Matthew chapters 5-7 and kindred passages. Herein the King unfolds what the kingdom was and was intended to mean to its recipients. Here the fundamental facts and precepts are revealed. Here, for the first, the content of Christ's message for His own is set forth in rich and full detail.

On this particular occasion it is said that "he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'"

A little use of the imagination will give us the picture. The leader slows to a halt on the gentle mountain slope and takes His seat. Above Him rises the mountain side, beneath Him spreads the plain, and over all there towers the great blue dome of the sky. The disciples come to Him and He indicates where and how they are to sit. The seating arrangement leaves Him a little above and apart from the others. Presently all are seated and every eye is fastened on Him. The teaching which He is about to give has been in His mind for some time and has been well and thoroughly prepared. And now the Master, the Great Teacher, speaks, and the word of the Lord is heard.

Words of ineffable comfort are borne upon the air, fall on the ear, and sink down into sorrowful and broken hearts ready and waiting to hear. Now hungry hearts are filled and thirsty souls are satisfied. "Blessed are the poor in spirit" and "Blessed, they that mourn," the Saviour says, And such they are, and for such as them the kingdom has been prepared and unto them it is given.

"Ye are the light of the world . . . the salt of the earth," He says. Later in life in His prayer He said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world . . . As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." The blessedness of the believers is not only one of fellowship but also one of service. Being blessed in ourselves we are to be a blessing to others and to receive the greater blessedness. Having been made light-receivers, we are to be light-givers. Seasoned in ourselves, we are to serve as salt.

Two words call for special notice: "blessedness" and "righteousness." The essence of the kingdom of God is the presence of God with men. Hence its blessedness. But how could it

be that God could be here or anywhere and not bear rule? And what blessedness could there be apart from the rule of God, except in and through His moral government? Hence the prominence given to the righteousness of the kingdom. Righteousness signifies law. It is the application of the law of God in heart and life. It is conformity to the will of the Lord who is both the law and the life giver. It is willing subjection in thought and action, in faith and life. It is a glad and a thankful obedience, for only so is there real righteousness. The lesson of these words is plain. Blessedness is never known apart from righteousness.

So the teaching proceeds and the law of life and liberty in Christ is set forth. Illustrations are given and wide variety of duties is prescribed. Finally, the absolute necessity of entrance into the kingdom is enjoined.

As we read and reflect upon this teaching we realize that here is the foundation for all that follows. This is the fundamental law of Christ. It stands in the setting of the Bible teaching as a whole and proceeds on the basis of all that God had theretofore revealed. It is factual as well as ethical; doctrinal through and through as well as practical. Men's state and condition in the hereafter are definitely related to their state and condition here.

Pervading all is the note of self-assertion on the part of the Teacher. He is solidly behind Moses and the prophets, but definitely at odds with the leaders of the day in their adherence to the tradition of the elders. In opposition to what the elders taught He says: "But I say unto you." He tells of how His followers must suffer for His sake. The time will come when all shall appear before His judgment seat. And both here and now and "in that day" He is the Lord.

Going About Doing Good

It was a glorious day in Galilee when the Lord began His ministry in that favored land. As the work of John, with the common people at least, was a great success, so also was the early public life and work of Christ. "John did no miracle," but Jesus did, and that of course was a great point in His favor.

Luke informs us that in the days of His growing life He "increased in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). His general good standing in this respect was a situation which carried over and persisted for a time during the early Galilean ministry. He put Satan to rout and He, with John, was an offense to the leaders. But "God was with him" and He rapidly developed a large and enthusiastic following among the

people. Humanly speaking, His ministry was an immediate and great success.

There were various reasons for this. For a period of four hundred years Israel had been bereft of prophecy. At the time that John and Jesus began their work there was an appalling dearth of any kind of real prophetic preaching. The scribal teaching, with its endless striving for effect, was devoid of all real nourishment. Provision for men's physical wants was not lacking, but spiritually there was widespread famine and starvation.

Consequently when we read how John came preaching in the wilderness, we need not be surprised to read that "there went out to him all

the land of Judaea and they of Jerusalem and were all baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins." So also in the case of John the Baptist's great successor when He entered into the synagogue and taught. Both were men who had been "sent from God," although one of the two was One who had come forth from heaven itself and God. But however great the difference between them they were both men with a message — a message of good and of good things beyond all words. They knew what they were to say and how to say it, and their hearers hung upon their every word.

Another reason for Jesus' original popular reception was the prevalence of disease in the land. It is doubtless difficult for us today to realize what sickness and affliction were like in those days. So it is no easy thing to visualize what it would mean when, in addition to the preaching, there came a great outpouring of the works of power and love for every kind of physical and mental need. How the news spread, and how they came from near and far and hastened to Him for this ministry! As the sick and afflicted were healed, so also the demons were cast out, to the inexpressible relief of the many who were so delivered.

Still another excruciating element in the situation was the galling yoke of Rome. There was coercion and confiscatory taxation in those days. And the oppressed, looking to Jesus as the Christ, expected that He would rise up for their deliverance and set them free. It was a serious mistake, but it was a large element in the irresistible attraction by which they were drawn to Jesus at the time.

Of course, ever working with the Word in the hearts of the hearers were both the general and special operations of the Spirit. Christ Himself gives the picture in the parable of the Sower. As the sower went forth to sow, the good seed of the Word fell on different kinds of soils. That which fell on the hard and beaten path had never a chance. It was simply a wind-fall for the birds. Nevertheless most of the seed fell on soils wherein they grew and flourished for a time, through not for long. Other seed, however, fell upon good ground; that is to say, was received into good and understanding hearts. These hearts were what they were by virtue of the new birth. In them an inner preparedness had been so provided. In these hearts the good seed was retained and remained and grew and brought forth its appropriate and appointed fruit.

So it was in some cases, though by no means in all. And yet there were many whose hearts responded and who at first, at least, appeared to have been converted. But Jesus understood

the situation perfectly and was not deceived by such appearances, as the parable shows. He knew that His success was more in the outward appearance than in any deep inner experience.

A great initial advantage had been gained in the fact that John had gone before Him. But more than that was the fact that God, in all the mystery of His works and ways, had gone before them both and had prepared the way.

Truly there was another side to the situation even in the radiant morning of Jesus' public life. It was lovely beyond description while it lasted, warm and bright and beautiful with the very light of life. But the sun had no sooner arisen than the storm clouds began to show on the horizon and gather in the sky and the glory of the dawn soon passed. But the main point is that, for the first time in the centuries of darkness and deprivation, the people at last found One who really loved them and whom as their hearts were open to Him, they could love.

Ever since sin entered into the world and death by sin, mankind has been destitute of all real love apart from the grace of God in Christ. And ever since the sons of men, deep down in their hearts, have sensed something of this sad condition.

The world in general is a world which is starved and hungry for love. Everywhere and always there are those who long for one who cares, for someone who really loves. This was what they found in this Jesus who was called the Christ. Not until we have learned the truth of Jesus' love have we discovered the innermost secret of His success. Love ever was and is the secret of His power over the hearts and lives of men.

There is no reason to doubt that in one way or another His love went out to all His fellow men. Otherwise how could He have taught His disciples saying "Love your enemies?" — that is to say, Love everyone? And if Paul could say that his "heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was that they might be saved," such could have been no less true of his Lord. Though Jesus' labor of love was lost upon many, it was never on account of any lack of love on His part.

In one sense of the word love never really comes into its own, never really comes alive, except as it is reciprocated. "The love of Jesus what it is, none but His loved ones know." Men's personal relationship to Christ is not the same in all cases. There is a sense in which one is His beloved and another not. Some are His kindred in spirit and others not. It was so in the days of His flesh and it is so today. Except as one is born again he never closes with the Saviour and never knows "the love of Christ that passeth knowledge."

It may be that we have digressed, but at any rate these are the reasons for the Saviour's original success. But though love was the motivation in the Incarnation, the great thing in the heart of Christ and the ruling principle of His life, it was by no means everything in His heart and life. It was present in Him, as it is in God, in combination with all the virtues and every perfect moral attribute. And, as has been indicated, the work of the Holy Spirit is far from being the same in all cases. There is both a special and a common grace of the Spirit.

So while some were effectually drawn to Jesus, others were not. And while some were drawn, others were not drawn at all but were only disappointed and offended. His presence in the world was a divisive force and the cause and occasion of a great division. The love which called to love in one only evoked hatred in another. There is no real love apart from righteousness which is the fulfillment of the law of love. Real love simply cannot and does not exist in any other form, and it is sheer folly to suppose that it does. It is the most volatile of all the elements. Try to extract it from its natural setting in the virtues, and it melts into the air and is gone.

Righteousness in its very nature is opposed to unrighteousness, and love to lovelessness. Good is ever in conflict with the evil. So also the other way around. Sin is opposed to sinlessness, evil ever is in conflict with the good.

And, after all, Christ's first great love and zeal ever was and is for God and not for man. The advent of Christ was in manifestation of the love of God for sinful men in their evil case and predicament. But even so it was also first and supremely in the cause of God, His kingdom and the honor and glory of His Name.

Christ's coming was in the interest of all the things of God — His being and nature, His work and His Word, His law and His justice and His wrath and condemnation as well as His love and redemption. It was in the cause of all that is right and true and beautiful and good and godly. It was in the love of all that is true and honest, just, pure, lovely and praiseworthy.

And His coming was in supreme regard for the will of God in every way. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psalm 40:6-8 and Heb. 10:5-10). It was in full accord with the will of God as expressed in the law of God and in the Gospel of His grace. But above all it was in perfect accord with the will of God's eternal purpose, His decrees; that aspect of His will which takes precedence over every other.

Consequently the Lord Jesus was in perfect sympathy with the election of some and the non-

election of others. He cordially accepted the divisive operations of the great Divider. And He gladly acknowledged the perfect wisdom and goodness of God in the distribution of His grace. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Matt. 11:25,26).

He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:31). But Jesus' good-doing was no ordinary kind of do-goodism. It went all the way to the bottom of the situation. In other words, His whole life of love and doing good was in conflict with the devil and all his agents whether demons or men.

As for the proud and impenitent evil-doers of His day, His testimony was against them. And He was absolutely in favor of "the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men" who suppress the truth in the interest of their own unrighteousness. Even in the sufferings of His death for sinners He "committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:23).

Why was He hated? Why did they yearn to destroy Him? Why did they counsel against Him to put Him to death? Because His very presence among them, His every word and deed, His whole approach and attitude carried with it an open or implied adverse judgment and reproof.

And Satan and his subjects never hesitated to fight back. The forces of darkness and sin could not do otherwise. For all of Christ's good-doing was in counteraction of their evil-doing. It was aimed at the destruction of Satan and all his works. Jesus' whole life and work on earth was a death blow to the devil. It was a battle to the death. That was why He was so fiercely hated and so mightily opposed. It was the story of Cain and Abel all over again. Cain was "of that wicked one and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (1 John 3:12).

We may not dwell on the particulars, but, as Peter says, He went about doing good. His life-work as a whole was the work of God in Him for the salvation of sinner-men. He came in the love of God, proclaimed that love and perfectly exemplified it in His life. There was no imperfection in His love. It loved and overflowed in all His ministry. Love appeared in the kingdom as it came in and with and through His coming, and in the Gospel of the kingdom as it was freely offered unto all. Love was revealed as the good news was received and took effect in the hearts and lives of its receivers. Love breathed in all the prayer life of the Lord. And it shone in His good deeds, in all the wonderful works of His life in ministry to man's distress and need.

But what was His recompense at the hands of men? Well could the Saviour sing with His renowned forefather,

"Full of life and great in number,
Strong the foes who me withstood;
Evil they for kindness render,
Hating me for doing good."

Those who accepted the Gospel and received Him, did so with the utmost gratitude and love,

but on the whole these were comparatively few. With all others it was only evil for good, and hate for love. And still His recompense to them was ever only good for evil and love for hate. So, even at the last, as they nailed Him to the cross He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

(Note: Mr. Rankin's studies in the life of our Lord will be continued, D.V., in future issues of this magazine. Editor).

The Puritan Principle of Worship

By the Rev. William Young, B. Litt., Th. D.

(Continued from preceding issue)

The regulative principle when applied provides objectivity in worship. By objectivity in this connection is meant simply conformity to the law of God as opposed to subjectivity or rather to subjectivism in worship. There is no doubt a good sense of subjectivity in worship, the sincere, reverent attitude of the true worshipper. This desirable subjectivity, however, will tend invariably to that worship which is agreeable to the Will and Word of God. Opposed to this is subjectivism in worship, worship arising not from the revealed Will of the Lord, but from the desires, inclinations, imaginations and decisions of men. Subjectivism is precisely what the Reformers and Puritans termed will-worship.

An increasing trend toward subjectivism in worship has marked the practice of professing Protestantism since the seventeenth century. This trend corresponds with a general trend in modern thought and life. The Puritan principle in the 16th and 17th centuries was insisted on in opposition to the tyrannical exercise of power on the part of an authoritarian Church. In the 20th century, while authoritarian churches still display their characteristic traits, the glaring evil especially in Protestant circles, is unbridled licence on the part of individuals and groups within the churches. The Puritan principle stands as a principle of order and of liberty between the extremes of tyranny and anarchy in worship. The extremes in this instance as in others have a common root error more expressly manifest in the one than in the other extreme. Tyranny has in it the seeds of anarchy. Anarchy may reveal itself at a later stage of development than tyranny, but it reveals more clearly the root evil that expresses itself in tyranny as well. That evil is departure from the ways of the living God. Rabbi Duncan has well said that there is but one heresy and that is antinomianism. Legalism itself can be regarded as a disguised type of antinomianism. The Puritan principle is not legalism, for it neither inculcates salvation by works nor does it admit of any impositions beyond the commandments of

God. Legalism whether in Judaism or Christianity has involved essentially the rejection of sovereign grace and of the sufficiency of God's Word. Puritanism, far from being legalistic in this proper usage of "legalism," is the one system that has in its distinguishing principle opposed legalism most consistently. If Puritans have sometimes fallen into legalistic errors, this lapse is in spite of, not the natural result of their allegiance to the regulative principle of worship.

The trend toward subjectivism may be illustrated in a multitude of particulars. Observance of days other than the Christian Sabbath or Lord's day (and seasons of Thanksgiving and humiliation) has increased with alarming rapidity. The evils of superstition and idolatry that have come to be connected with the Church observance of Christmas and Easter are notorious. Subjectivism in these instances attaches itself parasitically to observances originally imposed by an authoritarian Church while in other instances it invents days suited to the modern spirit that aims beyond all else at the glory of man. Motherhood, war and labour make inroads upon the Sabbath and on the purity of God's worship in general, while a hundred or rather thousands of lesser humanistic spirits hover about particular occasions in the activities of the modern churches. A Sabbath for the Lodge in one Church and in memory of Robert Burns in another! A peculiarly idolatrous form of deviation from the regulative principle in some circles at present is the erection of "worship centres" and particularly the use of pictures of the Saviour for this purpose. The use of a picture of Christ in worship is a blatant violation of the 2nd commandment. Many other applications and implications of the regulative principle could be mentioned. The Puritans were concerned with ceremonies (of which the three noxious ones singled out were the use of the surplice, kneeling at the Communion and the sign of the cross in Baptism) and with the imposition of liturgies. Since the 18th century, however, a major deviation from the regulative principle in

the direction of unbridled subjectivism concerns the musical aspect of the service of worship. The flood of uninspired lyrics commonly miscalled hymns or gospel songs which has inundated a declining Protestant Church has been matched by other musical accompaniments that have transformed Churches into theatres and concert halls featuring preludes, postludes, interludes and who knows what else of the same species?

The godly William Romaine was one of Zion's faithful watchmen in the 18th century who raised voice and pen in protest against the crowding out of divinely authorized and inspired Psalmody by the introduction into public worship of humanly composed ditties suited to tingle the itching ear and to allure the carnal mind. Romaine's words of apology in his "Essay on Psalmody" may well be quoted by one who would introduce this subject in the 20th century, Evangelical Churches.

"I know this is a sore place, and I would touch it gently, as gently as I can with any hope of doing good. The value of poems above Psalms is become so great, and the singing of men's words, so as quite to cast out the Word of God is become so universal (except in the Church of England), that one scarce dares to speak upon the subject: Neither would I, having already met with contempt enough for preferring God's hymns to man's hymns, if a high regard for God's most blessed word did not require me to bear my testimony; and if I did not verily believe, that many real Christians have taken up this practice without thinking of the evil of it; and when they come to consider the matter carefully will rather thank me, than censure me, for freedom of speech."

Romaine's *Essay on Psalmody* (1775) in *Works* (1847 ed), p. 990.

Romaine explains his position as to the use of hymns referring to Isaac Watts in particular. "Let me observe then that I blame nobody for singing human compositions. I do not think it sinful or unlawful, so the matter be scriptural. My complaint is against preferring men's poems to the good word of God, and preferring them to it in the Church. I have no quarrel with Dr. Watts, or any living or dead versifier. I would not wish all their poems burnt. My concern is to see Christian congregations shut out divinely inspired Psalms, and take in Dr. Watts' flights of fancy, as if the words of a poet were better than the words of a prophet, or as if the wit of a man was to be preferred to the wisdom of God. When the church is met together in one place, the Lord God has made a provision for their songs of praise—a large collection and great variety.—and why should not these be used in the church according to God's express appointment? I speak not of private people or of private singing, but of the Church in its public service. Why should the provision which God has made be so far despised, as to become quite

out of use? Why should Dr. Watts, or any hymn maker, not only take the precedence of the Holy Ghost, but also thrust him entirely out of the Church? Insomuch that the rhymes of a man are now magnified above the Word of God, even to the annihilating of it in many congregations." pp. 990 f.

Romaine writes of Watts not with rancour but with magnanimity, but is unsparing of the followers of Watts who eliminated the Psalms from the service of praise. Watts never intended to thrust the Psalms from the Church. His words quoted by Romaine from the preface to the hymns are these: "Far be it from my thoughts to lay aside the book of Psalms in public worship; few can pretend so great a value for them as myself; it is the most artful, most devotional, and divine collection of poesy; and nothing can be supposed more proper to raise a pious soul to heaven, than some parts of that book; never was a piece of experimental divinity so nobly written, and so justly reverence and admired." Romaine remarks: "Happy would it have been for the Christian world, if his followers had stopped just where he did. He declares it was far from his thoughts to do what they have done. It never came into his head to lay aside the book of Psalms in public worship. Think of this and weigh it carefully, ye that idolize Dr. Watts, and prefer his poems to the infallible Word of God. It would be well for you, if you valued psalms as much as he did; for he says none valued them more. Then you would have looked upon them in his light: for having already in your hands the most devotional and the most divine collection, you would not have thought of any other, knowing that it was impossible to have a better, but you would have used this, and would have found it too, as Dr. Watts did, the most proper to raise the soul to heaven. Blessed sentinels! I honour the memory of Dr. Watts for this glorious testimony. I can say nothing that can bear harder upon those persons, who, contrary to his opinion, have entirely left off singing the Psalms of God in the Church. He never intended to countenance such a practice. He declares it was far from his thoughts, yea, he abhorred the very thought, and in so saying he has upon record condemned it. Here I rest the matter . . . Farewell. May the Lord guide you into all truth." pp. 996 f. Romaine's magnanimity does not deter him from quoting references to Watts' Jingle and Watts' hymns from Mr. Hall and Rev. T. Bradbury respectively (p. 999).

Watts was responsible for two innovations in the service of sung praise, both in the direction of subjectivism in worship. He prepared Imitations of the Psalms to supersede the metrical versions commonly used in the Puritan churches. The more drastic innovation was the introduction of a collection of hymns of his own private composition. Watts defends both of these departures from the standard Puritan practice in his "Short

Essay Toward the Improvement of Psalmody" and attempts to produce Scripture warrant for the introduction of uninspired hymns, appealing to references to the new song in Rev. V:9 and XIV 3 and to the Song of Moses and the lamb. Rev. XV, 3. Puritan exegesis of these texts will be produced later from a work by John Cotton of New England. The modernizing subjectivist motive appears more clearly in Watts' plea for what may seem to be the lesser departure from the old ways, namely the provision of imitations of the Psalms. Watts argues as follows for modifying and mutilating the text of the Psalms as used in singing: "Where there are any dark expressions and difficult to be understood in the Hebrew songs, they should be left out in our psalmody, or at least made very plain by a paraphrase. Where there are sentences or whole psalms, that can very difficulty be accomodated to our times, they may be utterly omitted. Such is Ps. CL, part of the XXXVIII, XLV, XLVIII, XL, LXVIII, LXXXI, CVIII and some others as well as a great part of the song of Solomon." Watts' Works 1700 London Ed. Vol. VII, p. 7. One may judge for oneself whether such language is consistent with a full-blooded witness to the inspiration, authority, and perfection of Holy Scripture as expressed in II Timothy III 16, 17. Watts' attempt to distinguish the use of the Psalter in singing from that in reading does not meet this objection. If reverence for the Word of God should induce the reader to retain an un mutilated text despite difficulties of a subjective nature, why alter the text on account of such difficulties for purpose of singing? Watts goes so far as to include the beautiful expressions of Ps. LXXXIV: 3, 6 among "passages which were hardly made for Christian lips to assume without some alteration." The defence of uninspired hymnody entails a modification of the regulative principle of worship, in transferring the content of praise from prescribed matter to a thing indifferent. In answering the objection that there is no instance in Scripture of a human composure sung by the people of God, Watts appeals to the general considerations he has argued from Scripture and adds the words "Since we perform many circumstances of worship under the influence of a general command without express and special examples" (pp. 17, 18). Aside from the apparent confusion of good and necessary consequences of general commands with circumstances of actions in worship which may be adiaphora, the remark itself betrays an attitude of unwillingness to regulate the details of worship by the Scripture pattern. In the conclusion, after admitting that his arguments will not be found conclusive, he quotes Rom XIV, 2. In identifying Psalm-singers with weaker brethren, Watts shows that he regards the content of praise as belong to the Adiaphora. This is to say, the regulative principle of worship does not apply. In settling such a question the judgment of man is decisive rather than the appointment of the divine Will. In this,

even more than in the innovations themselves with their far-reaching consequences, lies the deepest deviation of Watts from the Puritan position with respect to worship.

A consideration of authentic Puritan teaching with respect to the content of sung praise will now be in order. Mention may be made first of all of the witness of the Puritans at the Westminster Assembly of Divines both in the mention of singing of Psalms among the authorized elements of worship and in the concern for a metrical Psalter which could be a faithful rendering of the text of the Psalms.

In his work on "Singing of Psalms a Gospel-Ordinance" (1647), John Cotton, teacher of the Church at Boston in New-England, finds it necessary first of all to justify vocal singing in the worship of God. He gives the following proofs in justification of the practice (p. 2).

Proof. 1. The commandment of the Lord by Paul, Eph. 5:19 Col. 3:16, I Cor. 4:15, 16. The content of song and manner of singing are not here defended, but in Cotton's words, "**That singing of Psalms in the New Testament, is to be dispensed in Christian Churches, not only with inward grace in the heart, making melody to the Lord; but also with outward audible lively voice.**" (p. 3). Cotton replies to various objections raised against the appeal to the Pauline texts. One objection is to the effect that no spiritual gift is exercised in the singing of the letter of the Psalms. Cotton replies that "Singing of Psalms is accompanied and blessed of God (by his grace) with many gracious effects, above nature or art" (p. 4). "Singing of a spiritual song, prepareth to prophecy, by ministering the Spirit, II Kings 3:15 . . . The minstrells playing, if it had not been accompanied with a spiritual song, it could not have conveyed such a spiritual blessing." (P. 5). Cotton reasons in like manner from I Samuel 10:5, 6. "For prophecy is an utterance only of the Word of God, and of the things of God contained in it; which Instruments without voyce cannot doe. Nor had their playing with Instruments been a means of conveying the Spirit to Saul, had not their voyces concurred and sung with their Instruments." (Ibid.)

Singing of Psalms honours God with our glory, i.e. our tongue, Ps. 108:1, Ps. 57:7, 8. To the objection that "these gracious effects and fruits of singing Psalms do plead as much for singing and playing with instruments as for singing with voyces," Cotton gives several answers, the third of which is of particular interest as providing a main ground for the Puritans' rejection of instrumental music in worship: "Singing with Instruments, was typically, and so a ceremonially worship, and therefore is ceased. But singing with heart and voyce is morall worship, such as is written in the hearts of all men by nature: As to pray in distress, so when we are merry, and have cause of solemn

thanksgiving unto God, then to sing Psalms, which the Holy Ghost by the Apostle **James** approveth and sanctifieth, **James 5:13**. Or suppose singing with instruments were not typicall, but only an external solemnity of worship, fitten to the solace of the outward senses of children under age, (such as the Israelites were under the Old Testament **Gal. 4:1, 2, 3**). Yet now in the growne age of the heires of the New Testament, such externall pompous solemnities are ceased, and so externall worship reserved, but such as holdeth forth simplicitie, and gravitie; nor is any voyce now to be heard in the Church of Christ, but such as is significant and edifying by significance, (I Cor. 14: 10, 11, 26), which the voyce of Instruments is not." (Ib. pp 5 f.).

Proof 2. The examples of Christ himself, and of his saints and Disciples in the New Testament. "Christ himselfe with his Disciples sung a Psalme or an Hymne together, in the end of the administration of the Lord's Supper, **Math. 26:30**. And **Paul** and **Silas** are said to have sung a Psalme in the Prison, so as the Prisoners heard them, **Acts 16:25**. Now if in singing they had only spirituallly rejoiced, and not expressed their joy and their song in audible and lively voyce, the Prisoners could not have heard them. The stranger doth not know nor meddle with the spirituall joy of the heart, **Pro. 14:10**." (Ib. pp 7 f.). In reply to the objection that **Math. 26:30** could as well be translated 'They prayed God' as 'They sung an Hymne', Cotton observes: "It is more probable, than any reason can wave, that Christ and his Disciples did shut up the Lords Supper with singing one of their Hebrew Psalms; so as the Jewes were wont to shut up their Celebration of the Passover (as their own Records tell us) with singing Psalme 111. with the five other Psalms next following together. But all that I now intend, is to show that Christ and his Disciples sang together, and therefore with the voyce as well as the heart." (p. 8).

Proof 3. "The Prophecies of the Old Testament, foretelling and persuading such a duty in the New, **Isa. 52:8**. with the voyce together shall they sing. And that is foretold of the times when the feet of the Messengers of glad tydings shall be beautiful, who shall say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. Which **Paul** explaineth of the times of the Gospel. **Rom 10:14**." (p. 10). Cotton also adds references to **Ps. 100:1; 2** and **Ps. 95:1,2** and shows that both of these Psalms relate to the worship of the New Testament Church.

Against this appeal to O. T. texts, the objection was raised that since singing in the O. T. is associated with the use of Instrumental Music, these texts do not refer to singing in the N. T. Church. Cotton replies, referring to **Psalm 95:12**. "Here is now no mention of making a joyfull noise with Instruments, but with Psalms. And therefore the making a joyfull noise with Psalms

doth still continue, even on our Lord's dayes: when making a joyfull noyse with Instruments continueth not, but is laid downe in silence: save only so farre as it is kept alive in the antitype, the affections of our hearts (our Praecordia) making melody with the songs and professions of our lips, and with the gracious and peaceable conversation of our lives." (p. 12).

Following upon his elaborate argument in support of vocal singing in the worship of God, Cotton proceeds to the heart of the matter, the content of sung praise in worship, or as he expresses it, "the matter of the Psalms to be sung" (p. 14). He refers to "some who do not scruple singing with the voyce . . . but singing of the Psalms of **David** now in these dayes of the **New Testament**" and summarizes their opinion: "As concerning **Dauids** Psalms were penned for Temple worship, during the Paedogogy of the Old Testament. But now in the dayes of the **New Testament**, when God hath promised to pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, now the whole worship of God should be carried on, not by set formes of Psalms (no more than by set formes of prayer) but by personall spirituall gifts, whereby some one or other of the members of the Church, having received a Psalme by the inditement of the Spirit, he singeth it openly in the publique Assembly of the Church, and the rest of the brethren say Amen to it in the close." (Ib. pp. 14 f.)

Ignoring at the present stage of discussion the question as to who should sing, Cotton states his view as to the matter to be sung:

1. That not only the **Psalms of David**, but any other spirituall songs. Songs recorded in Scripture, may lawfully be sung in Christian Churches, as the song of **Moses**, and **Asaph**, **Heman** and **Ethan**, **Solomon** and **Hezekiah**, **Habacuek**, and **Zachary**, **Hannah**, and **Deborah**, **Mary** and **Elizabeth**, and the like.

2. Wee grant also, that any private Christian, who hath a gift to frame a spirituall song, may both frame it, and sing it privately for his own private comfort, and remembrance of some speciall benefit, or deliverance: Nor doe we forbid the private use of an Instrument of Musick therewithall; So that attention to the instrument, doe not divert the heart from attention to the matter of the Song.

Neither doe we deny, but that in the publique thanksgivings of the Church, if the Lord should furnish any of the members of the Church with a spirituall gift to compose a Psalme upon any speciall occasion, he may lawfully be allowed to sing it before the Church, and the rest hearing it, and approving it, may goe along with him in Spirit and say Amen to it." (p. 15).

An important reservation accompanies this concession, namely that such spiritual gifts as

Psalmes and tongues received by sundry members of the Corinthian Church are not now ordinarily bestowed, "so we would not call upon men now, to preferre their ordinary common gift as more fit for the publique edifying of the Church before the extraordinary gifts of the holy men of God in Scripture, who by the Spirit were guided to prepare spirituall songs, suitable to all the conditions and affections and temptations of the Church and people of God in all ages." (p. 16). Cotton then formulates the issue in a form that is as pertinent to the situation of the Reformed Churches of the 20th Century as it was

to the Puritans of the 17th: "So then the Question is, whether the Psalmes of David and Asaph and such other Hymnes and spirituall songs endited by the Prophets, and recorded in Scripture, be appointed by God, to be ordinarily sung in Christian Churches, or whether laying aside Scripture-songs we are to sing only such spirituall songs, as shall be endited by the personall (by ordinary) gifts of any ordinary officer or member of the Church? The former we hold to be the Truth, others the latter." (p. 16).

(To be continued)

THE END OF THE AGES

A Study of Scripture Truth Concerning the Last Things

Note: The material presented in the following series of lessons was first published in booklet form in China in 1935, with a second edition, revised and enlarged, in 1936. The booklet has now

been out of print for several years, and the author has been unable to supply copies to those who, from time to time, have requested them. In view of continued requests for copies of this material, it is published here in a revised form.—J.G.V.

LESSON I

CHRIST'S TWO COMINGS

The Word of God speaks of two comings of the Lord Jesus Christ to this world. He came once to suffer; he will come again to judge. His first coming took place nearly two thousand years ago: it is history. His second coming will take place at a time in the future unknown to men: it will be the final fulfilment of prophecy. We, who live in the interval between the two comings, look backward to the historical coming and forward to the final coming.

The Old Testament was written before the first coming of Christ; from its standpoint both the first and second coming were still far in the future. For this reason the Old Testament does not distinguish very clearly in its prophecies between the two comings of Christ. As we might look at a distant mountain range, and see the range clearly, but not distinguish clearly between two individual peaks, so the Old Testament predicts the coming of the Messiah, sometimes speaking of things which we, of the New Testament period, know pertain to his first coming, and sometimes of things which we now know pertain to his second coming. Actually approaching the mountain range, we might pass one peak, leaving it behind us, while still looking forward to the next great mountain peak. Christ's two comings are two great mountain peaks in divine revelation and in God's plan of redemption. The Old Testament looks forward to both. In Isaiah 61:1-3 occurs this prophecy of the coming of the Messiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings

unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Now turn to Luke 4:16-21. Our Saviour opened the book of the prophet Isaiah, found the place above quoted, and read as far as the words **To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord**. Then he closed the book and said **Today hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears**. Why did he stop reading at that point? Because up to that point only it was a prophecy of his first coming fulfilled that day in their ears. **The acceptable year of the Lord or the year of Jehovah's favor** was the time of Christ's first coming. The next phrase, **the day of vengeance of our God**, refers to the time of his second coming, specifically to the judgment. In Isaiah there is only a comma between the two, but in the actual fulfilment there is a period of at least 1900 years, the entire interval between the two comings.

The following are some Old Testament references to prophecies of the coming of Christ:

Already fulfilled in the first coming:
Psalm 22:1-21; Isaiah 7:14; 53:1-12; Micah 5:2.

Still to be fulfilled in the second coming:
Isaiah 11:1-10; Daniel 7:13-14; Malachi 4:1-3.

Relating equally to both comings:

Genesis 3:15; Psalm 2 (Cf. Acts 4:25ff.); Isaiah 9:1-7; 42:1-4.

Questions:

1. Of how many comings of Christ to this world does the Bible speak?
2. Why does the Old Testament not distinguish very clearly between the first and second comings of Christ?
3. Why can we who live in the New Testament period distinguish, in reading the Old Testament, between predictions of Christ's first coming and predictions of His second coming?

4. At what point did Jesus stop in reading Isaiah 61:1-3, and why did he stop at that particular point?

5. Name some old Testament prophecies of Christ's first coming.

6. Name some Old Testament prophecies of Christ's second coming.

7. Name some Old Testament prophecies that concern Christ's coming without distinction between His first coming and His second coming.

8. What was the purpose of Christ's first coming?

9. What will be the purpose of His second coming?

LESSON II

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING SURE, PERSONAL, VISIBLE

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven". Acts 1:11.

His coming is sure: "This same Jesus . . . SHALL . . . COME."

His coming is personal: "THIS SAME JESUS, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall . . . come."

His coming is visible: "Shall so come IN LIKE MANNER AS YE HAVE SEEN him go into heaven."

There is a mighty testimony in the Scriptures to the sure, personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Unbelieving historical critics of the New Testament have been forced to admit that Jesus predicted his own coming on the clouds of heaven, while holding that he was sadly mistaken about the matter. Modernistic theology in general "spiritualizes" the prophecies of the second coming into the thin air of the vague hope of a new social order in the world and the final victory of righteousness over evil. The following excerpt from *The Christian Century*, January 9, 1935, page 53, is an example of this:

"The New Testament is full of the expectation of an early return of the Lord in power. That return did not take place in the manner expected. It has never taken place, although every generation has witnessed explicit and convinced predictions that it was about to transpire. There is no reason to believe that it will ever take place in the vivid and spectacular manner in which literalists and millenarians have insisted. Such a view is simply unconvincing in the light of the total teachings of history and the experience of the centuries.

"The reality of the 'coming of the Lord' is not in question. It is one of the certainties of the gospel disclosure. It is not a momentary episode, but a continuous experience. The Master is coming in individual life, in social transformation, in industrial and commercial response to his ideals, in national and international relations. The Lord is coming in new revelations of his grace and his redemptive power in the church. He is coming as surely and as rapidly as we give him place in our lives and our institutions. This is the kind of 'parousia' which meets all the needs of a troubled and anxious world. Why storm the heavens for the coming of a Lord who is already here, if we but have the intelligence and the vision to perceive him at work in the thousand activities of the kingdom of God?"

This is not explaining the teachings of the Bible, but explaining them away. The modernist, having no faith in the Scriptures as the inspired word of God, feels free to take liberties with their contents, even to the extent of making plain statements mean something quite different from their grammatical, historical and altogether obvious meaning. But let the word of God speak to refute the Christian Century:

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing,

that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Peter 3:3-8). "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Which is right, the Christian Century or the Lord Jesus Christ? To those to whom the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, there can be no doubt about the absolute certainty of the Lord's personal and visible return to this earth from which He ascended nineteen centuries ago.

Again and again in Scripture, Christ's second coming is associated with the clouds of heaven, that is, of the sky. This idea occurs first in Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people nations and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Note that here Daniel saw in a vision the Son of Man (that is, the Messiah), coming with the clouds of heaven.

In Matt. 24:30 we have our Lord's own prophecy of His coming on the clouds: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Again, before the Sanhedrin He testified (Matt. 26:64): "I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." In Rev. 1:7 the clouds are again associated with His coming, and the visibility of the event is strongly emphasized: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

Twice during the life of Jesus Christ on earth the clouds of heaven are associated with the revelation of His supernatural power and glory. First, at the Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-8), where we read (verse 5): "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Then at the Ascension (Acts 1:6-11) we read (verse 9): "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."

These references to clouds, and especially those of the Transfiguration and the Ascension, of course involve more than natural clouds. These clouds are of a supernatural character, and have a special meaning. A study of the subject in the Bible leads to the conclusion that the meaning of clouds, as at the Transfiguration and the Ascension, is the revelation and at the same time the

concealment, of deity. The clouds indicated the presence of God Himself, the Second Person of the Trinity, as well as the First and Third Persons of the Trinity, and at the same time the clouds concealed the divine glory from the eyes of men.

When the Old Testament tabernacle was erected, a cloud indicated the presence of God and his glory (Ex. 40:34-35). At the dedication of the temple by Solomon, God's presence and glory was again shown by a cloud (1 Kings 8:10-11). The cloud of glory, or Shekinah, in the tabernacle and temple was a manifestation of God's special presence among his people in the place where blood sacrifices were offered for sins. Jesus Christ is Immanuel, God-with-us, **for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily** (Col. 2:9), and so he is the fulfilment of all that the temple and the tabernacle foreshadowed. During our Lord's earthly life, his estate of humiliation, his divine glory was largely hidden from human eyes, but it shone forth at his Transfiguration; and at the Ascension the cloud appeared to indicate that this person was none other than the Lord of glory come from heaven to earth and ascending into heaven again. So when it is prophesied that Christ shall come again with the clouds of heaven, it means that his coming will be supernatural, visible and glorious.

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). How did He go into heaven? "He was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9). How will He come again? "Behold, he cometh with clouds" (Rev. 1:7). Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the words of Jesus Christ shall not pass away. He is coming, surely, personally, visibly.

Questions:

1. What verse of the Bible teaches with special clearness that the second coming of Christ is sure, personal and visible?
2. What view of the second coming of Christ is held by modernists, as exemplified by the Christian Century?
3. What portion of Scripture gives a specially fitting answer to the view of the Christian Century?
4. In what book and chapter of the Bible is Christ's coming first associated with clouds?
5. On what two occasions during the earthly life of Jesus Christ were clouds associated with the manifestation of His divine glory?
6. What is the significance of the clouds which appeared on these two occasions?
7. Where in the Old Testament was a supernatural cloud associated with the glory of God?
8. What is the importance of maintaining faith in a personal and visible second coming of Christ to this earth?

LESSON III

THE CHRISTIAN'S BLESSED HOPE

"Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). "Set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:13, ARV). "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

That the first of the above-cited texts of Scripture refers to Christ's second, final coming, and not to any merely spiritual coming during this present age, is shown by the use of the word "glorious". It is His coming **IN GLORY** that is spoken of: when He comes, it will be with the glory of the great God. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (Matt. 25:31). The coming **IN HIS GLORY** is the final, visible coming with the clouds of heaven. This appearing of Jesus Christ is declared in Scripture to be the Christian's blessed hope. While we are not to stand idly looking into heaven as the disciples did after the Lord's ascension, yet we are to set our hopes definitely on **A FUTURE EVENT**, and that event can only be the appearance in glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

At the time of the birth of Jesus, "there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him" (Luke 2:25). The Holy Spirit led this Old Testament believer to set his heart on a future event in God's redemptive program, namely, "the consolation of Israel", meaning the appearance of the Messiah. He lived to witness what we now know was the first coming of Christ. The aged prophetess Anna on seeing the baby Jesus "gave thanks . . . unto the Lord, and spake of him to all that looked for redemption in Jerusalem (for the redemption of Jerusalem, ARV)" (Luke 2:38), that is, to all that looked forward to the appearance of the Messiah.

Because such persons as Simeon and Anna were waiting for the Lord's Anointed to appear in fulfilment of prophecy, they were the most godly and spiritual of the Jews in the time of Christ's first coming. We of the New Testament dispensation look back into history nineteen hundred years to the first coming of Christ and believe on him who **died for our sins according to the scriptures** (1 Cor. 15:3): that is faith. We also look forward to his glorious second coming: that is hope.

Christians suffer a great deal of heartbreak,

discouragement and disillusionment when they set their hope on the wrong thing. Some have thought that by evangelism and missions the whole world would be converted to Christ, and are discouraged because the fruits of missionary effort are so pitifully meager in comparison with the vast natural increase of the world's population. Others have hoped for a warless world in the present age, and are disillusioned by seeing treaties and peace pacts torn to shreds while the nations arm for conflict as never before. Others have thought that education and democracy would result in a better world, only to see democracy displaced by dictatorship in nation after nation, and tyranny usurp the place of freedom in many lands until the state claims ownership of men, soul and body. Still others have had visions of a new social order and the reign of righteousness on earth in the present age, only to see the old social order growing worse and worse before their eyes while iniquity bounds on every hand. It is the duty of Christians to witness against sin of every kind, personal and social, and to preach the Gospel to every creature; but the Christian's blessed hope is something quite different from the results of any of these activities. It is that complete redemption which shall come with the appearance in glory of our Saviour Jesus Christ. He has told us that when we see certain things begin to happen, we are to **look up and lift up our heads because our redemption draweth nigh**. Plainly the Christian's hope is to be centered on one definite future event, the Lord's coming. As we see in the world about us the signs prophesied as preceding that event, we are to realize that the time of God's next great redemptive act is approaching, and receiving from this realization new strength and courage we are to look forward in eager expectation to his appearing, saying with the beloved disciple, **Amen. come, Lord Jesus!**

Questions:

1. What event is called in the Bible "that blessed hope"?
2. What is the significance of the words "glory" or "glorious" in connection with predictions of Christ's coming?
3. On what future event in God's redemptive program had Simeon and Anna set their hearts?
4. Why were persons such as Simeon and Anna the most godly and spiritual of the Jews of their time?
5. What causes Christians a great deal of heartbreak and disillusionment?
6. Why is it wrong for Christians to make

events within the present age the object of their ultimate religious hope?

7. What was the apostle John's attitude toward the second coming of Christ?

8. Show from the Bible that the Christian's hope is to be centered on the second coming of Christ.

LESSON IV

THE TIME OF CHRIST'S SECOND COMING UNKNOWN TO MEN

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only . . . Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come . . . Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:36, 42, 44).

That these texts do not refer to any purely spiritual coming or comings of Christ during the present age is shown by the context, verse 30, which speaks of the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and verse 31, which speaks of sending forth the angels with a great sound of a trumpet to gather the elect from one end of heaven to the other. These are events which take place once only, at the end of this age, and the coming of Christ spoken of is therefore his second coming in glory.

Note that the time of the second coming is unknown to men, for it has not been revealed by the Father. Therefore all attempts to set a date for the second coming are futile and unscriptural. **Of that day and hour knoweth no man.**

While it is impossible to set a date for the Lord's return, it is possible to know whether or not that event is drawing near. "So likewise ye, when ye see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33). As will be shown in the next chapter, certain signs have been prophesied as preceding the Lord's return, and the appearance of all of these signs will show Christian people that His return is near.

Our ignorance of the time of his second coming is urged by Christ as a reason for watchfulness. Since we cannot know the day and hour, we are to be always ready and watchful. The closing words of the Westminster Confession of Faith express the matter with force and clearness: **"As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity; so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord**

will come; and may be ever prepared to say, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen." (Chapter 33 Section 3).

Not only is the time of the Lord's coming unknown to men, but it will be a time when Christians generally do not expect His coming: "In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44). Many Christians if asked: "Do you believe the Lord's return is near?" would reply: "I do not believe so" or "I think not". But He is coming at a time when we think not. We have no right to assert positively that the Lord's coming is not near, any more than we have to try to set a date for that event. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth" (Luke 21:34,35). The Lord's return will come suddenly as a snare upon the world, and unspiritual Christians may be involved in this sudden astonishment because their minds are filled with earthly things. The Lord's word to all His people is: **"THEREFORE BE YE ALSO READY"** Matt.24:44).

Questions:

1. What texts in the Gospel of Matthew prove that the time of Christ's second coming is unknowable?
2. How can it be shown that these texts do not refer to any purely spiritual coming of Christ during the present age?
3. Why are attempts to set a date for Christ's second coming futile and unscriptural?
4. What is it possible to know concerning Christ's second coming?
5. What Christian duty is made urgent by our ignorance of the time of Christ's second coming?
6. What, according to Scripture, will be the world's general attitude toward Christ's second coming just prior to its actual occurrence?

LESSON V

THE SIGNS PRECEDING THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it

is near, even at the doors (ARV, that he is nigh, even at the doors)" (Matt. 24:32,33).

We learn of the signs preceding the second coming of Christ from the discourse on the Last

Things in Matthew 24 together with the parallel passages in Mark 13 and Luke 21. The signs may be divided into three groups, as follows: (1) Those which remotely precede the second coming, and may therefore be said to characterize nearly the whole period between the first and second comings. These are: 1. Appearance of false Christs. 2. Wars and rumors of wars. 3. Famines. 4. Earthquakes. 5. Pestilences (Luke 21:11). Concerning these signs the Lord, said **The end is not yet (Matt. 24:6)** and all these are the beginning of sorrows (Matt. 24:8).

(2) Those which more nearly precede the second coming, and may therefore be said to characterize the latter part of the period between the first and second comings. These are: 1. Persecution and slaughter of Christians. 2. Christians hated by all nations. 3. Stumbling, treachery and hatred among professing Christians (Matt. 24:10). 4. Rise of false prophets leading many astray. 5. Multiplication of iniquity. 6. The love of the many shall wax cold. 7. The Gospel preached in the whole world for a testimony to all the nations. Concerning these signs the Lord's word is: **And then shall the end come (Matt. 24:14)**.

(3) Those which immediately precede the second coming, or are nearly contemporaneous with that event. These are: 1. The appearance of the Antichrist or abomination of desolation. 2. A short time of fearful tribulation. 3. Appearance of false Christs and false prophets, working miracles, who claim that the second coming has already taken place. 4. Darkening of sun and moon, stars falling, the powers of the heavens shaken. 5. Appearance of the sign of the Son of man in heaven. After predicting these signs the Lord said: **And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matt. 24:30)**.

It should be noted that the disciples asked Jesus three questions (Matt. 24:3): 1. When shall these things (the destruction of Jerusalem) be? 2. What shall be the sign of thy coming? 3. What shall be the sign of the end of the world (or age)? It is plain that the disciples associated these three things in their thinking, and as their question was a triple one, Jesus' answer must be understood as dealing with all three of these matters. Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in A. D. 70. The second coming and the end of the age have not yet taken place. We now know, what the disciples at that time did not know, that the destruction of Jerusalem and the second coming of Christ would be separated by many centuries. It is probable that Matthew 24:15-22 is a prophecy of events connected with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but as prophecy may have a multiple fulfilment, there may be a wider and more complete fulfilment of this prophecy still future.

A widely held interpretation holds that the predictions of Matthew 24, or at least the first 35 verses of the chapter, are limited, as to their fulfilment, to events which took place at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. Those who wish to study a detailed exposition of the passage along that line are referred to a recent publication entitled "Matthew Twenty-four: an Exposition," by J. Marcellus Kik (Bible Truth Depot, Swengel, Pa., 1948, pp. 97, \$1.50). This book is reviewed in *The Westminster Theological Journal*, May, 1949, pages 164-167; and in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, Oct. Dec., 1949, pages 182, 183. Mr. Kik holds that verse 34 is the key verse of Matthew 24: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." His interpretation is that all in the chapter that precedes this statement of Jesus refers to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, while the portion of the chapters that follows verse 34 refers to the second coming of Christ and the end of the world.

The Rev. Arthur W. Kuschke, Jr., in reviewing Mr. Kik's volume in *The Westminster Theological Journal*, agrees with Mr. Kik that the word "generation" in Matt. 24:34 must be taken in its natural sense as referring to "that generation of men living at the time of our Lord," but he points out that the real question concerns the meaning of the word "fulfilled" (the Greek verb is *ginomai*), and he points out that according to Trayer's *Lexicon*, this Greek verb does not necessarily mean "to be finished" but may also mean "to begin to be". Mr. Kuschke holds — rightly, we believe — that "there can be reference both to the destruction of Jerusalem and to the Second Coming in the very same verses." He cites Joseph Addison Alexander's comment on the parallel passage Mark 13:30, as follows: "the meaning of the verse before us then will be, that the contemporary generation should not wholly pass away without beholding one great cycle of fulfilment, i.e. without seeing this prophetic picture realized, as to all its essential parts, in one specific instance, although not exhausted of its whole prophetic import, which is yet to be developed in a course of ages" (*The Gospel According to Mark*, N.Y., 1858, p. 363).

There is good reason for holding that the above criticism of the view which would limit Matt. 24:1-34 to the destruction of Jerusalem is a valid criticism. We believe that some parts of that section may refer PRIMARILY to the destruction of Jerusalem, while other parts may refer PRIMARILY to the second coming of Christ. Yet we have a right to hold that the prophecy throughout deals BOTH with the destruction of Jerusalem AND with the second coming of Christ, because there is an organic connection between the two events. The one is a type, the other its antitype or complete realization. That is to say,

the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was a true fulfilment of Matt. 24 and a true instance of the coming of Christ and the judgment of God upon sin, ON THE TYPICAL PLANE, while the prophecies of Matt. 24 will be not only truly fulfilled, but actually EXHAUSTED, by the second coming of Christ and associated events, at the end of this age.

Our study of the signs preceding the second coming of Christ will be continued in the next lesson of this series, in our next issue.

Questions:

1. Where in the Gospels do we find the great discourse of Jesus which concerns the signs preceding His second coming?
2. How may the various predicted signs be grouped or classified?
3. What three-fold question was asked of Jesus by His disciples?

4. What is the bearing of the triple character of their question on the interpretation of Jesus' discourse which followed?

5. What can be said for and against the interpretation which holds that the prophecies of Matt. 24-1-34 are limited to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans?

6. How should the word "generation" in Matt. 24-34 be understood?

7. What possible meanings does the Greek word translated "fulfilled" in Matt. 24-34 have?

8. What was Joseph Addison Alexander's interpretation of Mark 13:30, and what bearing does it have on the interpretation of Matt. 24?

9. Why can the same verses refer both to the destruction of Jerusalem and also to the second coming of Christ?

LESSON VI

THE SIGNS PRECEDING THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST (Continued)

While the nature of the various signs is for the most part quite clear, one or two require special mention. The Antichrist or "abomination of desolation" is also called in Scripture "the lawless one," "the beast" and "the man of sin." At the time of the Reformation it was common to hold that the papacy, or some one of the popes, was the Antichrist. Four hundred years have passed since Martin Luther publicly burned the pope's decree calling it "the execrable bull of antichrist," and it has become increasingly clear that while the papal system is certainly antichristian, nevertheless the prophecies point to some individual person, or possibly some collective person or institution, which has not yet appeared upon the scene of human affairs. In 2 Thess. 2:1-12 we learn concerning the "man of sin" that he is to appear before the second coming of Christ; that he will usurp to himself divine honors and worship, setting himself forth as God; that a restraining power existed in Paul's time which prevented his appearing on the scene until that power should be taken out of the way, at which time the lawless one would be revealed; that this person will work miracles by Satanic power; and finally that he will be destroyed by the Lord Jesus at his coming. No doubt Antiochus Epiphanes and Nero, as well as other persons, have foreshadowed the coming of the Antichrist and have partially fulfilled the Old and New Testament prophecies concerning him, but the final and complete fulfilment is certainly still future. From Revelation 13 it appears that the Antichrist will rule over the entire world and will persecute Christians (verse 7) and that all except the elect will worship him (verse 8); also that his power will be of relatively short duration (verse 5). In Rev. 19:19-21 we read, in highly symbolic language, of the conflict

between the Antichrist and Christ at his second coming, the end being that the Antichrist is cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone. It is probable that from the appearance of the Antichrist, events will move with great rapidity toward the climax of the Lord's second coming. The appearance of the Antichrist will indicate to watchful Christians that the Lord's coming is very near. It will be noted that many of the signs in the first two groups are of a very general nature and capable of occurring repeatedly over long periods of time: wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences, persecutions, for example. There is however one sign in these two groups which is of a more specific nature, and which must be fulfilled before the end can come: the Gospel must be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all the nations. This work has already been largely, though not entirely, accomplished through the extensive missionary work of the past 150 years. Christ did not say, of course, that the whole world would be converted to Christianity through the preaching of the Gospel, but that the Gospel must be preached throughout all the world for a witness to all the nations. As there are still some nations and tribes of people to whom the Gospel has never been preached, it is evident that this sign is not yet fully accomplished, and therefore that we are still in the period of the second group of signs. But in the nature of the case it will be impossible to say precisely when the Gospel has been fully preached for a testimony to all the nations (though we can definitely say that such is not the case yet), so that it will never be possible to predict the exact time when the events of the third group will appear on the horizon.

There has been much speculation as to the meaning of the appearance of the sign of the Son

of man in heaven (Matt. 24:30). It is probable that this means some very striking sign among the heavenly bodies, the exact nature of which we do not know now but which will be understood when it occurs, and which is to appear immediately before the coming of the Lord on the clouds of heaven. In this connection we should remember that a star heralded the first coming of Christ (Matt. 2:1-12).

What answer shall we give to the question: May the Lord's return take place at any time? Although many Christians believe that the Lord may come at any moment, still we feel that in the light of the Scriptures we must answer this question with a qualified No. Inasmuch as the preaching of the Gospel for a witness to all the nations is not yet completed, and the Antichrist has not yet appeared, it would seem that we are not justified in regarding the Lord's coming as imminent in the sense that it may take place at any moment. Those who believe that the Lord may come at any time distinguish between Christ's coming "for his saints" (the "Rapture") and his coming "with his saints" (the "Revelation"), holding that the first of these events will be secret so far as the world is concerned, only the Christians rising to meet the Lord in the air together with the righteous dead who have just been resurrected, and holding that these two comings are separated by a period of seven years during which time the Antichrist is in power. Believing that the "Rapture" and the "Revelation" are two aspects of one and the same event and will be contemporaneous or nearly so, we believe that the doctrine of a secret "Rapture" is without Scriptural foundation. When the Antichrist appears on the scene, however, the situation will be different. From that time on events will move rapidly (Matt. 24:34) and it will then be possible to say that the Lord will return in glory at any time, for he is to slay the Antichrist **with the breath of his mouth** and bring him to nought **by the manifestation of his coming**. But even then it will be impossible to predict the exact time of the coming.

But if it is not possible for the Lord's return to take place at any moment, then why did he command his disciples to watch and lay so much stress on the fact that they could not know the day nor the hour? It is true that the day and the hour will remain unknown to men until they actually see the Lord appearing in glory upon the clouds of heaven. But when he commanded the disciples to watch, surely he did not mean to gaze at the heavens as the disciples were rebuked for doing in Acts 1:11, but to watch for the signs of which he had told them, because when they should see ALL these things, then they could know that he was near, even at the doors; and also to be watchful as to their conduct and spiritual state.

The question has been raised, how could

Paul and the other inspired apostles look forward to the second coming as something which might take place in their lifetime, when in reality at least 1900 years were to elapse before the Lord's return. That the apostles so regarded the second coming is evident from Hebrews 10:37, James 5:7-8, 1 Thess. 4:17, 5:4, 1 Cor. 15:51-52. In answer to the above question, it may be said, first, that the apostles looked forward to the second coming as something which might take place in their lifetime, not as something which must take place in their lifetime. In the second place, that while the apostles were inspired in writing the Scriptures, they were not omniscient; some things were not revealed to them, including the time of the second coming. In the third place, while the Lord's coming could not take place until all of the signs had appeared, nevertheless the signs were of such a nature that they might all appear in any one generation of the world's history. If the Church had been faithful to Christ's Great Commission, the world would have been evangelized many centuries ago, and then the way would have been clear for the appearance of the Antichrist and the other signs of the third group. Paul in fact warned the Thessalonian Christians (2 Thess. 2:1-5) that they must not think that **the day of the Lord is just at hand** because **it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed**. So we see that the appearance of the Antichrist will be the sign that the Lord's coming is very near.

We should remember that these signs were given to us for our study in order that the day of the Lord should not overtake us as a thief (1 Thess. 5:1-5). The Lord's coming is sure, and we need to study current events in the light of the Scriptures in order to discern the signs of the times, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus **Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away** (Matt. 24:35).

Questions:

1. What was the common Protestant belief concerning the Antichrist at the time of the Reformation?
2. What is predicted concerning the "man of sin" in 2 Thess. 2:1-12?
3. What historical characters may have foreshadowed the coming of the Antichrist?
4. What is predicted concerning "the beast" in Revelation 13?
5. What does Rev. 19:19-21 say concerning the destiny of "the beast"?
6. What particular sign must be fulfilled before the Lord's second coming can take place?
7. To what extent has this sign already been fulfilled?
8. What is the probable or possible meaning

of the "sign of the Son of man in heaven" (Matt. 24:30)?

9. Why is it not correct to say that the Lord's second coming may take place at any moment?

10. What is the doctrine of the "secret Rapture" held by those who believe that the Lord may return at any moment?

11. How does 2 Thess. 2:8 show that after the appearance of the Antichrist events will move very rapidly toward the end?

12. If the Lord's return cannot take place

at any moment, why did He command His disciples to watch?

13. What was the attitude of the apostles toward Christ's second coming? Did they teach that it would take place during their lifetime, and were they mistaken in what they taught?

14. What warning did the apostle Paul give the Thessalonian Christians with reference to the time of the Lord's return?

15. Why were the signs in Matt. 24 and Luke 21 revealed to us?

LESSON VII

THE EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The second coming of Christ will be immediately followed by certain events of supreme importance to all humanity of all ages. The first of these events is the resurrection of the dead. By the term "resurrection" is here meant not merely the immortality of the soul but the resurrection of the body. This doctrine is foreshadowed in the Old Testament, perhaps the clearest reference being Daniel 12:2, **And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.** In Psalm 16:10 the bodily resurrection of the Messiah is predicted, **For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.** What is only dimly foreshadowed in the Old Testament is very clearly revealed in the New. Jesus repeatedly predicted his own resurrection from the dead, and his resurrection, now a thoroughly attested historical fact, is the pledge of ours. The general resurrection is prophesied by Christ in John 5: 28-29: **Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.** That both the saved and the lost are to rise from the dead is also shown by Paul's words in Acts 24:15, **Having hope toward God. . . that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust.** The classic passage on the resurrection of believers is 1 Cor. 15, where proof of the certainty of the resurrection is given, followed by a discussion of the nature of the resurrection body. The resurrection is definitely connected with the second coming of Christ in verse 23, **But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming.** It may be said in passing that this text does not prove the Premillenarian contention that there are to be two resurrections, one of the righteous at Christ's coming, and another later of the wicked. The text deals with the resurrection of Christ and that of Christians only. Nothing is said about the resurrection of the wicked in the entire chapter, and of course nothing can be proved by silence.

Immediately after the resurrection, all living believers will be transformed, receiving incorruptible and glorious bodies. A whole generation of Christians, that generation living when the Lord returns, will never have to pass through the experience of death, but will be "changed" without dying. This is taught in 1 Cor. 15:51-52: **Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.** So also in 1 Thess. 4:16-17 we read: **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.** Note that the "change" includes all believers still living at the time of the Lord's return, that it follows the resurrection, that it is instantaneous, and that it does not involve death. Of course the words **The dead in Christ shall rise first** mean that the dead shall rise before the living rise in the air, not that the Christian dead will rise before the wicked dead. The comparison is between dead and living Christians, not between the righteous and the wicked.

Rev. 20:11-15 connects the resurrection with the judgment. The order of events is thus as follows: 1. The second coming of Christ. 2. The resurrection. 3. The transformation of living believers. 4. The judgment. It will be seen from Rev. 20:11-15 that the judgment is of both the righteous and the wicked. Books are opened and the dead are judged out of the things written in the books, according to their works. Judged by this standard every human being would be condemned, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But there is another book, the Book of Life, in which no works are recorded, but only names, the names of God's elect and redeemed people. The principle of the judgment is indeed "according to their works" but God's elect have a substitute, the Lamb of God which

taketh away the sin of the world, for their names have been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain (Rev. 13:8). The result of the judgment is that the wicked will be cast into the lake of fire, also called hell or the second death, and the righteous shall enter into the eternal kingdom of glory: **And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life** (Matt: 25:46).

Questions:

1. What is the first great event which will be associated with the second coming of Christ?
2. What Old Testament passage very clearly predicts the resurrection?
3. Where in the Gospel of John is the general resurrection very clearly predicted by Jesus?
4. What chapter in Paul's Epistles gives the fullest discussion of the doctrine of the resurrection?

5. What is the order of the resurrection as given in 1 Cor. 15:23?

6. Why does 1 Cor. 15:23 not prove anything concerning a doctrine of two separate resurrections, one of the righteous and the other of the wicked?

7. What great event will take place immediately after the resurrection of the dead? What two chapters in Paul's Epistles tell of this event?

8. What will happen to those Christians still living in the world when Christ comes again?

9. What is the meaning of the expression "The dead in Christ shall rise first" in 1 Thess. 4:16?

10. What event is connected with the resurrection in Rev. 20:11-15?

11. What two kinds of "books" are involved in the Great Judgment?

12. What is the principle of the Judgment?

13. Why are Christian believers not to be condemned in the Judgment?

LESSON VIII

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

That the kingdom of God has both present and future aspects is apparent on even a superficial reading of the New Testament. When Christ said **The kingdom of God is within you** (Luke 17:21), he spoke of the present, spiritual aspect of the kingdom, as also when he said, **There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom** (Matt. 16:28). When we read that **the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit** (Rom. 14:17), we understand that this refers to a kingdom now existing in the world, that kingdom of which God's redeemed people are the citizens. But it is equally true that the kingdom of God has a future aspect, as is shown in Dan. 2:44, **And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.** It is plain that the kingdom here spoken of is not merely one which exists contemporaneously with and among the kingdoms of the world, but one which is eventually to supplant them completely and bring about their total destruction. As these events have not yet taken place, this is a still unfulfilled prophecy of the future kingdom of God. In Rev. 11:15 we read: **And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.** This is a prophecy of the final supplanting of the nations by the eternal king-

dom of God. So 2 Tim. 4:18, **The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom,** clearly refers to the future. When Jesus said that to sit on his right hand and on his left in his kingdom would be given to those for whom it was prepared, it is obvious that a future kingdom is meant. Failure to recognize that the kingdom of God has both present and future aspects results in serious doctrinal perversions and errors. Perhaps the most concise statement of the matter ever made is found in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, question 102: **What do we pray for in the second petition? Answer, In the second petition (which is, Thy kingdom come) we pray, that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.** When we speak of the kingdom of God in relation to the second coming of Christ, it is the future kingdom of glory that is meant. The kingdom of grace is temporary (because the need for salvation from sin will cease when man is confirmed in holiness at the resurrection); the kingdom of glory will be eternal. The kingdom of grace is partial (as only a part of humanity are citizens of it); the kingdom of glory will be universal, for **the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea** (Isa. 11:9). The kingdom of grace is in the world but not of the world (John 18:36). The kingdom of grace belongs to the present age, the kingdom of glory to the age to come. The second coming of Christ is the dividing line between the two.

It can be clearly shown from the Scriptures that the future kingdom of God will be eternal in duration. In addition to Dan. 2:44 and Rev. 11:15, quoted above (**It shall stand for ever . . . and he shall reign for ever and ever**), reference may be made to Luke 1:33. **And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end;** Dan. 7:14, **His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.**

Questions:

1. What two aspects of the Kingdom of God, with respect to time, does the New Testament present?

2. Give some examples of texts which concern the present or spiritual aspect of the Kingdom of God.

3. What passage in the book of Daniel speaks very clearly of the future aspect of the Kingdom of God?

4. How do Rev. 11:15 and 2 Tim. 4:18 speak of a future kingdom of God?

5. How does the Westminster Shorter Catechism designate the present and future aspects of the Kingdom of God (S.C. 102)?

6. In what respects do the "kingdom of grace" and the "kingdom of glory" differ?

7. Give two texts from the book of Daniel which prove that the future Kingdom of God will be eternal in duration.

8. Give a text from Revelation and one from Luke which prove that the future Kingdom of God will be eternal in duration.

LESSON IX

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD, Continued

Rev. 20:1-6 is held by premillennarian interpreters to mean a reign of Christ on earth for 1000 years after his second coming. This 1000 years' reign is called the Millennium, and the doctrine that Christ will reign on earth for 1000 years after his second coming is known as Premillennialism or Chiliasm. It is impossible to undertake a detailed interpretation of Rev. 20:1-6 here but it may be said that this passage cannot mean an earthly kingdom of 1000 years after the second coming, because: 1. John saw the **souls** of people, not their resurrected bodies. The "first resurrection," mentioned only here in the Bible, therefore is not the resurrection of the body, but a spiritual resurrection. It is said that **they lived** and that **over these the second death hath no power**, both of which things are true of the spirits of the saved in heaven; but it not said that their bodies rose from their graves. In the Greek text, "lived" and "reigned" are both the same tense (aorist), and both are qualified by the phrase "a thousand years" — they **LIVED** a thousand years, and they **REIGNED** a thousand years. "Lived" cannot mean "began to live" (i.e., were raised), any more than "reigned" can mean "began to reign". 2. What John saw was a vision of thrones and souls in **heaven** not anything on the earth. 3. The term "a thousand years" is as certainly a symbolic number as **the seven spirits of God** (Rev. 1:4, 3:1, 5:6), the number **666** (Rev. 13:18), a **crown of twelve stars** (Rev. 12:1) **144,000 Israelites** (Rev. 7:4), **twice ten thousand times ten thousand** (Rev. 9:16), a **thousand and six hundred furlongs** (Rev. 14:20), not to mention other symbolic numbers in the Book of Revelation. For these reasons we believe that Rev. 20:1-6 speaks of the reign of the saints in heaven with Christ during the present age, and that the 1000 years is a symbolic number covering the period from the triumph of Christianity over Roman persecu-

tion (about A. D. 325) to the time when the Antichrist will gather the nations together to persecute Christians. The rise of the Antichrist will come when Satan shall be **loosed for a little time**. Note well that the passage does not say that Satan will be bound in respect to all his activities, but only that **he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be fulfilled**. Of course Satan is a bodiless spirit, and cannot be bound by keys, chains and seals. God will greatly restrict his activities for a long period of time. What is meant by Satan **deceiving the nations** is made clear by the prophecy of what Satan will do as soon as he **shall be loosed out of his prison**: he will gather the nations from the four corners of the earth, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea, **to make war against Christianity**. A world wide persecution of Christians! It is obvious that such a thing has never yet taken place, the nearest approach to it being the Roman persecution from the apostolic age to the time when the emperor Constantine issued his Edict of Toleration (A. D. 311). Remember that the Book of Revelation was written just as the Roman persecution was beginning. Chapter 20 prophesies 1. The cessation of this persecution; 2. A long time of freedom from world wide attack on Christianity; 3. The resumption of the persecution on a world wide scale for a **little time** in the evening of the world's history. The reasonableness of this interpretation will be more apparent if we try to look at the prophecy through the eyes of the early Christians who faced the bloody persecution of Rome. Truly Satan is bound today as to that sort of thing. Minor persecutions there have been, here and there, but nothing like that of ancient Rome since Constantine. The attack prophesied in Rev. 20 will be far more extensive, though briefer, than that of ancient Rome. It is this fierce, world wide attack on Christianity which

Satan is now restrained from making, but which will come in the days of the Antichrist. For these reasons we do not believe that Rev. 20:1-6 prophesies a millennial kingdom on earth, and therefore are constrained to reject Premillennialism as an unscriptural error.

Questions:

1. How is Revelation 20:1-6 interpreted by premillennial scholars?
2. What is the meaning of the term "Millennium"?
3. What is meant by Premillennialism or Chiliasm?
4. What does the word "souls" in Rev. 20:4 imply concerning the nature of "the first resurrection"?
5. What can be learned from the tense of the Greek words for "lived" and "reigned" in Rev. 20:4?

6. Why is it reasonable to believe that the expression "a thousand years" in Rev. 20:1-5 is a symbolic number?

7. What probable meaning can be assigned to the symbolic expression "a thousand years" in Rev. 20:1-5?

8. What is probably meant by the binding of Satan and his being locked in the bottomless pit during the "thousand years"?

9. What will Satan do when he is released from the bottomless pit? What does this imply concerning the meaning of his being bound during the "thousand years"?

10. What terrible ordeal was appearing on the horizon of the early Christians at the time when the Book of Revelation was written?

11. What is the probable meaning of Rev. 20:1-10 with reference to the persecution of Christianity on a world-wide scale?

12. What will be the comparative duration of Satan's final attack on the Christian Church?

LESSON X

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD, Continued

At the same time we feel equally constrained to reject Postmillennialism, or the doctrine that Christ will return after a millennial kingdom, for the following reasons: 1. The signs which Christ predicted as to precede his second coming are such as could all occur in any generation of the world's history, and therefore he commanded his disciples to watch; but if Christ's second coming is to take place after a still future millenium, then he cannot come for 1000 years or a long period of time, and there is no reason for watchfulness. 2. Postmillennialism represents the kingdom of God as coming gradually through the operation of forces now at work in the world, whereas the Scriptures represent it as coming in its final form suddenly and at a definite time, the second coming of Christ. 3. Postmillennialism ignores or minimizes the prophecies of the increase of evil and wickedness during the present age. 4. The kingdom of Postmillennialism, being before the resurrection, is bound to be imperfect and marred by sin and suffering, groaning and travailing in pain. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:50, **Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God**; Postmillennialism teaches a kingdom in which men are still in their natural bodies and still capable of committing sin.

Another text which seems difficult to reconcile with the doctrine of Postmillennialism is Rom. 8:22-23: **For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.** Creation's groaning will be silenced not by the

gradual growth and extension of Christ's spiritual kingdom, but by a miracle, sudden, visible, transforming, namely the resurrection of the dead and the transformation of living believers, which will take place at the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing short of the resurrection of the dead will ever make this earth anything other than a place of groaning and travailing in pain. The whole creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God, but this will not be accomplished by forces now operating in the world, but by a sudden, supernatural intervention of God himself in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious appearing. Biblical Christianity always has its eyes fastened on eternity because of the consciousness that only the miraculous intervention of God can bring about the hoped for consummation. Postmillennialism teaches that agencies now operating in the world, namely the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, will gradually bring about such an extension of Christ's present spiritual kingdom and such a Christianizing of society that there will be a golden age on this earth during which the world will be filled with righteousness, and sin and evil will be reduced to relatively negligible proportions. Some Postmillennarians hold that the millennium will be a literal 1000 years and others believe that the 1000 years are symbolic of a long period of time. We believe the doctrine is an error and a perversion of the Scriptural teaching about the kingdom of God.

At the same time, we wish to make it perfectly clear that the doctrine of Postmillennialism

has been held and is held today by many Bible-believing Christians, and has been advocated by some outstanding scholars, including John Bunyan, Charles Hodge and Benjamin B. Warfield. The doctrine of Postmillennialism has had a long and honorable history and there is no real reason why it should be regarded as rationalistic, modernistic or incompatible with faith in the inspiration and authority of the Bible. While the author of the present series of studies personally believes that Postmillennialism is an error, and that it is based upon faulty interpretation of the Scriptures, still it is freely and gladly recognized that many faithful Christians have held the Postmillennial view, just as it is undoubtedly true that many faithful Christians have held the Premillennial view (which the present writer also believes to be erroneous). To differ with some of our Christian brethren about particular points of Bible interpretation of course does not imply that we regard them as "modernistic" or unfaithful to Christ, nor that we in any way challenge or deny their right to hold the Postmillennial view.

In "liberal" or modernistic circles there has arisen a view which denies that Christ will ever come again in person, in bodily form, to this earth. For a sample of this type of unbelief, the student is referred to Lesson II of the present series, in "Blue Banner Faith and Life", Volume 15 Number 1, January-March 1960, page 16, where the "Christian Century" is quoted on the subject of the second coming of Christ. It will be evident to every Bible-believing Christian that such a view is radically contrary to real Christianity, and is justly called "modernistic," "rationalistic" and "unbelieving." Many modernists who hold a similar view of the future, which reduces the second coming of Christ to a program of human progress, call their belief "Postmillennialism", though they have no real right to use this term. Because of this use of the term "Postmillennialism" to designate a view which is radically anti-Christian, some Bible-believing Christians have jumped to the conclusion that Postmillennialism is modernism and that all Postmillennialists are modernists. This is entirely unwarranted and unjust, but, like many other evils, it must be attributed to the unethical double-talk of modernists who say one thing while they mean another. This modernistic belief in human progress is not really "Postmillennialism". It would be more accurate to call it **evolutionism**; or at any rate **Pseudo-Postmillennialism** (False Postmillennialism).

We should, therefore, be careful to make a clear distinction between the Postmillennialism of Bible-believing scholars such as Hodge and Warfield, and the Pseudo-Postmillennialism of the modernists of our day. Every genuine Postmillennialist believes that Christ will come again on the clouds of heaven in like manner as the disciples saw Him ascending into heaven. The Pseudo-Postmillennialist, on the other hand, be-

lieves that the second coming of Christ "is not a momentary episode, but a continuous experience . . . in individual life, in social transformation, in industrial and commercial response to his ideals . . .", etc., (as stated by "The Christian Century").

Whether Postmillennialism is TRUE is a question to be decided by careful study of the Bible. But we should realize that there has long been difference of opinion on the question of the Millennium among the most earnest and faithful Bible-believing Christians. Historically the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches have never attempted to make particular beliefs about the Millennium a "term of communion" or condition of membership in good standing. We believe that there must be some room for differences of view concerning details of Biblical prophecy, and that the main truth is that Christ is coming again in person on the clouds of heaven. We can rejoice together with those who cherish "that blessed hope," though we may differ with them concerning the doctrine of the Millennium. In this series of studies we are presenting what we believe to be the truth as taught in the Bible, and which we believe also to be the scheme of prophetic interpretation most in harmony with the Westminster Confession of Faith and other doctrinal standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. This of course must not be taken to imply that we deny to others their right to hold a different interpretation and to defend it on the basis of the Bible and the standards of the Church. We believe that Christian brethren should be able to discuss these differences freely and patiently without any unchristian attitudes toward each other.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the term "Postmillennialism"?
2. What is the bearing of Christ's command to watch on the doctrine of Postmillennialism?
3. What class of Bible prophecies are often ignored or minimized by Postmillennial scholars?
4. What is the bearing of 1 Cor. 15:50 on the doctrine of a Millennium before Christ's second coming?
5. What is the bearing of Romans 8:22-23, on the doctrine of a Millennium before the resurrection of the dead?
6. According to Rom. 8:22,23 what event will put a stop to the whole creation's groaning and travailing in pain?
7. According to Postmillennialism, what agencies will bring about the coming of the future Kingdom of God?
8. According to Postmillennialism, what con-

ditions will exist on this earth during the Millennium?

9. Name some outstanding orthodox scholars that have held the doctrine of Postmillennialism.

10. Should differences of interpretation concerning the Millennium be allowed to interfere with Christian fellowship between believers?

11. What is the prevalent liberal or modernistic idea of the second coming of Christ?

12. How has this modernistic teaching caused some people to regard the term "Postmillennialism" with suspicion? Why is this suspicion unjust?

13. What is the difference between orthodox Postmillennialism, as taught by Hodge, Warfield, etc., and the counterfeit "Postmillennialism" of modernism?

14. What is the main truth in the prophetic revelation of the Bible, upon which agreement is absolutely necessary?

LESSON XI

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD, Continued

An examination of two other passages of Scripture will throw additional light on the question of millennium, either before or after the second coming of Christ. It is a sound principle of interpretation that the more obscure and difficult passages should be interpreted in the light of those that speak more clearly; to reverse this process can lead only to confusion. It cannot be denied that Revelation 20 is a chapter of visions and symbols in a book of visions and symbols; this does not mean that we should reject it as without value, but it does mean that it should be interpreted in the light of the clearer language of the Gospels and Epistles. To start with Revelation 20, which may at first sight seem to contain the earthly millennium idea, and then to try to make the other parts of Scripture fit in with this idea, is certainly contrary to sound principles of interpretation.

The first passage we wish to cite is the Parable of the Tares and the Wheat, Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43. This parable is particularly clear because we have our Lord's own authoritative interpretation of it. Some have misused this parable to justify the toleration of modernism and unbelief in the Church, because the householder forbade his servants to root up the tares. It should be noted, however, that the field is not the Church but the world; no matter how corrupt the world may become, the Church ought by all means and at any cost to be purified of the leaven of the Sadducees, which is rationalism. A thorough exegesis of this parable and the Lord's interpretation would require much space; we here only intend to point out a number of things in it which we believe to be incompatible with both Premillennialism and Postmillennialism.

According to this parable, the population of the world will be mixed, of righteous and wicked persons, throughout the present age, and until a future point of time here called "the end of the world" or "the consummation of the age." Before that time there is to be no separation of the righteous from the wicked, and the latter, instead of being suppressed, or ruled with a rod of iron, are to be let alone till the time of the harvest. The

time of judicial separation of the righteous from the wicked is characterized by (1) Angels segregating the wicked; (2) The wicked being cast into hell. This is not a mere suppression of the wicked, but the total and final eradication of sin and sinners from the world, and casting them into hell for eternity. In other words, there is to be no separation of the righteous from the wicked until the final separation of the Great day when the wicked shall be judged and cast into hell; thus the premillennarian idea of 1,000 years **before** the judgment, during which the earth will be relatively free from sin and filled with righteousness, not only is not taught in this parable, but cannot even be fitted into the parable.

The righteous cannot shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father **until the wicked have been cast into hell**; but Premillennialism teaches that the righteous dead will rise at the beginning of the millennium and will reign with Christ in resurrection glory throughout the 1,000 years of peace and righteousness on earth, and that **after all this** will come the Great Judgment when the wicked will be judged and cast into hell. The parable leaves no room for these ideas.

It should be noted, too, that the "end of the world" or "consummation of the age" here spoken of is the absolute, final end of the world, because it includes the Great Judgment and the casting of the wicked into hell, after which, according to all interpretations there comes nothing but the eternal state. So the great dividing line is the Day of Judgment. After that, the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Before that, there can be no millennium of righteousness and peace on earth, for a millennium in which the wicked, planted by Satan, are left to grow along with the righteous, undisturbed until the Judgment, would not be a millennium of righteousness. And this parable would seem to be equally decisive against Postmillennialism, which holds that the preaching of the Gospel and the gradual extension of Christ's present spiritual kingdom will result in a state, before the Second Coming and the Judgment, in which the earth will be full of the knowledge of God as the waters

cover the sea. Postmillennialism presupposes the conversion of practically the entire population of the world to Christ a long time before the Second Coming and the Judgment, an idea which cannot be harmonized with the Parable of the Tares and the Wheat.

The second passage we wish to cite is 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10, **if so be that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you, and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus; who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be marveled at in all them that believed (because our testimony unto you was believed) in that day.**

In discussing this passage, we wish to raise two questions: (1) When will afflicted Christians receive rest? (2) What will happen at the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven?

This passage contains a promise of the Christian's future rest at the Lord's coming. It speaks of the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven as the first redemptive event on the prophetic horizon; Christians are to look forward to that Revelation as the time when, and not till when, they will receive rest from affliction. If Paul thought of a "Rapture" and "Revelation" as two distinct events, with seven years between, the Christians to be caught up in the clouds at the "Rapture," followed by the rule of the Antichrist and the Great Tribulation on earth, then why did he not say so here? Why did he not point afflicted Christians to the "Rapture" as the time when they would receive rest from affliction? Premillennialism, of the usual pre-tribulation-rapture type, teaches that the Rapture is the first event on the prophetic horizon, and that it may occur at any moment. It seems quite impossible to fit this idea into the passage before us. Therefore we conclude that the idea of a secret Rapture, and the Church being out of the world for seven years before Christ's visible second coming, is an unscriptural error. In the light of 2 Thessalonians 1:7 we answer the first question raised above by stating that Christians living on earth will receive rest from affliction at, but not before, the "Revelation" or visible second coming of Christ in glory.

Turning to the second question, we find that three things will happen at the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven: (1) The angels will come with flaming fire; (2) They will render vengeance to them that know not God, etc. (3) The wicked will be cast into hell (for this is the meaning of "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord") Note that these three things will

happen **AT** the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven, not 1,000 years later as taught by Premillennialism. Therefore we conclude that Paul not only did not know anything about a "Revelation" 1,000 years before the judgment of the wicked, but that he actually left no room in this passage for such an idea. Three events are unmistakably linked as happening at the same time. (1) The Revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven; (2) Afflicted Christians receiving relief from trouble; (3) The wicked judged and cast into hell for all eternity. These three events are separated by Premillennialism as follows:

1. Christians caught up in the clouds at the Rapture or invisible second coming, and receive relief from affliction at that time.

INTERVAL OF 7 YEARS. ANTICHRIST AND TRIBULATION

2. Revelation of Christ from heaven, binding of Satan, suppression of the wicked; the saints, risen from the dead, rule the world with Christ.

INTERVAL OF 1,000 YEARS. THE MILLENNIUM

3. Judgment of the wicked, and they cast into hell; final end of the world and beginning of the eternal state; the new heaven and new earth.

No one will persecute Christians during the supposed millennium; therefore this passage, in promising rest to afflicted Christians, must speak of a rest to be received at the end of the present, so-called Church age, not at the end of a future hypothetical millennial age; and if so, then it has been demonstrated that the final judgment and punishment of the wicked will take place, not at the end of a 1,000 years' period after the Second Coming, but at the time of that Coming, the end of this age.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 seems as incompatible with Postmillennialism as with Premillennialism, because it leaves no room for a golden age of righteousness and peace on earth before the Second Coming of Christ. According to Postmillennialism there will be a long period before the Second Coming, during which Christianity will be supreme and nearly the entire population of the world will be Christians; but if this teaching is true, why did Paul point to the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven as the time when afflicted and persecuted Christians would find relief? The conclusion is inescapable that Paul not only knew nothing of an earthly millennium, before or after the Second Coming, but that there is no place in his eschatological scheme into which such a millennium can be fitted without wresting the meaning of his words.

Questions:

1. What principle of Bible interpretation must be kept in mind in dealing with difficult portions of the Bible?

2. How does this principle apply to the interpretation of Rev. 20?

3. Why is Revelation 20 a difficult portion of Scripture to interpret?

4. Why is the Parable of the Tares and the Wheat particularly clear and understandable?

5. What wrong use has been made of this parable by some, and why is this use of it not justifiable?

6. According to the Parable of the Tares and the Wheat, what will be the character of the population of the world until "the end of the world"?

7. What is meant by "the harvest" in the Parable of the Tares?

8. When will the judicial separation of the righteous from the wicked take place?

9. What will happen to the wicked at the time of "the harvest"?

10. What is the bearing of the Parable of the Tares on the Premillennial doctrine that the wicked will be suppressed with a rod of iron for 1,000 years before the Judgment Day?

11. What must happen before the righteous can shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father? What is the bearing of this truth on the doctrine of Premillennialism?

12. What is the meaning of "the end of the world" or "the consummation of the age" in Matt. 13:39,40?

13. What is the bearing of the Parable of the Tares on the idea of a Millennium of peace and righteousness on earth before the Judgment Day?

14. According to 2 Thess. 1:6-10, what is the first redemptive event on the prophetic horizon?

15. According to 2 Thess. 1:6-10, when will persecuted Christians on earth receive rest from their affliction?

16. What is the bearing of 2 Thess. 1:6-10, on the Premillennial doctrine of a seven year interval between the "Rapture" and the "Revelation"?

17. According to 2 Thess. 1:6-10, what three events will take place at the Revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven?

18. What is the bearing of this passage on the Premillennial teaching that the Judgment and casting the wicked into hell will not take place until a thousand years after the second coming of Christ?

19. How does Premillennialism separate the three events which 2 Thess. 1:6-10 speaks of as happening at the same time?

20. Why cannot the "rest" spoken of in 2 Thess. 1:7 not mean "rest" to be received by Christians at the end of a thousand year kingdom, or Millennium?

21. What is the bearing of 2 Thess. 1:7 on the Postmillennial teaching that Christianity will be dominant throughout the world for a long period before the second coming of Christ?

LESSON XII

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD, Continued

Rejecting all kinds of millennialism as unscriptural, we hold the Amillennial or Non-millennial view of the kingdom of God, as shown in the accompanying table, to be the true and Scriptural view. According to this view the kingdom in its perfected state comes after the resurrection; in it the redeemed will have their glorious and incorruptible bodies; they will neither marry nor be given in marriage (Matt. 22:30); the kingdom will be eternal in duration; in extent it will include the new heaven and the new earth, probably the whole universe of the starry heavens, shown by modern astronomy to be so vast as to be utterly beyond the farthest reaches of the human imagination.

The reign of Christ spoken of in 1 Cor. 15:25-28 and Matt. 28:18 is his reign as Mediator, God-man, over the universe, and is to be carefully distinguished (1) from Christ's eternal kingship or headship over his redeemed people, the spiritual Israel; (2) from God the Father's eternal

kingship or sovereignty over the entire universe. Christ is now king, as Mediator, over the universe. **For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet . . . The last enemy that shall be abolished is death . . . then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all** (1 Cor. 15:25-28). The mediatorial kingship of Christ over the universe **ends with** the resurrection or the abolition of death. It is a kingship over men, angels, demons, heavenly spheres, all except the Father are made subject to Christ. The next to the last step in this conquest will be the destruction of the Antichrist and his armies; the last step will be the abolition of death, or the resurrection. Then Christ's mediatorial kingship **over the universe** will be given up to God the Father, but Christ will continue to all eternity as the head of the redeemed human race (Luke 1:33), **He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever**.

**COMPARATIVE TABLE OF VIEWS OF THE
LORD'S COMING IN RELATION TO
THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

I. RATIONALISTIC VIEWS

- (1) **Unbelieving historical criticism of the New Testament:** Christ predicted that he would come again but he was mistaken and the victim of a delusion. He never will or can come again for he is dead and the supernatural does not exist.
- (2) **Modernistic Social Gospel:** Predictions in The Bible of Christ's second coming are **spiritualized** to mean that good will overcome evil in the world, righteousness will become supreme, there will be "a new social order" called the kingdom of God. Christ will never come again in bodily form.

II. EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN VIEWS

- (1) **Postmillennialism:** Christ will come again literally and visibly at the end of a long period, or 1,000 years, of universal or prevalent righteousness and peace on earth. The millennium comes before the second coming of Christ and is brought about by forces now at work in the world (the Word of God and the Holy Spirit), especially by missions and evangelism. During the millennium Christianity will be supreme and practically universal. Christ's coming cannot be expected for many centuries for the millennium, which is still future, must come first. At the end of the millennium there will be an outbreak of sin, followed by Christ's second coming, the resurrection, the judgment, and the eternal state.
- (2) **Amillennialism:** The kingdom will be eternal, not millennial. Christ will come again literally and visibly at the end of this age. His coming will occur when the signs predicted as preceding it have all been fulfilled. There will be a contemporaneous development of good and evil in the world, reaching its culmination just before the second coming of Christ. The second coming will be followed by the general resurrection of the righteous and the wicked, the judgment, the new heaven and the new earth, and the eternal kingdom of God.
- (3) **Premillennialism:** Christ's coming will be followed by a 1,000 year kingdom during which Christ will reign in Jerusalem over the world. The redeemed will rise from the dead at the beginning of the millen-

nium and the wicked at the end. During the millennial kingdom wickedness will be suppressed but not eradicated. After this period there will be a rebellion against Christ which will be suppressed by fire from heaven. This will be followed by the resurrection of the wicked dead, the final judgment, the new heaven and the new earth and the eternal state.

Questions:

1. What is the "Amillennial" or Non-millennial view of the Kingdom of God, and how does it differ from the Premillennial and Postmillennial view?
2. According to the Amillennial interpretation, what will be the duration of the kingdom of God?
3. What is the reign of Christ spoken of in 1 Cor. 15:25-28?
4. From what other kingly function of Christ must the reign mentioned in 1 Cor. 15:25-28 be distinguished?
5. From what kingship of God the Father must Christ's reign in 1 Cor. 15:25-28 be distinguished?
6. When will the mediatorial kingship of Christ over the universe come to an end?
7. What will be the last event in Christ's conquest of His enemies?
8. What verse in the Gospel of Luke proves that Christ shall reign over the redeemed humanity for ever?
9. What is meant by the term "Rationalistic"?
10. What two rationalistic views of the second coming of Christ exist?
11. What is the view of unbelieving critics of the New Testament concerning Christ's second coming?
12. What is the view of the modernistic social gospel concerning the second coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God?
13. What three evangelical Christian views exist concerning the second coming of Christ in relation to the Kingdom of God?
14. Give a brief statement of the content of each of these three evangelical Christian views of the second coming of Christ in relation to the Kingdom of God.

LESSON XIII

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND SOCIAL REFORM

There is a fundamental distinction between what the Bible predicts and what the Bible commands. Much confusion of thought results from the failure to recognize this distinction. The Lord predicted his betrayal by Judas, **Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me** (Matt. 26:21; that was prophecy. God had also said, **Thou shalt not kill**; that was commandment. Both statements were the word of God and both applied to Judas' action. It was certain that Judas would betray the Lord, but it was murder for him to do it, as he confessed when he said **I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood** (Matt. 27:4). Not discerning the distinction between these two parts of divine revelation, namely prophecy and commandment, some have placed great emphasis on Bible prophecy to the disparagement of all kinds of social reform work. They reason something like this: "Scripture predicts that the world will grow worse and worse, and that wickedness will increase, culminating in the man of sin, the Antichrist. Why then should we make efforts to reform this corrupt world which is hastening to judgment? The Lord will initiate the reign of righteousness when he returns." This attitude is generally characteristic of the premillennial and particularly of the dispensational school of thought. Some have gone so far as to call efforts for social reform "the devil's righteousness." Those who hold this view maintain that preaching the Gospel of salvation to individuals is all that can be done toward reforming the world or anything in it, and that the world can be Christian only to the extent that its population is composed of born again persons. Others place great stress on social reform work, to the disparagement of the whole body of Bible prophecy and the gross neglect of discerning the signs of these times. Such persons emphasize efforts directed toward the attainment of various social reforms, such as the legal prohibition of the traffic in liquor, tobacco and narcotic drugs, the abolition of child labor, civil legislation safeguarding the Lord's Day, legislation requiring the reading or teaching of the Bible in the public schools, the cultivation of international understanding and good-will, the attainment of social justice and improved relations between capital and labor, and the achievement of world peace through international negotiations and such agencies as the United Nations and the World Court. While perhaps holding the second coming of Christ as an abstract doctrine, they place that event far in the future, and it is not related in any organic way to their thinking concerning the world in which they live today. This attitude is characteristic of many Postmillennialists, and especially of those who are zealous in their advocacy of various reforms.

Those who hold this view almost always believe that the ultimate result of missions and evangelism will be the conversion of the entire population of the world to Christ and that the "Christianizing" of institutions and accomplishment of various social reforms will gradually bring in the kingdom of God.

Concerning these two viewpoints, it must be said that both are partly right and partly wrong. By combining the sound part of both attitudes, it will be possible to attain a wholesome and balanced attitude toward both our present duty and our future hope. It is right to study the prophecies of Scripture and to hope for the coming of the Lord and that perfect, eternal kingdom which flesh and blood cannot inherit; but it is wrong to do only this and neglect all efforts for social reform and all testimony for the present mediatorial kingship of Christ over the nations. Again, it is right to testify against all evils and for the Lordship of Christ in every sphere of life during the present age, but it is wrong to do only this and neglect the study of prophecy and fail to set our hope on the Lord's appearing and the eternal kingdom of God. To refuse to try to bring about needed moral reform because of Scripture prophecies is as unreasonable to the attitude of a Christian woman, known personally to the writer of these notes, who badly needed a winter coat but would not purchase one because she felt sure the Lord would come before the cold weather set in. On the other hand to neglect all study of and belief in Scripture prophecy because of devotion to a present program of reform work is to cast discredit on a large portion of what the Holy Spirit has revealed in the Scriptures. The thoroughly eschatological nature of Biblical Christianity must be emphasized; it is pre-eminently occupied with hope of the things which are eternal. There is in this attitude no conflict with real Christian social and reform work, provided we do not hold eschatological errors and false expectations about the ultimate possibilities and limitations of such undertakings. Does not the Covenanter Church need a revival of eschatological interest and conviction, a deepened longing for the eternal things and a more earnest searching of the Scriptures to learn the truth about these matters? How many sermons do we hear about the Lord's second coming, the judgment, and eternity? It is not true that many members have almost no convictions about the Lord's second coming beyond a vague opposition to Premillennialism? We are so wrapped up in the things that we are trying to do for God that we tend to forget that someday, perhaps not so far in the future, God will raise the curtain on his next great redemptive act and

do things that men, even Christian men, cannot do and that we have scarcely dreamed of. Our religion cannot be entirely made up of activity; it must also have the element of expectation, hope, waiting for God to bring about the final consummation of the world-process.

Questions:

1. Why must we distinguish clearly between what the Bible predicts and what the Bible commands?

2. How does the betrayal of Jesus by Judas illustrate the distinction between prophecies and commandments?

3. What is the attitude of those who emphasize the prophecies of the Bible while they pay but little attention to its commands?

4. What is the attitude of those who emphasize the commands of the Bible while they pay but little attention to its prophecies?

5. How can we have a balanced attitude toward our present duty and our future hope?

6. Why is it unreasonable to neglect efforts to bring about needed moral reform because of belief in Scripture prophecies?

7. Why is it wrong to neglect study of Scripture prophecies because of devotion to a present program of reform work?

8. What is the meaning of the word "eschatological" (see a dictionary)?

9. What is meant by saying that Biblical Christianity is thoroughly eschatological in nature?

10. Does our church need a revival of eschatological interest and conviction? What can be said on both sides of this proposition?

11. Why can our religion not be made up entirely of activity?

LESSON XIV

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND SOCIAL REFORM, Continued

Mention must be made next of a certain psychology of reform which is quite foreign to the doctrines of the Bible. This psychology or way of thinking goes today by the slogan of "Building the Kingdom." The basic idea seems to be that as the whole is equal to the sum of its parts, so the kingdom of God can be divided into a number of specific social reforms, to be accomplished one by one thus bringing in the kingdom of God gradually, until all are attained. There are Church members who appear to believe that the kingdom of God will be gained or lost with the success or failure of attempts to enact and enforce civil legislation against various evils. This psychology is unconsciously based on a Pelagian view of man and of sin. Pelagius (about A. D. 400) taught that man does not have a sinful nature but only sinful acts and habits learned by imitation from others, and therefore that no new birth or radical change of human nature is necessary; all that is needed is to give up the evil habits and begin to practice the corresponding virtues. The objection to Pelagianism is that, according to the Bible, man not only has sins but **sin**, and the root of the thing has to be taken out before man can become perfect. But sin (as distinguished from sins), whether in individuals or in society as a whole, will not be totally eradicated until the resurrection. Reforms may deal with sins but they cannot eradicate sin. Checked in one manifestation, it breaks out in other forms. **The kingdom of God cometh not by observation** (Luke 17:20), and it also comes not by the successive achievement of any number of specific reforms. If we could make a complete list of all desirable social reforms, and if in 500 years of united effort on the part of all the

Christians in the world, every one of these reforms could be put into practice on a world wide scale, still the kingdom of God would not have come. The kingdom of God is far more spiritual and less mechanical than that. It is not a matter of legislation and statistics. A man does not become a Christian in the manner suggested by Benjamin Franklin in his Autobiography as a means of attaining perfection, by successively cultivating different virtues such as honesty, thrift, kindness, etc., until he has acquired all possible virtues. That is so-called morality, not Christianity. Believers become perfect instantaneously at their death when they pass into glory (Shorter Catechism, Q. 37); and so the world will become perfect instantaneously by our Lord Jesus Christ introducing the perfected kingdom of God at his second coming.

It is also necessary to say that the world can never be made Christian nor the kingdom of God brought in as long as the vast majority of the world's population are not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and therefore are unregenerate persons. A sound building can only be made of sound individual bricks, and a Christian world, or the kingdom of God, can only be made up of regenerate people. For this reason all visions of a warless world in the present age are bound to fail of realization. Christian conduct, individual or social, presupposes Christian people, and as long as the vast majority of the world's population are unregenerate, so long will sinful and selfish considerations determine the policies of the nations, treaties and peace pacts to the contrary notwithstanding. It is just as impossible for nations made up largely of sinful, unregenerate persons to make up their minds to treat

each other in a Christian way, as it would be for a man with a broken leg to make up his mind to run a cross country race. Of course we should pray and work for peace, but at the same time we should not delude ourselves into thinking that **universal** and **permanent** peace can come in this age while the Prince of Peace is rejected by the vast majority of earth's millions.

We ought, then, to work and witness for desirable social reforms for their own sake, that is, in view of the anticipated benefits to ourselves and others from the said reforms, and the glory of God in the removal, to some extent at least, of the corresponding evils. It is obvious that any reform that is even partially accomplished may do a great deal of good in the world and eliminate much unnecessary sorrow and suffering. At the same time we should not allow ourselves to dream that "a Christian world" or the kingdom of God is attainable by such measures.

Total sanctification during the present life, otherwise known as "sinless perfection," is a doctrine held by some denominations but rejected as an error by all branches of the Presbyterian family. If not a single individual can attain sinless perfection during the present life, then how can society as a whole attain that state during the present age? Society is made up of individuals, and a perfect society (the final kingdom of God) must be made up of perfect individuals. It will indeed be so in that day when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, but that will be after the resurrection, when the redeemed shall be confirmed in holiness and unable ever again to fall from that estate. We submit that those who believe that the kingdom of God in its final form can be attained by a series of social reforms, or even by evangelism and missions, are really holding a doctrine of sinless perfection, applied not to individuals but to society as a whole. This thing is an impossibility. Even if every individual in the whole world could be converted to Christianity, and every human institution "Christianized," still the final kingdom of God would not be here, for every Christian still has a sinful nature which may break out and lead him into sin. The kingdom of God, it is necessary to repeat, cannot be inherited by flesh and blood — by men during the

present age, before the resurrection — it is founded upon the resurrection and cannot be realized in its perfect and final form until after that event.

Questions:

1. What is wrong with the expression "Building the Kingdom" as commonly used by religious liberals?
2. When did Pelagius live and what were his teachings?
3. What is wrong with Pelagianism, from the Bible point of view?
4. What is meant by saying: "Reforms may deal with sins but they cannot eradicate sin"? Why is this a true statement?
5. If all desirable social reforms could be achieved on a world-wide scale, why would this not bring about the Kingdom of God in its final form?
6. What is the difference between "morality" and Christianity?
7. What was Benjamin Franklin's method of attaining perfection, as stated in his Autobiography? What was wrong with his idea?
8. When will Christian believers become perfect in holiness, and when will the world become perfect in holiness?
9. Why can people not "build the Kingdom" by a mass movement among unregenerate people, stressing such ideals as temperance, social justice and world peace?
10. Why should we pray and work for world peace?
11. Why should we work and witness for desirable social reforms?
12. Why can there not be a perfect society until there are perfect individuals to compose it?
13. If every individual in the world were to be converted to Christ, why would the final Kingdom of God still not have come?
14. What is the relation between the Kingdom of God in its final perfection and the resurrection of the dead?

LESSON XV

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND SOCIAL REFORM, Continued

But the error of the modern religious liberals who have hopes of bringing in what they call "the kingdom of God" (though they do not believe in the Triune God of the Bible) by what they call "the social gospel," is even more fundamental than the error of the social perfectionism mentioned above. **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God** (John 3:3). It is clearly taught in Scripture that men become citizens of the king-

dom of God by a new birth, or regeneration by the Holy Spirit. This act is always instantaneous, and it is an act of God's Spirit, in which man's spirit is passive or acted upon. One instant a man is dead in trespasses and sins; the next instant he is a new creature in Christ Jesus. Human consciousness of regeneration may come gradually, but the new birth itself is instantaneous. It is the beginning of a new spiritual life, and the beginning of anything cannot be a grad-

ual process but in the nature of the case must be instantaneous. Now, a man is either born again or he is not born again, just as he is either a citizen of the United States or he is not a citizen of the United States. He is not 25% or 50% or 75% a citizen of the country; he is just a citizen or he is not. He may have taken out his first papers but he remains an alien until the moment he is declared a citizen by the court. A man may be a good citizen or a bad citizen, but still he is a citizen, or he is not. In the same way a man may be a weak Christian or a strong Christian, but still he is either a Christian or he is not, as the case may be. The use of the term "Christian" in the qualitative sense is part of the parlance of modern liberalism, as in the phrases "a Christian social order," "a Christian world", etc. The trouble is that those who talk about a Christian social order and a Christian world do not mean a society and a world made up of **Christians** in the old-time sense of born again, believing people, but a social order and a world which are to possess certain qualities which the liberal teachers call "Christian." Of course, the word "Christian" is never used in the Bible in this qualitative sense. While it is true that we use such terms as "Christian doctrine", "Christian education", "Christian literature", and the like, these merely designate the doctrine, education, literature, etc., which pertain to Christianity, and it is understood that these things are connected with **Christian people**. The modern religious liberal, however, uses the word "Christian" merely in the qualitative sense. To him a Christian is not a believer in Christ, but any person who possesses "Christian" qualities, and a person can be more Christian or less Christian, according as he possesses more or less of these qualities, and irrespective of whether or not he is born again and a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, at the bottom of this idea is the denial of John 3:3 (**Except one be born anew**). The liberals object particularly to the clear-cut division of humanity into those born again and those not born again, for according to their ideas a man does not need to be born again, and what they call a Christian differs from other men only in degree, not in nature. These are the ideas that underlie the "social gospel" advocated by liberal teachers; it is based on a denial of man's total depravity and of the necessity of a supernatural new birth. Permeating the "social gospel" propaganda is the error that a world made up of people who have not been born again can gradually become more and more "Christian" by the adoption of Christian attitudes, principles, etc. As explained above, we believe in working for desirable social reforms, not because the kingdom of God can be brought in this way, but because of the value and benefit of the reforms themselves and because it is our duty to oppose evil and strive after good. We believe in a social application of the Gospel of Christ. But we reject the "social gospel", which is really a substitute for the Gos-

pel of Christ, part and parcel, and refuse to be identified with it in any way. It is not a gospel; it is a deadly narcotic drug which lulls people off into a spiritual anaesthesia, so that they feel no need of a new birth and the cleansing blood of Calvary, but satisfy their souls by building dream castles of a perfect world founded on human qualities and attitudes. What has the Bible-believing, blood-brought Covenanter Church to do with a journal like the "Christian Century" which denies the truths of Scripture in practically every issue and regards the Lord Jesus Christ as merely a great and good man who said many valuable things but also made some mistakes? Brethren, the God and the Christ they talk about are not the God and the Christ revealed in the Scriptures and in whom we have believed. The kingdom of God of which they speak is not the eternal kingdom of God for which we are longing. Their "new social order" is of the earth, earthy. Their entire program is humanistic from start to finish. Let us not lose our savor by even apparent identification with such a Christ-dishonoring propaganda.

Questions:

1. What is wrong with the liberal idea of "a Christian world" to be attained through the "social gospel"?
2. According to the Bible, what is the relation between being born again and the Kingdom of God?
3. Is regeneration, or the new birth, an act or a process?
4. In regeneration, or the new birth, is the spirit of man active or passive?
5. Is the difference between a Christian and an unsaved person an absolute difference, or is it merely a matter of degrees?
6. What is wrong with the liberals' use of the word "Christian" in a qualitative sense?
7. What is the attitude of liberalism or modernism toward the truth stated in John 3:3?
8. What is the basic error of the "liberal" "social gospel"?
9. If we reject the "liberal" idea of the "social gospel", then why should we still work for social reforms?
10. What should be the attitude of Bible-believing Christians toward books and journals which are filled with unbelief and denials of the truths of the Scriptures?
11. What is meant by saying that the "new social order" of modern liberalism is of the earth, earthy? Is this a true statement?
12. Why is it correct to say that the "social

gospel" program of liberalism is humanistic from start to finish?

13. What is the difference between the "so-

cial gospel" of modern liberalism, and a social application of the Biblical Gospel of Jesus Christ? Is it possible for us to avoid the former while we insist on the latter?

LESSON XVI

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND SOCIAL REFORM, Continued

Someone may say, What is the use of working for the recognition of the kingdom of Christ over the nations if the fulness of the kingdom of God cannot come until after the resurrection? Now the mediatorial kingship of Christ over the nations is one of the neglected truths of Scripture. Plainly taught in the Bible, it has been largely ignored by the main current of Christianity throughout the history of the Church. It has remained for the Covenanter Church to lift a banner of testimony for "the crown rights of Jesus Christ." Such Scriptures as Rev. 1:5, Matt. 28:18, 1 Cor. 15:25, Psalm 2:10-12, and many others, teach that Jesus Christ has, now, in the present age, been exalted by God the Father as King and Lord of all. The fact that the nations in their present state of rebellion have not as yet recognized Christ's authority does not make any difference. It is the glory of the Covenanter Church to witness to this neglected truth and to point out to the nations their duty to **kiss the Son** (Psalm 2:12) by recognizing his kingly authority and submitting to his laws, in legislation and all civil affairs.

But even if in the course of time all the nations of the world should make adequate constitutional recognition of the mediatorial kingship of Christ, still the kingdom of God would not have been attained. No doubt such world wide recognition would be attended by the greatest benefits and blessings to the human race. But sin, sorrow, suffering and death would still exist in the world, and God's people would still have to look forward to the coming of the Lord and fulness of the life eternal. Therefore we should not suppose that even world wide national recognition of Christ would bring in the kingdom of God in its final form.

Suppose, on the other hand, that the nations of the world will stubbornly refuse to recognize Christ's kingship until after his second coming. Is that any reason why we should not witness for the kingship? Some would say that if success is not obtainable we might as well drop the whole matter. This pragmatist, utilitarian view of life is quite common today but it is utterly foreign to the teachings of the Scriptures. If a thing is our duty, then we must do it, whether the results are likely to be successful or not. **Well done, good and faithful servant** is a very different thing from "Well done, good and successful servant." It is the bounden duty of the Covenanter Church to witness for Christ's kingship over the nations,

and every member of the Church is **bound by oath** to further this testimony and to obtain from everything contrary of it. We approved of the Church's Covenant when we were admitted as communicant members, and are bound by that Covenant just as much as if we had lifted our own right hand and sworn the oath with our own lips. Our duty is plain; the issue is with God. We are not engineers trying to remake the world; we are merely witnesses for God's truth and against human sin. If in his inscrutable purposes God has decreed that the nations shall turn a deaf ear to the testimony of his witnesses, as he decreed that Pharaoh would harden his heart against the words of Moses, that does not in the slightest degree lessen the obligation of the witnesses to testify to the whole truth. Furthermore, it will be to the glory of God at the day of judgment that those nations which have perished for their rejection of Jesus Christ have had a clear witness borne to them throughout the centuries, so that God will be **justified when he speaks, and clear when he judges** (Psalm 51:4). The prophet Isaiah, like the Covenanter Church, was commissioned by God to preach repentance to a nation, **and he was told beforehand that they would not repent or believe his message.** Read Isa. 6:8-12. God told him that the result of his preaching would be terrible divine judgment on all except a very small remnant of the people, **until cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without men, and the land become utterly waste** (Isa. 6:11). Did Isaiah say, "What is the use of my preaching if they are sure to reject my message anyway?" He was no utilitarian. He did exactly what God commanded him to do, not because he hoped to bring about a "new social order" but because it was his duty to do it. We should go and do likewise. Even though we may recognize that it is possible that the nations will never adequately recognize Christ's kingship over them until his second coming, when **every knee shall bow and every tongue confess** to him, still our duty to testify to the crown rights of Jesus Christ remains clear and imperative. God's judgments are a great deep. We must distinguish clearly between God's commandments and his predictions, guiding our actions by the former and our hopes by the latter.

Questions:

1. If the fulness of the Kingdom of God cannot come until after the resurrection, then is

there any use in working for the recognition of the kingship of Christ over the nations?

2. What has been the treatment of the doctrine of the mediatorial kingship of Christ over the nations by most of the churches throughout their history?

3. What is meant by lifting a banner of testimony for "the crown rights of Jesus Christ"?

4. How does the Second Psalm teach the doctrine of the kingship of Christ over the nations?

5. How is this doctrine of Christ's kingship over the nations taught in the Great Commission, Matt. 28:18-20?

6. Give a text from Paul's Epistles that clearly teaches the mediatorial kingship of Christ over the nations.

7. Give a text from the Book of Revelation that clearly teaches the mediatorial kingship of Christ over the nations.

8. What does the kingship of Christ over the nations imply concerning the duty of the nations toward Christ?

9. Would world-wide national recognition of Christ's kingship mean that the final Kingdom of God had come?

10. What benefits might be expected to result from national recognition of Christ's kingship?

11. What evils would still exist, even after such national recognition of Christ's kingship, which would prevent the enjoyment of the highest blessedness?

12. If the final, perfect Kingdom of God cannot be attained by national recognition of Christ's kingship, does this mean that we might as well give up the whole idea and drop the matter?

13. What is "Pragmatism" and why is it a false philosophy?

14. Why does the probability of success, or lack of probability of success, not change our obligation to do our duty?

15. What good is accomplished by a witness to divine truth which is rejected and disobeyed by the person or nation witnessed to?

16. What will be the relation between our witnessing here and now, and God's honor and glory at the Judgment Day?

17. What commission was given to the prophet Isaiah, and what was he told in advance as to the results of his prophesying (Isa. 6:8-12)?

18. Why did Isaiah obey God and bear witness to the people, since he knew in advance that his message would be rejected by the majority?

19. Should our actions be guided by God's commands or by His predictions?

20. Should our religious hope be based on God's commands or on His predictions?

LESSON XVII

THE DAWNING DAY

Many times in the old Testament occurs the phrase **the last days** or **the latter days**, referring to a remote time in the future when prophecy would be fulfilled. Micah 4:1-3 is an example of this: **But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem; and he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sworn against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.** A glance at a concordance will show a large number of other references where **the last days** or **the latter days** are spoken of as the times when prophecy would be fulfilled.

Turning to the New Testament, we find that the writers of the various books are conscious that they are living in the midst of "the last days," the times prophesied of old. The last days are the days of the Messiah's advent; remembering that the Old Testament does not distinguish very sharply between the first and second comings of Christ, but more generally prophesies of his coming, we see that "the last days" began with the first coming of Christ, and will continue until the eternal order of things is ushered in and onward through eternity. Thus the entire period between the two advents is properly spoken of as "the last days." This terminology seems strange to us because of the shortness of our vision. We look back through history, and think of George Washington as someone who lived a long time ago, of Charlemagne as very long ago, and of the time of Christ and the apostles as ancient history. Because we ourselves are a part of the historical process and unable to lift ourselves above it, we tend to think of ourselves as living in "modern times" and Christ and the apostles as living in "ancient times." But one

day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. If we would understand the Scriptures, we must familiarize ourselves with the terminology which the Holy Spirit uses, however different it may seem from our ordinary habits of thinking. According to Scriptural terminology, when the Lord Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem, the end of the world began. As this may seem a strange idea, Scripture proofs of it will be cited here. 1 Pet. 1:19-20, **Christ: who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake.** Heb. 1:1-2, **God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days** (Greek, at the end of the days, these) **spoken unto us in his Son.** Heb. 9:26, **But now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by sacrifice of himself.** 1 Cor. 10:11, **Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the sages are come.** In these texts the times of Christ, the apostles, and the early Christians are spoken of as **the end of the times, the end of the days, the end of the ages, and the ends of the ages.** The Messiah, prophesied first immediately after the Fall, had come at last in fulfilment of prophecy and had performed the first of those redemptive acts which would ultimately issue out into the eternal order of things. Everything from that time on belongs to "the end of the ages." Everything from the first advent of Jesus Christ is part of the final winding up of the world's affairs, in preparation for the world of eternity. The early Christians understood this, felt it, were saturated with its atmosphere. They lived daily in the consciousness that **the world passeth away, and the lust thereof** (1 John 2:17), and that the permanent order of things was already being instituted, in fact that the first great act of the drama had already taken place. **The end of all things is at hand** (1 Pet. 4:7) was their attitude toward the present age. It was not a matter of the length of time involved. Whether a few years or a few centuries or longer, it was only a little while in the divine scheme of things. **For yet a very little while** (Greek, **how little, how little**), **he that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry** Heb. 10:37), expressed their confident expectation. The process was already under way.

We modern Christians, much to our own loss, have a different attitude and different terminology. We tend to think of the first coming of Christ as very long ago and of his second coming as far in the future. We think that if his second coming is to take place in the last days, his first coming must have been in the first days. But according to the Bible, both comings and the whole period between them are part of "the last days." This is also shown by Acts 2:16-24, where

the apostle Peter first quotes a prophecy from Joel and then goes on to say that it has been fulfilled in the time between the two comings of Jesus Christ. **But this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel: And it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh . . . The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord come, that great and notable day: and it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.** Se we see that Pentecost, a few days after the ascension of Christ, was in "the last days." The same idea that the end time of the ages had already arrived occurs repeatedly in the writings of the apostle John, as for example 1 John 2:18, **Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye have heard that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour.** Rev. 1-1, 22:6, **The things which must shortly come to pass.** Rev. 22:10, **And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.** Compare Daniel 8:26, **But shut thou up the vision, for it belongeth to many days to come.** 12:4, **But thou, O Daniel shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end.** 12:9. **The words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end.**

Three times in the last chapter of the Book of Revelation the Lord Jesus Christ testifies concerning the nearness of his coming: verse 7, **And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.** Verse 12, **Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is.** Verse 20, **He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come Lord Jesus.**

It is the evening of history. The long, weary day of the world's sin, suffering and struggle is almost over. We do not know how many years, whether many or few, remain before the Lord shall come on the clouds of heaven, nor does it matter. The world will not continue indefinitely on its present course; it is hastening on to its consummation. Time will issue into eternity, labor into rest, faith into sight, struggle into victory. But it is even later than the evening of history; the evening and the long night have almost passed and a new day is about to break—the morning of eternity.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the expression "the latter days" or "the last days" which occurs frequently in the Old Testament prophets?
2. When did "the latter days" or "the last days" begin?
3. Give proof from the New Testament

Epistles that the apostles and early Christians realized that they were living in "the last days."

4. What was the dominant attitude of the early Christians toward this present world?

5. Prove from the Bible that the first coming of Christ, the second coming of Christ, and the entire period between the two, are included in "the last days".

6. What solemn assurance is uttered by the

Lord Jesus Christ three times in the last chapter of the Bible?

7. What reason have we for saying that the evening and the long night of human history have already passed and a new day, the morning of eternity, is about to dawn?

8. What spiritual comfort can a Christian derive from the doctrine of the second coming of Christ as revealed in the Bible?

CONCLUSION

That great Covenanter, Samuel Rutherford, after enduring great sufferings for Christ's Crown and Covenant, departed to be with the Lord in the year 1661. On the afternoon of his last day on earth he said, "**Glory dwells in Immanuel's Land.**" This saying became the basis of a beautiful poem about the life eternal, by Mrs. Anne Ross Cousin.

This series of lessons could not close more fittingly than by quoting its nineteen stanzas.

IN IMMANUEL'S LAND

The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of heaven breaks,
The summer morn I've sighed for,
The fair, sweet morn awakes;
Dark, dark hath been the midnight,
But dayspring is at hand,
And glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Oh! well it is for ever,
Oh! well for evermore—
My nest hung in no forest
Of all this earth-doomed shore;
Yea, let the vain world perish,
As from the ship we strand,
While glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

There the Red Rose of Sharon
Unfolds its heartmost bloom,
And fills the air of Heaven
With ravishing perfume:
Oh! to behold its blossom,
While by its fragrance fann'd,
While glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

The King there in his beauty,
Without a veil is seen;
It were a well spent journey,
Though sev'n deaths lay between;
The Lamb, with His fair army,
Doth on Mount Zion stand,
And glory — glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Oh! Christ He is the fountain,
The deep sweet well of love!

The streams on earth I've tasted,
More deep I'll drink above;
There to an ocean fulness
His mercy doth expand,
And glory — glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Oft in yon sea-beat prison
My Lord and I held tryst;
For Anworth was not Heaven,
And preaching was not Christ;
And aye, my murkiest storm-cloud,
Was by a rainbow spann'd,
Caught from the glory dwelling
In Immanuel's land.

But that He built a Heaven
Of His surpassing love,
A little New Jerusalem,
Like to the one above;
"Lord, take me o'er the water",
Had been my loud demand,
"Take me to love's own country,
Unto Immanuel's land".

But flow'rs need night's cool darkness,
The moonlight and the dew;
So Christ from one who loved it,
His shining oft withdrew;
And then for cause of absence
My troubled soul I scann'd —
But glory, shadeless, shineth
In Immanuel's land.

The little birds of Anworth,
I used to count them blest —
Now, beside happier altars
I go to build my nest;
O'er these there broods no silence,
No graves around them stand,
For glory, deathless, dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

Fair Anworth, by the Solway,
To me thou still art dear,
E'en from the verge of Heaven
I drop for thee a tear.
Oh! if one soul from Anworth
Meet me at God's right hand,
My Heaven will be two Heavens,
In Immanuel's land.

I've wrestled on towards Heaven,
 'Gainst storm, and wind, and tide;
 Now, like a weary traveler
 That leaneth on his guide,
 Amid the shades of evening,
 While sinks life's lingering sand,
 I hail the glory dawning
 From Immanuel's land.

Deep waters cross'd life's pathway,
 The hedge of thorns was sharp;
 Now, these lie all behind me —
 Oh! for a well-tuned harp!
 Oh! to join Hallelujah
 With yon triumphant band
 Who sing, where glory dwelleth,
 In Immanuel's land.

With mercy and with judgment
 My web of time He wove,
 And aye the dews of sorrow
 Were lustered with his love.
 I'll bless the hand that guided,
 I'll bless the heart that plann'd,
 When throned where glory dwelleth,
 In Immanuel's land.

Soon shall the cup of glory
 Wash down earth's bitt'rest woes,
 Soon shall the desert brier
 Break into Eden's rose;
 The curse shall change to blessing —
 The name on earth that's bann'd
 Be graven on the white stone
 In Immanuel's land.

Oh! I am my Beloved's,
 And my Beloved is mine!
 He brings a poor, vile sinner
 Into His "house of wine";
 I stand upon His merit,
 I know no other stand,
 Not e'en where glory dwelleth,
 In Immanuel's land.

I shall sleep sound in Jesus,
 Fill'd with His likeness rise,
 To love and to adore Him,
 To see Him with these eyes;
 'Tween me and resurrection
 But Paradise doth stand;
 Then — then for glory dwelling
 In Immanuel's land.

The Bride eyes not her garment,
 But her dear bridegroom's face;
 I will not gaze at glory,
 But on my King of Grace —
 Not at the crown He giveth,
 But on His pierced hand —
 The Lamb is all the glory
 Of Immanuel's land.

I have borne scorn and hatred,
 I have borne wrong and shame,
 Earth's proud ones have reproach'd me
 For Christ's thrice-blessed Name;

Where God's seals set the fairest
 They're stamp't their foulest brand,
 But judgment shines like noonday
 In Immanuel's land.

They've summoned me before them,
 But there I may not come —
 My Lord says, "Come up hither",
 My Lord says, "Welcome home!"
 My kingly King at His white throne
 My presence doth command,
 While glory — glory dwelleth
 In Immanuel's land.

**The night is far spent, and the day is at hand:
 let us therefore cast off the works of darkness,
 and let us put on the armor of light. Rom. 13:12.**

Appendix

For those of our readers who may wish to study the question of the Millennium further and more thoroughly than was possible in the foregoing series of lessons, the following list of literature on the various viewpoints is presented. These books are recommended as representative of what can be said in favor of the various millennial and non-millennial interpretations of Biblical prophecy. The addresses of the publishers are as follows:

Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan
 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan

Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co.,
 Box 185, Nutley 10, New Jersey

Bible Truth Depot, Swengel, Union County,
 Pennsylvania

The Judson Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 Oxford University Press, New York, N. Y.

Evangelical Postmillennial Works

Systematic Theology, by Charles Hodge
 (Eerdmans)

Systematic Theology, by A. H. Strong (Judson)

The Millennium, by Loraine Boettner (Presbyterian & Reformed), 1958, 380 pages, \$4.50. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, October-December 1958, p. 192.

Revelation Twenty: An Exposition, by J. M. Kik (Presbyterian & Reformed), 1955, 92 pages. \$2.00. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, October-December 1955, pp. 195-6.

Matthew Twenty-Four: An Exposition, by J. M. Kik (Bible Truth Depot), 1948, 97 pages. \$1.50. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, October-December 1949, pp. 182-3.

Israel and the New Covenant, by R. Campbell (Presbyterian and Reformed), 1954, 336 pages. \$3.75. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, July-September 1955, pp. 123-5.

Dispensational Premillennial Works

The Scofield Reference Bible (Oxford)

The Pilgrim Edition of the Holy Bible (Oxford)

Books by Charles Feinberg, Lewis Sperry Chafer, Harry Ironside, W. E. Blackstone, Gaebel and others, obtainable from many religious bookstores or from Moody Press, 153 InSTITUTE Place, Chicago 10, Ill.

Non-Dispensational Premillennial Works

God's Plan and Man's Destiny, by Viola Cameron (Presbyterian & Reformed), 1955, 160 pages. \$1.80. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, January-March 1953, pp. 46-8 and January-March 1956, p. 42.

Crucial Questions about the Kingdom of God, by G. E. Ladd (Eerdmans), 1952, 193 pages. \$3.00. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, April-June 1953, pp. 95-8.

Non-Millennial or Amillennial Works

Why Thousand Years? Or Will the Second Coming be Premillennial? by William Masselink (Eerdmans), 1953, 222 pages. \$2.50. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, October-December 1958, pp. 192-3.

The Future of the Kingdom in Prophecy and Fulfillment, by M. J. Wyngaarden (Baker), 1955, 211 pages. \$3.50. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, October-December 1955, pp. 196-7.

The Pauline Eschatology, G. Vos (Eerdmans), 1952, 365 pages. \$5.00. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, January-March 1953, pp. 48-9.

More than Conquerors, by William Hendriksen (Baker).

The Gospel According to Revelation, by D. H. Elliott (Chester R. Fox, Empire Building, Pittsburgh 22, Penna.) 1948, 132 pages. \$1.00. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, October-December 1949, p. 182.

Millennial Studies, by G. L. Murray (Baker), 1948, 207 pages. \$2.50. Reviewed in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, April-June 1949, pp. 84-5.

The End

Salvation is of the Jews

By the Rev. W. R. McEwen

There is a tendency in some quarters to drive a wedge between the Old and New Testaments. Biblical scholars have advocated a Christianity without Jewish categories of thought. They have felt that Old Testament concepts were an impediment to the acceptance of the Christian faith, especially by the Gentile, without a Jewish background. "Was there no way in which he might be introduced directly to the values of Christian salvation without being for ever routed, we might even say, detoured, through Judaism?" asks Professor E. J. Goodspeed. Anticipating the answer, scholars have professed to find in the New Testament an abandonment of what some have called "Jewish rags."

It has been difficult to divorce Paul from his Jewish background, or to interpret the letter to the Hebrews without reference to the Old Testament! But some have felt more hopeful about the Gospels. Especially in the Gospel of John, which is further removed from a Jewish environment and written at a time when the Christian Church contained many converts with a Hellenistic background, they have professed to find there a non-Jewish Christianity — a Christianity restated in terms that would appeal to the Greek mind and devoid of Jewish concepts.

The facts, however, do not bear out this contention. There is a strong and prevalent Jewish emphasis in John's Gospel, as throughout the whole New Testament. John did not abandon his religious heritage to make Christianity acceptable to the Greek intellectual world. His Gospel is full of Old Testament conceptions and references and allusions to Jewish customs.

Certainly John, like the other apostles and evangelists, shows that the outreach of the Gospel goes beyond the borders of Judaism. It is John who reports the visit of the Greeks, enquiring of Philip, "Sir, we would see Jesus." He also records that our Lord "must needs go through Samaria," and tells of His interview with the woman by Sychar's well. But in neither case is there any suggestion that Jesus repudiated or by-passed the Old Testament. True, the Samaritans were welcomed into the kingdom, and the Woman of Samaria was assured that the hour had come when external distinctions were done away and true worshippers are those who worship God, Who is a Spirit, in spirit and truth. But He revealed Himself unto her as the Messiah, to Whom the Jews looked forward, and emphasized the unique place of the Jews in the saving purposes of God, when He declared, "Salvation is of the Jews."

The Revelation of God's Saving Purpose

Paul asked the question, "What advantage then hath the Jew?" and answered it by declaring, "Much every way." He pointed specially to the oracles of God—the revelation of God's gracious covenant purpose of salvation made to the Jews. True, the first revelation of that purpose, that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, was made in Eden, and might have been the heritage of all mankind. But this is preserved in the Hebrew scriptures alone, as is also God's gracious revelation to Noah. Then God became selective when He called Abraham and made a covenant with him. That covenant was renewed to Isaac and Jacob, and to the nation of Israel. And it contained promises of salvation not only for Israel, but for other nations.

That salvation and the means of it were represented in the Old Testament in symbolism. Of course the ordinance of sacrifice was primeval and universal. But that was embodied, with more elaborate detail, in the Levitical ceremonies in connection with the tabernacle and temple worship. Then there were the Passover and other annual feasts of the Jews. All these set forth various aspects of salvation, some of which are brought out in the epistle to the Hebrews.

God also revealed and carried forward His saving purposes in the history of Israel. While God governs all nations in His general providence, He dealt with Israel by a special providence. This gives a significance to historical incidents beyond their immediate sequence. The events which happened to Israel were part of God's plan in carrying forward His redemptive purpose, and were also revelatory of that purpose. As Paul pointed out, "All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they were written for our admonition" (1 Cor. 10:11). That is the basis for the study of the typology of the Old Testament Scriptures.

But God not only gave to the Jewish fathers general promises of His saving purposes and showed them forth in symbol and type. He also gave to the Jewish people specific prophecies setting forth, often in great detail, future events in the carrying out of His gracious plan. In the Old Testament there is much predicted in connection with the Messiah's birth and life, His teaching and miracles, His sufferings and death, His resurrection and ascension and coming again. Accordingly, Old Testament prophecy helps to authenticate Christ's person and mission and to prepare the heart to receive Him as Saviour.

Thus "by divers portions and in divers manners" God revealed His saving purpose unto the Jewish people and prepared the way for the

coming of the Saviour. And only those who bow before this revelation, and regard Jesus Christ against the Old Testament background, can truly come and accept Him as He is offered in the Gospel. "Salvation is of the Jews."

The Coming of the Saviour

Not only did God reveal His saving purposes to the Jewish people, but the Saviour Himself, according to the flesh, came of the Jews. The New Testament opens with a genealogy which traces back Christ's descent through David to Abraham. And the rest of the New Testament accords with this. The writer to the Hebrews emphasises the fact that "our Lord sprang out of Judah." In the light of the New Testament no one can deny that our Lord, as concerning the flesh, was a Jew. John does not ignore this fact in order to make his Gospel more appealing to Greeks. He reports that Philip called Him "Jesus of Nazareth," and that Nathaniel recognized Him as the "King of Israel." John also records the scene of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when Jesus rode upon an ass, in fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecy, "Behold, thy King cometh, sitting upon an ass's colt," and when He was acclaimed by the multitude, crying, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord" (John 12: 13, 15). John, too, tells how Jesus was mocked by the Roman soldiers as the King of the Jews, and how Pilate presented Him to the Jewish people as their king and wrote the title, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," which was put upon the Cross.

Again, Jesus was brought up in a Jewish environment. He was born in a Jewish home. His mother, Mary, was a godly Jewess, whose mind was steeped in the Old Testament. Her husband, Joseph, who became Jesus' legal father, was a just man, according to Jewish standards. So, though none of the Gospels gives us an account of Jesus' early years—Luke alone records one incident when He was twelve years old — it is clear that He was brought up as a strict Jew. He regularly observed the Jewish customs. It was His custom to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath Day. And John has many references to the Jewish customs to which He conformed. John alone refers to three passovers during His ministry, and also to the feast of tabernacles and the feast of dedication. He also mentions His visits to the temple and the several acts He performed there. He also records His testimony before Annas that He "ever taught in the synagogue." And in His controversies with His Jewish opponents, of which John gives such full accounts, Jesus ever appealed to the Old Testament. We cannot get away from the Jewish atmosphere in John's Gospel any more than in any of the others.

Again, Jesus observed the Jewish law. Paul told the Galatians that "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:5). The reference is to the Jewish law. But that law not only contained ceremonial requirements, separating the people of Israel from the other nations and setting forth various aspects of salvation. It also contained moral precepts of universal application. And Jesus not only observed the Jewish ceremonies, which had crystallised into honoured customs, but He obeyed all the moral commandments of the law. He could confront His opponents with the challenge, "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" (John 8:46, R.V.).

Not only did He obey the law actively, He also suffered passively under the Jewish law. "The law hath provided two ways of obeying," said Bunyan, on a memorable occasion in prison when being interviewed by Paul Cobb, the Clerk of the Peace, "the one to do that which I, in my conscience, do believe that I am

bound to do, actively, and where I cannot obey actively, then I am willing to lie down, and to suffer what they shall do unto me." While the cases are not parallel in every particular, while Jesus was happy to obey the whole Jewish law with a clear conscience, actively, yet when He was falsely accused of blasphemy under that law, He was willing to lie down and to suffer what His people did unto Him. Rejected and delivered up by the Jewish people He yet fulfilled the gracious purpose of God in dying, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, Thus "through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:11). Again, "Salvation is of the Jews."

What a debt, then, we owe to the Jews, to bring to them the Gospel of God's redeeming grace that they may yet come to see Jesus as their Messiah and hail Him as their King!

Note: The foregoing article is reproduced here from *Evangelical Action* (Australia). It is highly relevant to present-day tendencies in the United States as well as in other countries.—Editor.

John Calvin on Church Music

"To sing the praises of God upon the harp and psalterly unquestionably formed a part of the training of the law and of the service of God under the dispensation of shadows and figures; but they are not now to be used in public thanksgiving." (Calvin on Psalm 71:22).

"With respect to the tabret, harp, and psaltery, we have formerly observed, and will find it necessary afterwards to repeat the same remark, that the Levites, under the law, were justified in making use of instrumental music in the worship of God; it having been his will to train his people, while they were yet tender and like children, by such rudiments until the coming of Christ. But now, when the clear light of the gospel has dissipated the shadows of the law and taught us that God is to be served in a simpler form, it would be to act a foolish and mistaken part to imitate that which the prophet enjoined only upon those of his own time." (Calvin on Psalm 81:3).

"We are to remember that the worship of God was never understood to consist in such outward services, which were only necessary to help forward a people as yet weak and rude in knowledge in the spiritual worship of God. A difference is to be observed in this respect between his people under the Old and under the New Testament; for now that Christ has appeared, and the church has reached full age, it were only to bury the light of the gospel should we introduce the shadows of a departed dispensation." (Calvin on Psalm 92:1).

"I have no doubt that playing upon cymbals, touching the harp and viol, and all that kind of music, which is so frequently mentioned in the Psalms, was a part of the education—that is to say, the puerile instruction of the law. I speak of the stated service of the temple. For even now, if believers choose to cheer themselves with musical instruments, they should, I think, make it their object not to disserve their cheerfulness from the praises of God. But when they frequent their sacred assemblies, musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostle is far more pleasing to him. Paul allows us to bless God in the public assembly of the saints, only in a known tongue (1 Cor. 14:16). The voice of man, although not understood by the generality, assuredly excels all inanimate instruments of music; and yet we see what Paul determines concerning speaking in an unknown tongue. What shall we then say of chanting, which fills the ears with nothing but an empty sound? Does any one object that music is very useful for awakening the minds of men and moving their hearts? I own it; but we should always take care that no corruption creep in, which might both defile the pure worship of God,

and involve men in superstition. Moreover, since the Holy Spirit expressly warns us of this danger by the mouth of Paul, to proceed beyond what we are there warranted by him is not only, I must say, unadvised zeal, but wicked and perverse obstinacy." (Calvin on Psalm 33).

"I do not insist upon the words in the Hebrew signifying the musical instruments; only let the reader remember that sundry different kinds are here mentioned, which were in use under the legal economy . . ." (Calvin on Psalm 150:3-5).

"What, therefore, was in use under the law is by no means entitled to our practice under the gospel; and these things being not only superfluous, but useless, are to be abstained from, because pure and simple modulation is sufficient for the praise of God, if it is sung with the heart and with the mouth. We know that our Lord Jesus Christ has appeared, and by his advent has abolished these legal shadows. Instrumental music, we therefore maintain, was only tolerated on account of the times and the people, because

they were as boys, as the sacred Scripture speaketh, whose condition required these puerile rudiments. But in gospel times we must not have recourse to these unless we wish to destroy the evangelical perfection, and to obscure the meridian light which we enjoy in Christ our Lord." (Calvin's Sermon on 1 Samuel 18:1-9).

Note: The foregoing quotations from Calvin's works set forth the great Reformer's views on instrumental music in worship in his own words. It is a constant source of astonishment that scholars professing to be Calvinists attempt to derive principles concerning a Calvinistic view of instrumental music in worship by deductive reasoning from general features of Calvin's theology, while they totally disregard Calvin's own explicit rejection of the whole idea of instrumental music in New Testament worship. Can it be sound to use deductions from Calvin's theology to contradict explicit, emphatic statements of Calvin himself? Or can we claim that Calvin's view of instrumental music was contrary to Calvinism?—Editor.

Religious Terms Defined

PLENARY INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE. The doctrine that the Scripture is fully inspired of God, so that not only the ideas but the very words of the genuine text in the original Hebrew and Greek are the Word of God, being exactly what God intended them to be, and being completely free from errors of whatever kind.

POLYGAMY. The state of having more wives than one at the same time. This is contrary to the original institution of marriage (Genesis 2:24). During the Old Testament period polygamy was temporarily tolerated but not actually sanctioned by God; its worst features were restricted by God's law, pending its complete elimination.

POLYTHEISM. Belief in many gods:

POPE. The title claimed by the Bishop of Rome as supreme earthly head of the Roman Catholic Church. ("Pope" originally meant "father.") ("There is no other head of the Church, but the Lord Jesus Christ; not can the Pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof . . ."—Westminster Confession of Faith, XXV. 6).

POPERY. The system of doctrines and practices maintained by the Roman Catholic Church: This system is chiefly summarized in the Decrees of the Council of Trent (A. D. 1545-1563). It is a mixture of truth and error; giving false answers to the crucial questions about the way of salvation, it must be adjudged, as a system, to be false.

PRAYER. "Prayer is an offering up of our

desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies" (Westminster Shorter Catechism, 98.)

PREACHING. The public proclamation and application of the Word of God, by one who has been duly approved and called to the office of the ministry of the Word. (See the Westminster Larger Catechism, Q. 158, 159. Strictly speaking, preaching is a function of ordained ministers and licentiates, in distinction from exhorting which may properly be done by other Christians).

PREDESTINATION. "The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass" (Westminster Shorter Catechism, 7).

PRESBYTER. Literally, an elder. Presbyters are officers of the New Testament Church, of two classes: (1) those who only rule (today called "elders" or "ruling elders"); (2) those who in addition to ruling also teach or preach (today called "ministers"). All ministers and all ruling elders are presbyters.

PRE-EXISTENCE OF JESUS CHRIST. The doctrine that Jesus Christ, before His birth of the Virgin Mary, existed from all eternity as the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity. (See Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q. 21, 22).

PRESBYTERIANISM. That form of church government in which the church is governed, under Christ, by a plurality of presbyters (min-

isters and ruling elders) in a series of graded courts of which the highest is the synod or general assembly. (See article, "Bible Authority for Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods", by the Rev. Frank D. Frazer, in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, July-September 1952, pages 119-123):

PROFESSOR. "Any person who makes an open acknowledgment of the religion of Christ, or who outwardly manifests his attachment to Christianity. All real Christians are professors, but all professors are not real Christians" (*Buck's Theological Dictionary*).

PROTESTANTS. Those who adhere to the evangelical religion of the Bible over against the doctrines and claims of the Roman Catholic Church. The name "Protestants" was first given in Germany in 1529 to the adherents of the Reformer Martin Luther because they protested against a decree of the emperor Charles V and the Diet of Spires, and appealed to a general council of the Church.

PROVIDENCE. "God's works of providence are, his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving

and governing all his creatures, and all their actions" (*Westminster Shorter Catechism*, 11).

PURGATORY. According to Roman Catholic theology, purgatory is the state in which persons who die guilty of venial (slight) sins, or have not fully satisfied for the punishment due on account of their sins, suffer for a period of time after their death. According to this doctrine, all souls in purgatory will eventually enter heaven: (The doctrine of purgatory is wholly without Scriptural support, and is contrary to the Bible truth that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. See the Westminster Confession of Faith, XXXII.1, which, after speaking of heaven and hell, adds: "Besides these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.")

PURITANS. That party in the Church of England in the 17th Century that sought a greater degree of reformation and purity of the Church than had yet been attained. (After the passing of the Act of Uniformity, 1662, the Puritans were commonly called Nonconformists, and later Dissenters).

Some Noteworthy Quotations

IT IS DANGEROUS dressing for another world by the looking-glass of this world.

William Secker

THE DOCTRINE of an eternal purpose of God is the foundation upon which all the teaching of the Bible is really based. Back of all the events of human history, back of all the changes in the inconceivable vastness of the universe, back of space itself and time, there lies one mysterious purpose of Him to whom there is no before or after, no here or yonder, to whom all things are naked and open, the living and holy God.

J. Gresham Machen

THE CHRISTIAN MAN finds in the Bible the very Word of God. Let it not be said that dependence upon a book is a dead or an artificial thing. The Reformation of the sixteenth century was founded upon the authority of the Bible, yet it set the world aflame. Dependence upon a word of man would be slavish, but dependence upon God's Word is life. Dark and gloomy would be the world, if we were left to our own devices, and had no blessed Word of God. The Bible to the Christian is not a burdensome law, but the very Magna Charta of Christian liberty.

J. Gresham Machen

IT IS PERFECTLY TRUE that no mere man can pay the penalty of another man's sin. But it does not follow that Jesus could not do it; for

Jesus was no mere man but the eternal Son of God.

J. Gresham Machen

WRESTLE, FIGHT, go forward, watch, fear, believe, pray; and then ye have all the infallible symptoms of one of the elect of Christ within you.

Samuel Rutherford

CHRIST'S CROSS is the sweetest burden that ever I bore; it is such a burden as wings are to a bird, or sails to a ship, to carry me forward to my harbor.

Samuel Rutherford

I HAVE HAD MANY THINGS in my hand and I have lost them all; but whatever I have been able to place in God's hand, I still possess.

Martin Luther

IF I PROFESS with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battle-field besides, is merely flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point.

Martin Luther

GOD'S CHOICE and Christ's salvation run parallel. So God's choice saveth none but such as

Christ is anointed to save, and God seeth us to be saved.

Richard Sibbes

A MAN MAY PAINT FIRE, but he cannot paint heat. A man may dissemble actions in religion, but he cannot affections. Love is the very best affection of truth. A man may counterfeit actions; but there is none that can love but the child of God.

Richard Sibbes

NOW FAREWELL, all dear friends! I hope the Lord will have a glorious Church in Scotland, and that He will raise His glory out of the ashes of a burnt Covenant. Now, farewell sun, moon, and stars! Farewell, holy Scriptures! Oh! I am going to a life where I shall no more be troubled with a body of sin or death. Oh! I am going to a mansion of glory that my Lord has prepared for me. I shall have a crown of life; because I have been, by my blessed Lord's assistance — though I slipped aside — made faithful to the death. Now, welcome, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thou hast redeemed me by thy price, and by thy power. Oh! Lord of Hosts, into thy hands I commit my spirit!

James Skene (Written in prison in Edinburgh, Scotland, November 30, 1680, the day before he was hanged for his loyalty to Jesus Christ)

I BLESS THE LORD that these thirty years and more I have been at peace with God, and was never shaken loose of it; and now I am sure of my interest in Christ and peace with God as all within this Bible and the Spirit of God can make me;

and I am no more terrified of death, nor afraid of hell, because of sin, than if I had never had sin; for all my sins are freely pardoned and washed thoroughly away, through the precious blood and intercession of Jesus Christ.

Donald Cargill (From his last words, spoken just before he was hanged for his loyalty to Jesus Christ, at Edinburgh, Scotland, July 27, 1681)

NOTHING WILL INDUCE ME to form an impure church. "Fifty added to the church" sounds well at home, but if only five of these are genuine, what will it profit in the Great Day?

David Livingstone

None Other Lamb

By Christina G. Rossetti

None other Lamb, none other Name,
None other Hope in heaven or earth or sea,
None other Hiding-place from guilt and shame,
None beside Thee.

My faith burns low, my hope burns low,
Only my heart's desire cries out in me:
By the deep thunder of its want and woe
Cries out to Thee.

Lord, Thou art Life tho' I be dead,
Love's Fire Thou art, however cold I be;
Nor heaven have I, nor place to lay my head,
Nor home, but Thee.

Announcement

An agreement has been made between **The Banner of Truth** (England) and **Blue Banner Faith and Life** for the free exchange of articles between the two magazines at the discretion of their respective editors. **The Banner of Truth** is published by The Banner of Truth Trust, of London, England, an organization formed a few years ago for the purpose of publishing sound Christian literature, especially that of a Reformed and Puritan type. Since its formation The Banner of Truth Trust has reprinted and circulated a considerable number of standard Reformed and Puritan classics which had long been out of print and almost unobtainable. The magazine **The Banner of Truth** is very attractively printed and is filled with most worth while material — it contains absolutely no chaff or "filler." The issues appear at intervals: the most recent one to reach us is Number 18, dated November 1959. Subscription is 6 shillings sixpence or \$1.25 for six issues, and may be sent

to The Banner of Truth Trust, 78B Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England (postage for ordinary letter, 8 cents; by airmail, 15 cents).

In accordance with the agreement referred to above, **The Banner of Truth** in recent issues has published several articles from **Blue Banner Faith and Life**, including part of the series on "Road-blocks Limiting Church Effectiveness" and some items from the "Question Box." On our part, we are presenting in this issue two brief articles by the Editor of **The Banner of Truth**, Mr. Iain Murray, B.A., entitled "An Outnumbered Foe" and "Faith's Triumph." We are also publishing, at the beginning of our Book Review section, their announcement of two forthcoming publications namely **Historical Theology**, by William Cunningham (2 volumes), and **The Church of Christ**, by James Bannerman (2 volumes). As stated in our Book Review section, The Banner of Truth Trust is offering these sets at special

reduced prices until February 1, 1960. Some of our readers will no doubt wish to avail themselves of this special offer.

We welcome the co-operation of The Banner of Truth Trust in making the truth of the Reformed Faith more widely known on both sides of the Atlantic, and throughout the English-

speaking world. Our readers will see the high quality of the contents of **The Banner of Truth** from the specimens reproduced in this issue of **Blue Banner Faith and Life**, and from those which will appear, D. V., in future issues of the magazine.

—Editor

An Outnumbered Foe

By Iain Murray, B.A.

And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? and he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.
2 Kings vi. 15-16.

It was no ordinary scene which called forth from Elisha's servant this despairing enquiry. He had risen early, and as the sun dispelled the last mists and shadows from the valley in which Dothan lay, the sight that fixed his gaze was not the amphitheatre of surrounding hills, nor the rich pasture lands stretching away to the north, but the glistening steel of a Syrian army. The village was surrounded—the prophet trapped—escape impossible—the cause hopeless! So near may the enemies of God thus sometimes come to **apparent** success, that the feelings of Elisha's servant are again repeated in the experience of those who serve Christ. The experience is not one that is likely to trouble those who are slumbering in Zion, unconscious of the true state of affairs, but it comes to those who have risen early and who have eyes to see when times are desperate.

Yet real though Elisha's peril was, the despair of his servant was misfounded. It arose from the testimony of sense, it was an inference drawn by the human eye as it viewed from the walls of Dothan the apparently overwhelming difference between the strength of the enemy and their own weakness. "Alas, how shall we do?" As if to say, "We can do nothing, we can neither fight nor flee!" Such language is always

the doom of Christian effort, for it inevitably brings despair, indecision and inaction. "He that observeth the wind," says the Scripture, "shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds, shall not reap" (Eccles. xi. 4). The believer who, when facing discouragements and difficulties, sits down and does nothing is just like a farmer who is so fearful of bad weather that he never ventures out in wind or rain to sow or reap! How different was the reflection of Elisha as he surveyed the same scene as his servant! There is an element that enters into the conclusions Faith draws which enables a man to look beyond mere outward numbers and human probabilities. "Fear not," says Faith, "I see an army infinitely more numerous than the Syrian—a King unspeakably more powerful than Benhadad! **They that be with us are more than they that be with them.**"

This glorious affirmation is one which we cannot remember too often. No matter how weak the true Church may apparently become, no matter how near she may be to apparent defeat, she nevertheless always fights against an outnumbered foe. Let us then fear no difficulties and neglect no duties. Let all lovers of God's free and sovereign grace stand fast, work, organize and keep together. The battle fought by Reformers and Puritans is not yet lost, nor will it ever be. Fear not! We have far more reason than Napoleon to use the words he uttered at four o'clock on the battlefield of Marengo, "There is yet time to win a victory!"

Faith's Triumph

By Iain Murray, B. A.

"Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardied their lives unto the death in the high places of the field." (Judges 5:18).

For twenty years Israel had groaned in bondage under the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan. His military hosts, led by Sisera and supported by 900 chariots of iron, held the land in complete subjection. The villages were depopulated, the highways deserted and there was "war in the gates" (Judges 5:6-8). No word

came from the priests at Shiloh, no Joshua arose to smite the enemy, no arms were wielded by God's people—there was not "a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel." Relief seemed hopeless. "God provides on purpose mighty adversaries for His Church, that their humiliation may be the greater, and that His glory may be the greater in their deliverance." (Joseph Hall).

The record of the deliverance is given in Judges, chapter 4. The ways of disobedience

become too bitter to endure; the people cry unto the Lord; and a prophetess is raised up through whom the people learn judgment (4:5). Abuses are thus corrected and the Church reformed; such is always the preparation for deliverance. Israel is now called to march with Deborah and Barak against Sisera—a remnant against a multitude, a band of footmen against a host of iron chariots. But the Canaanites were “men and not God; and their horses flesh and not spirit” (Isa. 31:3). The enemy is confounded, the mighty Sisera flees and falls at length beneath the blow of a nail at the hand of a woman. A woman led Israel to fight and another woman thus completes the triumph. The Lord of hosts is never at loss for instruments. “He that had thought to have destroyed Israel with his many iron chariots, is himself destroyed with one iron nail. Thus do the weak things of the world confound the mighty.” (Matthew Henry).

Yet this victory did not come without energy and action, and in the section of Deborah’s Song, from which our verse above is taken, the manner in which the tribes of Israel supported, or failed to support, God’s cause, is solemnly noted. Some are reported and Meroz is cursed. There are times when inaction incurs a special guilt; sloth is a sin which God hates. The commendation of Zebulun and Naphtali should teach us something about the character of true faith.

1. Faith is an active grace. They “jeopardied their lives unto the death.” The degree and strength of our faith is sure to manifest itself by our works. That man who in the name of faith neglects the diligent use of lawful means needs to learn this lesson. Faith makes a man industrious; faith takes the kingdom of heaven by force; a faith which does not work is no faith at all. C. H. Spurgeon tells us how he acted when first brought to love the Saviour’s name: “I could scarcely content myself even for five minutes without trying to do something for Christ: If I walked along the street, I must have a few tracts with me; if I went into a railway carriage, I must drop a tract out of the window; if I had a moment’s leisure, I must be upon my knees or at my Bible; if I were in company, I must turn the subject of conversation to Christ that I might serve my Master.” Does

this example of the energy of faith find some resemblance in us?

2. Faith can act when times are worst. No ordinary dangers faced Zebulun and Naphtali. Their case was desperate. Never in their history had Israel successfully faced chariots of iron, even the tribe of Judah when in her military prime had quailed before this fearful weapon. But, inexperienced in war though they were, and knowing nothing but defeat for twenty long years, Zebulun and Naphtali were still prepared to act though it cost them their lives. No matter how dark the skies may be, “faith,” says an old Puritan, “is never non-plussed.” The profaneness of the times should not slacken but heighten our zeal. We should be holiest in evil times. In Noah’s days when all flesh had corrupted itself, ‘Noah was perfect in his generation and Noah walked with God’ (Gen. 6:9). Athanasius stood up in the defence of the truth when the world was turned Arian. The more outrageous others are in sin the more courageous we should be for truth.” (Thomas Watson).

Our problem is just the same as Israel’s in the days of Sisera. God has again sold His people into the hands of adversaries. The judgment we have incurred is every bit as real and terrible as it was for the children of Israel under the hand of Jabin. But if we find our punishment in this narrative, we also find our duty. God judges His people not to break them but to bend them to obedience and faith. Faith is the instrument of deliverance. Faith is the hand which takes hold of God’s strength (Isa. 27:5). Faith acts not according to expediency but according to God’s revealed will. Faith scorns self-pleasing and will jeopardize all to please God. Such faith, and in some degree it is the possession of every child of God, will never be disappointed. Let us take courage from the example of Zebulun and Naphtali. Like them we are but few, yet that should not dismay us because, as Matthew Henry says, “As long as any of God’s Israel remain (and a remnant God will have in the worst times), there is hope, be it never so small a remnant, for God can make him that remaineth, though it should be but one single person, triumph over the most proud and potent.”

Reviews of Religious Books

The favorable reviewing of a book here is not to be understood as necessarily implying an endorsement of everything contained in it. Within the editorial policy of Blue Banner Faith and Life each reviewer is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in his reviews. Please purchase books from your book dealer or direct from the publishers; do not send orders for books to the manager of this magazine.

HISTORICAL THEOLOGY, by William Cunningham, 2 volumes, total 1,270 pages. Price per

set, 30 shillings or \$4.50. Order from The Banner of Truth Trust, 78B Chiltern Street, London,

W. 1, England. (See announcement below of special offer for a limited time).

A review of the principal doctrinal discussions in the Christian Church since the Apostolic age.

The volumes contain an examination of the various arguments with which the truth has been both assailed and defended and of the processes through which principal doctrines have been established and distinguished from error. The three great systems of error—the Roman, the Socinian and the Arminian—are particularly dealt with and in a manner which illuminates the major obstacles confronting the Church today.

Chapter 1. The Church; 2. The Council of Jerusalem; 3. The Apostles' Creed; 4. The Apostolical Fathers; 5. Heresies of the Apostolical Age; 6. The Fathers of the Second and Third Centuries; 7. The Church of the Second and Third Centuries; 8. The Constitution of the Church; 9. The Doctrine of the Trinity; 10. The Person of Christ; 11. The Pelagian Controversy; 12. Worship of Saints and Images; 13. The Civil and Ecclesiastical Authorities; 14. The Scholastic Theology; 15. The Canon Law; 16. Witnesses for the Truth during Middle Ages; 17. The Church at the Reformation; 18. The Council of Trent; 19. The Doctrine of the Fall; 20. Doctrine of the Will; 21. Justification; 22. The Sacramental Principle; 23. The Socinian Controversy; 24. Doctrine of the Atonement; 25. The Arminian Controversy; 26. Church Government; 27. The Erastian Controversy.

Regarded by Charles Hodge as the foremost theologian of his age, Cunningham was certainly the most able British theologian since the 17th century. After a memorable ministry at Greenock, he was called to a leading position in Edinburgh at the age of twenty-eight and took a principal part in the spiritual movement which terminated in the formation of The Free Church of Scotland (1843). He became Principal of New College, Edinburgh, in 1847, where he remained till his death.

His predecessor, Thomas Chalmers, referred to him as "an individual in whom is exemplified a very rare combination of qualities which seldom meet together in one and the same individual. He has a mighty and overwhelming power of argument, combined with a rich and varied theological erudition; indeed, I know no man so versed in the lore of ecclesiastical antiquity and of all ecclesiastical literature."

(From Publisher's Announcement)

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, by James Bannerman. 2 volumes, total 960 pages. Price per set, 30 shillings or \$4.50. Order from The Banner of Truth Trust, 78B Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England. (See announcement below of special offer for a limited time).

Probably the most systematic and complete discussion of the Doctrine of the Church in the English language. Bannerman adheres to the Presbyterian view of church government as held by the majority of the Reformed Churches, but, while giving an outstanding statement of that position, he also deals with many principles common to all evangelicals.

Issues are discussed which are demanding renewed attention at the present time, such as: What are the marks of a true church? What factors should determine our allegiance to visible churches? Who is lawfully called to preach? What do the Scriptures teach about such matters as public worship, church discipline, liberty of conscience?

A standard work for all students.

After taking part in the spiritual revival that occurred among the divinity students in Edinburgh in the 1820's, Bannerman was ordained to the charge of Ormiston, Midlothian, in 1833. He rose to prominence in the stirring events of "The Third Reformation" and was appointed to a professorship at New College in 1849. He was the intimate friend of William Cunningham and, along with his colleagues, Professors Buchanan and Duncan, they served to make New College a model theological school. In acknowledgement of his services to the cause of Christ, he was given the degree of D.D. by Princeton College in 1850. Of his other printed works, the most valuable were his work on Inspiration and a volume of his sermons published posthumously.

Referring to his volumes on **The Church of Christ**, Principal John MacLeod wrote "Bannerman is comprehensive in his outlook and acute in his distinctions. He is full and clear in his treatment of the various topics that came under his notice. Indeed, these volumes . . . are more than a classic work of one of the Reformed Churches. They give weighty deliverances that are illuminating for the Church life of the whole family of these Churches and for an even wider circle."

(From Publisher's Announcement)

Special Offer

The Banner of Truth Trust has announced that the four volumes described above will be

ready early in 1960. A discount of one pound or \$3.00 will be given to all who order the four

volumes before February 1, 1960, while a discount of 10 shillings or \$1.50 will be given to all who order one of the two-volume sets before February 1, 1960. Allowing for the discounts, the price for the four volumes will be \$6.00 plus \$1.00 postage to U. S. or Canada; the price for two volumes will be \$3.00 plus 50 cents postage to U. S. or Canada. We feel sure that the discounts will be allowed on orders accompanied by remittance which are mailed before February 1, 1960, even though they may reach London a few days after that date. Ordinary American or Canadian personal bank checks may be sent in payment. Ordinary letters (postage 8 cents) from U. S. A. reach England in about two weeks; air mail (postage 15 cents) takes about three days.—Editor.

SOME RESULTS OF HIGHER CRITICISM: A LETTER TO FRANK AND BILL, by Frederick Erdman. Published by the author, 417 West Chelton Avenue, Philadelphia 44, Pa. No date, pp 24, paper cover. 60 cents.

This booklet is a warning to young people and students to be on guard against the type of unbelief purveyed in many school and college "religion" courses as "the assured results of Biblical scholarship." It shows this type of "higher criticism" to proceed from assumptions which are hostile to Biblical Christianity and which cannot be reconciled with the real inspiration and authority of the written Word of God.

With the author's main line of argument and with most of what he says we are in hearty agreement. This booklet should be very useful as a warning against a dangerous form of unbelief which is often very subtly presented as if no other view were intellectually respectable.

"Higher criticism" should have been called "**Negative** higher criticism", for the term "higher criticism" itself does not necessarily imply unbelief or hostility to the orthodox Christian faith. In the hands of believing scholars it is a legitimate branch of study.

There are several errors which will detract to some extent from the book's effectiveness: On page 17 postmillennialism is called a "heresy" and it is implied that only premillenarians "look for" and "love" the Lord's return. Evidently the author is unaware of the existence of orthodox postmillennialists, past or present, such as Charles Hodge and Loraine Boettner, and he seems naively unaware of the existence of the amillennial view of the Last Things.

On page 15 "Bauer" should be "Baur", and on page 22 "Werner" should be "Werner Keller." Again on page 22, the archaeologist W. F. Albright is incorrectly identified with Harvard instead of Johns Hopkins University, and on the same page "Tubingen" should be "Tuebingen."

These are little things, yet they are regrettable because they lend color to the charge of liberals that those who hold the orthodox position lack scholarship.

In referring to Werner Keller's book, **The Bible as History**, the author states that in this book "the historicity of the Bible is proved by the diggings of archaeologists" (p. 22). This is an overstatement, as Keller's own book shows. Keller himself rejects the historicity of many things in the Bible: See review of Keller's book in **Blue Banner Faith and Life**, April-June 1958, pages 89-91.

—J. G. Vos

A REVIEW AND EXPOSE OF THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE, by Robert L. Sumner. Sword of the Lord Publishers, Wheaton, Ill. 1957, pp. 47, paper cover, 50 cents.

The sub-title of this booklet describes **The Interpreter's Bible** as "A modernist commentary openly denying the historic Christian Faith." This sub-title states the exact truth concerning **The Interpreter's Bible**, which is an expensive twelve-volume work published by the Abingdon Press of the Methodist Church. The author also brands **The Interpreter's Bible** as "blasphemous," which it certainly is.

The evidence presented in this booklet, with numerous quotations from **The Interpreter's Bible** is really devastating. Those who wish to know how this modernist work should be appraised in the light of the Bible as the infallible Word of God should purchase and read this booklet.

It is unfortunate that the author has allowed himself to use certain crudities of expression which only detract from the value of his work. For example, on page 25 there occurs the phrase "the same line of boloney." In referring to the authors of **The Interpreter's Bible** as "scholars" author Sumner regularly places quotation marks around the word "scholars." What is really wrong with the authors of **The Interpreter's Bible** is not lack of scholarship, but a wrong theological and philosophical viewpoint. Men with doctors' degrees from great universities are scholars (without quotation marks), even though their viewpoint may be radically contrary to the historic Christian faith. The issue is only confused by the implied suggestion that what these men lack is scholarship. What they really lack is a viewpoint of faith which places the Word of God above, not below, man's intellect.

The reviewer hopes that many will heed Mr. Sumner's earnest warning to beware of a radically unsound, theologically infidel book.

—J. G. Vos

MOTHERHOOD, by Pierre Maassen. Douma Publications, 1819 Newton St., S. E., Grand

Rapids, Michigan. 1959 pp. 24, paper cover. 25 cents.

This booklet is an excellent contribution to an area of ministry and Christian understanding for which too little has been written. It is apparently intended for Christian women who have recently borne children. It is the kind of booklet a pastor can use in hospital or home visitation in such instances.

The choice of subject matter and Scripture texts, and the brief meditations and prayers, are splendid. This reviewer especially likes the interweaving of the psychological and spiritual aspects of childhood and of motherhood, and the recognition of the redemptive need of the covenant child. "Naturally we do not expect little children to wrestle with the theological problems which concern older Christians. But he should be introduced early not only to God as Father but also to Christ as the Saviour. Someone has suggested, 'If a child is old enough to know he has sinned, he is old enough to know he has a Saviour'" (p. 10).

We appreciate also the encouragement to early training of the child in the life of prayer, Bible reading, and church attendance. We like the climactic meditation, "Your Gift to God," stressing that the baby after all "is God's child, entrusted to your love and care" (p. 19).

This reviewer does not overly care for the "Creed for Mothers" formulated on pp. 21, 22. For one thing, we have long felt that a creed is an ecumenical commitment, most carefully delineated in some such form as the Nicene Creed, or the Westminster Confession of Faith, deliberately adopted, and reverently expressed. To say "I believe—" of just about anything or everything, as the current fashion is, such as "I believe in play as the child's normal effort to understand himself through free self-expression" seems somehow to detract from the solemnity of the words.

Neither do we like to see the word "miracle" loosely used ("In the miracle of birth we best recognize God the Creator", p. 4.) It has become commonplace to call electricity, atomic energy, etc., etc., miracles. We prefer to restrict the term to those events (whether outward manifestations in nature or spiritual regeneration) which occur above or against the laws of nature, by the direct intervention of God. After all, if any birth is a "miracle", what word is left for the virgin birth of our Savior?

Notwithstanding these reservations, the booklet should be productive of much spiritual benefit.

—Victor Bucci

COOPERATION IN EVANGELISM, by John Murray. Pub. Japan Bible Christian Council.

19 pp. No date. Free copies on request from 273, 1-chome, Horinouchi, Suginamiku, Tokyo, Japan. (enclose postage).

Anyone acquainted with Professor Murray knows that when he has expressed his thoughts and convictions in print, he has done so with the most reverent, humble, Scripture-honoring, and painstaking care. Anyone who knows him well is assured that Prof. Murray is concerned not only for the trustworthiness of his communication of thought in general, but that every word shall mean exactly what he intends it to mean, and that every word shall have its good and necessary place in an architectonic structure of meaning. The result is a study that deserves respect and mature consideration in every instance.

This pamphlet is no exception to the rule. Slowly, carefully, Prof. Murray thinks through the contemporary problem of cooperation in evangelism. The theme of the study is stated succinctly in the opening words; "The question with which we are concerned in this article is whether evangelicals may properly cooperate with modernists in the actual conduct of evangelism" (p. 1). The author proceeds forthwith to epitomize the evangelical's belief, and the modernist's unbelief, on the subjects of "God", "Christ", and "the Bible".

The apostolic injunctions in II Cor. 6:14-18 and John 10, 11 are considered with a conscientious exegesis and application to the subject of the cleavage between the evangelical and the modernist. The author goes on to argue that Paul refused to cooperate with Judaisers in Galatia, and sets forth the stringency of John's interdiction of cooperation with false prophets in no uncertain terms.

Mr. Murray concludes that we should "preach to all, cooperate with believers only" (p. 15). His conclusion is worth quoting at some length; "There is a wide gulf of difference between preaching the gospel at the invitation of modernists, on the one hand, and entering into partnership with modernists for the promotion of the gospel, on the other. It is in principle the distinction between preaching the gospel to Mohammedans at their invitation and cooperating with Mohammedans in sponsoring and promoting gospel proclamation. In the latter case there is the **partnership** which the Bible condemns; in the former there is but the proclamation of the gospel to all and this is the commission of Christ requires" (p. 17).

The pamphlet ends with a rebuttal to the argument of the pragmatic test in the form of multiple conversions, in favor of cooperation in evangelism. Over against this the author places the revealed will of God, for which there is no substitute or competitor.

This reviewer has no fault to find with Prof. Murray's thesis, in its thrust or implications, or with his exegesis of the pertinent texts cited. We

hold that these principles are foundation, and may stand as axioms for Christian evangelism.

Unfortunately, just as geometry only begins with axioms, so does evangelism. When we studied geometry, our difficulty was not with the "self evident" axioms, but with the theorems and their hypotheses, that needed to be solved. So in evangelism it's "where do we go from here?" that bothers this reviewer.

We would, for example, submit such questions as these; (1) suppose a local council of churches invites an evangelist like Billy Graham to conduct a "crusade". Suppose that council includes modernist ministers or churches, perhaps even a preponderance of them. Yet suppose the council, as a loose federation of churches, actually has no official doctrinal commitment to be affirmed or denied by the evangelist. Suppose that council invites him to preach under its auspices, but on his terms, as to evangelistic content and methods. Should he accept or refuse the invitation?

(2) Suppose the evangelist accepts the invitation of that council. As the campaign gets under way, evangelical pastors and churches are asked to cooperate, by the council and the evangelist alike. Suppose a modernist minister gives the invocation or benediction, or reads the Scripture lesson. Should an evangelical walk out, —or stay away in the first place? Suppose that in the course of "follow-up" work some new converts are referred to liberal, or other questionable churches. Should the evangelical close his eyes for the sake of the majority who are committed to the pastoral care of evangelical churches? Suppose the evangelist is guilty of condoning some wrong practices, or even of basic and sinful cooperation with unbelievers. Does the believer who supports the evangelist in spite of the company he keeps share his guilt in the second degree?

(3) Suppose an evangelist is clearly a believer, cooperating with believers. But further suppose he is Arminian, or shows some weakness in this or other respects. Should a Calvinist cooperate with him? Mr. Murray draws no line in this pamphlet between "evangelical" Arminians, and "evangelical" Calvinists. This reviewer has known those who hold that Arminians are basically Judaizers, and if so, subject to the anathema pronounced in Galatians 1.

Indeed, how far along the line of doctrinal aberration can one go before one parts company with respect to evangelism? Weak Calvinism? Arminianism? Semi-pelagianism? Pelagianism? This question might be further refined; can a Calvinist who holds to close communion cooperate evangelistically with a Calvinist who practices open communion? Can a Christian Reformed pastor share a pulpit with a Lutheran - Missouri Synod man? If not, why not?

These are not doctrinaire questions, but practical problems which have arisen at one time or

another in this reviewer's ministry, and try the conscience, of himself and others. These are questions which Prof. Murray could not possibly cover in such a brief pamphlet, but we do hope he will address himself to them and other such problems in the near future, with his characteristic biblicism and lucidity.

There is one final question that disturbs this reviewer more, perhaps, than any of the above. That is, why is evangelism so predominantly the concern of the Arminian and the doctrinally aberrant? Why do Calvinists, who should be evangelists *par excellence*, seem to show themselves weakest in this matter? Is there something about (orthodoxy) or rather, those who hold to orthodoxy!) that tends to Pharisaism or "dead orthodoxy"? Must the Calvinist be so preoccupied with theological definition that he does less than his utmost for Christological presentation? These are only questions, to which there surely are answers!

— Victor Bucci

CHAMPION OF GENEVA: A SKETCH OF JOHN CALVIN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, by Peter de Rover. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 32, paper cover. 35 cents.

This brief, fast-moving sketch of the life of John Calvin has been written especially for young people. It has been translated from the Dutch by William B. Eerdmans, Sr. The publishers state that in order to give it as wide a distribution as possible among young readers, it has been priced without any thought of financial profit. In quantities of 10 or more, it sells for 25c a copy.

In these few pages the author has succeeded in giving us a vividly accurate picture of what John Calvin was like. Particularly do we enter into the great conflicts of his life, and are made to realize how much Calvin endured for Christ's sake at Geneva, and the tremendous contribution which God enabled him to make to the Protestant Reformation.

— John McMillan

THE STORY OF THE CHURCH, by A. M. Renwick. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W. C. 1, England. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1958. pp. 222, paper cover. 4 shillings sixpence or \$1.25.

This is a concise yet interestingly written summary of the history of the Christian Church from Apostolic days to the present. Sponsored by the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, it is conservative in viewpoint, but fairly presents the problems of Christianity through the ages.

The material is divided into twenty-two chapters, which outline the most important periods of history, and would be excellent as a text

for a class in Christian Education in the local church, or as a handy reference for busy pastors and college students.

One point of special interest to some of us is the proportion of space given to early Celtic Christianity and Scottish church history.

—D. Ray Wilcox

To condense an account of the world sweep of the Gospel and the never-ending counter-attack of evil, and to give this shape and life in one small volume is an almost overwhelming task, yet we believe it has been very admirably accomplished by Professor Renwick. Of necessity some periods of time and events in some areas have been drawn up in a sentence or brief paragraph, yet one is never dealing with mere dates or dry bones. The account reads like a story with a serious and lively plot.

The author's purpose is to help guide our steps in the present world situation through knowledge of the past. ". . . If the Church of God is to escape today the nemesis which always follows on certain lines of action, she must learn to ponder carefully the experiences of other days, whether these were good or evil. If it is true that secular history is "philosophy teaching by examples, then church history is certainly the Christian religion teaching by examples" (p. 8).

Professor Renwick keeps us ever aware of the fact that church history is the outworking of Divine providence, not just the pattern of human activity. The narrative is made up of the Church's success and failure in carrying out Christ's great commission to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." It consists of four elements: 1. Missionary activity — the spiritual conquest of many lands. 2. Church organization—the Visible Church in its moral grandeur, spiritual power, torn by conflict, sin and darkness. 3. Doctrine — the development of doctrinal systems false and true, together with "the uplifting spectacle of men and women who loved the truth and were ready to die for it" (p. 9). 4. The effect on human life — the transforming power of the cross on heathen society, interwoven with the sad tale of unbelief and worldliness which leaves us assured that God has never "left himself without a witness" and that there have always been some devoted men and women "whose hearts God has touched."

The story is told in historical order from "The Apostolic Age" to "The Twentieth Century." Throughout we are made aware of the mighty hand of God overthrowing the powers of darkness through "the weak things of the world." The favorable proportion of space given the development of Calvinism and the Reformation of England and Scotland betrays the author's doctrinal and geographical clime. The book exhibits keen analysis and fair criticism. It warns

and encourages. History is here written in a way both interesting and instructive to the people of God. This is a very fine volume for both private and church libraries.

—E. C. Copeland

Note: The editor wishes to express his regret to Dr. Wilcox and Mr. Copeland that they were both asked to review the same book. This irregularity resulted from the fact that Mr. Copeland received a review copy direct from the publishers in England, while Dr. Wilcox was handed one received by the editor from the American publishers. We shall try to avoid this kind of duplication in the future. In the present case, as both reviews are well worth reading, we are publishing both in fairness to the two reviewers.—Editor.

AUTHORITY, by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W. C. 1, England. The Inter-Varsity Press, 1519 North Astor, Chicago 10, Illinois. 1958, pp. 96. 3 shillings or \$1.50.

Man is an unhappy creature today largely because he refuses to recognize, much less submit to, any authority as absolute in his life. This book should therefore be of great interest. Dr. Lloyd-Jones attacks the problem of authority because he feels that the evangelical section of the Church is guilty, along with others, of trying to produce a spurious, artificial authority.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones believes that if we are to speak authoritatively to a lost world today, we have to begin where the apostle Paul began, not with apologetics, not with the wisdom of the world, but with the crucified Christ. He is the ultimate and final authority.

Science, the old Liberalism, New Modernism, the Roman Church, all present a subjective authority. But the Bible stands as the Word of God, says Dr. Lloyd-Jones, and verifies itself by the consistency of its claims for itself; it is, therefore, an objective authority, the final rule of faith and life. Scripture is the one abiding thing in this world, said Jesus, and apart from the objective statements of the Scriptures we cannot present Jesus Christ; in fact, we have no Christ to present.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones says that he believes that 1 Corinthians 2 is the most important single chapter in the Bible for evangelicals, because unless as set forth there men experience the authority of the Holy Spirit, they will never accept the authority of the Scriptures or know the Living Christ and His power to save them. The book closes with a fine, detailed study of the work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the individual, the ministry of the Gospel and the total work of the Church.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones warns evangelicals of the danger of relying too much on organization and activity to accomplish the Church's mission. We believe that he has hit upon a major weakness in current evangelicalism. The Church is responsible for a zealous obedience to the Great Commission, but only the Holy Spirit can add to the Church and build up the saints in righteousness and true holiness. Dr. Lloyd-Jones says that our greatest need is a true revival of the Spirit to renew authority within the Church.

The author has followed a clear outline which stands out distinctly in the printing format. This with numerous Scripture references makes it a good study aid. We are glad to recommend it.

—E. C. Copeland

THE LORD FROM HEAVEN, by Leon Morris. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W. C. 1, England 1958, pp. 112. 4 shillings.

There is no more important subject of preaching than the Person and work of Christ. Any work which helps clarify our presentation of Christ and Him crucified should be welcomed by the Church. As this is written especially for the layman, and in language and style both interesting and edifying to him, it should be doubly sought for and used.

The Vice-Principal of Ridley College, Melbourne, Australia, has done a masterly job in making his work complete yet sufficiently brief to be attractive to the average layman. Large volumes have been written on each of his chapter subjects. Yet Dr. Morris does not seem to be cramped in covering the material in the space chosen. The chapter headings are: Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus' View of Himself, Jesus the Man, A Prince and a Saviour, The Lord of Glory, A Great High Priest, God the Word and Conclusion.

Here you will find careful analysis and lively discussion of vital issues. The subjects are as old as Gospel preaching, yet the presentation is lively and fresh. The exegesis is scholarly. There is a wealth of Scripture reference, and a wide range of theological works are quoted. Dr. Morris has given us another evidence of his ability as an exponent of the Reformed Faith. The reviewer has found it very stimulating and a challenge to his preaching.

We recommend this work very highly. It would make an excellent guide for a study group who really want to know the Lord better and to be able to present Him more effectively.

—E. C. Copeland

EFFECTIVE WITNESS, ed. by C. J. E. Leffroy. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W. C. 1, England. 3rd edition, revised. 1958, pp. 96, paper cover. 4s. 6d.

"Practical suggestions for leaders concerning the detailed organization of Christian Union activities" — so reads the sub-title, indicating its particular field of use. There are thirteen chapters on specific matters of Union activity. We are impressed by the practicality of the suggestions, and the realism with which the problems of the ordinary group are faced. We believe that youth groups in churches will also find valuable suggestions on such subjects as How to Run a Meeting, How to Run a Team of Witness, Leading a Prayer Meeting, a Group Bible Study, a Conference, Missionary Activities, How to Speak in Public. I am sure that this would be a useful reference book in your C. Y. P. U. library.

—E. C. Copeland

GOD'S CHURCH, by Alan Stubbs. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W. C. 1, England. 1959, pp. 128, paper cover, 4 Shillings.

This is another of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship Biblical Studies Series, published for the layman. Professor Stubbs has written in his usual lucid language and style. He gives us a scholarly treatment of an important subject that all will find interesting and instructive.

In the Foreword the author states his purpose to be to trace the sequence of Biblical doctrine concerning the people of God, to show its coherence, and in this way to expose some current unscriptural ideas about the Church. He also says that he has avoided the discussion of the relative merits of "traditional attitudes and practices."

Section I examines Old Testament Preparation. Professor Stubbs presents the Reformed doctrine that the covenant with Abraham is the basic revelation concerning the people of God. Care is exercised in showing the distinction God made both in prophetic statement and in His dealings with the nation between the visible Israel and the true Israel. Many have failed to note this distinction, and so have fallen into serious error concerning the nature of the Church and the unity of the people of God in both dispensations.

Section II sets forth the New Testament Fulfilment in Christ and by the Spirit through faith of all that was anticipated by the Old Israel in the New Israel made up of all who believe in Christ from every nation. Again it is emphasized that there are not two bodies of God's people with two different futures.

Section III looks at the Present Outworking. After briefly examining the method and means of apostolic expansion, Professor Stubbs moves on to present-day conditions and problems.

Section IV is entitled Behold, the Bridegroom Cometh. Here he sets forth the hope claimed

in the great Reformed Confessions of the Lord's coming, when the number of His elect is complete, for the resurrection and glorification of His people.

We believe that Mr. Stibbs has made a valuable contribution to the fund of Reformed literature on the subject of the Church. We are glad to see his emphasis on the Reformed doctrine of the nature of the Church. He declares emphatically that unity in the Church is not to be gained organically until it is gained spiritually.

We believe that in order to carry out his purpose "to encourage truly Biblical life and activity in the church" the author should have gone into the subject of the divinely revealed plan for church organization and worship. This was purposely left untouched, we recognize, lest he encroach upon "traditional attitudes and practices." However, we need to take care lest in our effort to be brotherly we become guilty of "taking away the words of this book."

We are glad to recommend another of Professor Stibbs' books, and we know that all who avail themselves of the opportunity will be greatly blessed in studying it.

—E. C. Copeland

BASIC CHRISTIANITY, by H. R. W. Stott. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W. C. 1, England, 1958, pp. 144. 3s. 6d.

In his usual clear Anglo-Saxon English Mr. Stott has set forth unmistakably the basis of the Christian Faith. The treatment is scholarly and systematic, and the style is warm and pastoral. He writes especially for those who have the "suspicion that it (Christianity) is not intellectually respectable." The Christian will find it stimulating of self-examination: "Is my life a reason why some look upon Christianity as 'intellectually unrespectable'?"

The author begins by explaining that the right approach to Christianity is that of a receiver. Unlike other religions, Christianity is God's reaching down by Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit to lift up ignorant, sinful, helpless man into life by union with Himself. "It (the gospel) is not primarily an invitation to do anything; it is supremely a declaration of what God has done in Christ for human beings like ourselves" (p. 10). The Bible is God's record of what He has done for man. "Seek and you will find" (Matt. 7:7) if you seek diligently, humbly, honestly, obediently (Jer. 29:13) (pp. 14-16).

Mr. Stott then discusses: I. Christ's Person: His claims, character and resurrection; II. Man's Need: the fact, nature and consequences of sin; III. Christ's Work: His death, His Spirit (the Holy Spirit and His work) and His Church; IV.

Man's Response: Counting the cost, making a decision, being a Christian. (The last chapter is also published separately as a tract which may be secured from The Tyndale Press at two pence each). This is Reformed theology in most challenging presentation.

A few sentences from the preface state the thrust of the book: "To assent to Christ's divine person, to acknowledge man's need of salvation, and to believe in Christ's saving work are not enough. Christianity is not just a creed; it involves action. Our intellectual belief may be beyond criticism; but we must translate our belief into deeds. What must we do then? We must commit ourselves, heart and mind, soul and will, home and life, personally and unreservedly to Jesus. We must humble ourselves before Him. We must trust in Him as our Saviour and submit to Him as our Lord; and then go on to take our place as faithful members of the Church and responsible citizens in the Community." This is a very useful volume.

—E. C. Copeland

CONVERSION: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL, by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. The Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W. C. 1, England. Inter-Varsity Press, 1519 North Astor, Chicago 10, Ill. 1959, pp. 40, paper cover. 2 shillings.

This booklet is a critique of Dr. William Sargant's book, **Battle for the Mind**, with certain conclusions which Dr. Lloyd-Jones draws on the subject of getting decisions in evangelism. It was originally given as a lecture to ministers under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance of Great Britain. We are grateful to The Tyndale Press for making it available in print.

Dr. Sargant is a well-known psychiatrist in Britain. He treated many patients suffering from shock during and after the last war. He found that by producing a type of hypnosis under drugs and aiding the patient while in this state to reconstruct in his mind the circumstances under which he had originally suffered shock until he again suffered collapse, the patient came out complete relieved and whole. His findings, his reading of the Russian psychologist Pavlov's experiments with dogs and his conclusions about "conditioned reflexes," and his happening upon Wesley's Journal in his father's library all led him to make some rather sweeping — and shocking — conclusions about the nature of religious experience.

Dr. Sargant implies that "social conversions" (results of psychiatric treatment such as he used with shock patients), political conversions under "brain-washing" and religious conversions such as John Wesley's as he described it in his Journal are really essentially the same. He states: "Whether beliefs are good or bad, false or true,

the mechanism by which they are produced is almost exactly the same" (p. 10). He makes one important admission, that he is not discussing a "purely intellectual conversion but only those physical or psychological stimuli . . . which seem to help to produce conversion by causing alterations in the subject's brain function" (p. 11). However, it should be noted that Dr. Sargent does not give consideration to the Biblical doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. He discusses Pentecost at some length in an effort to show that the events and circumstances of the crucifixion, resurrection and re-appearance of Christ had conditioned the minds of the disciples, particularly Peter's.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones says that we must admit: (1) that circumstances can be produced to alter the functioning of man's brain so that he will do what he would not normally do; and (2) that there is too much going on today in the area of evangelism which should be classed as "conditioned reflexes." He warns that through our doctrine may be right and true, we may transgress by adopting, even with good intentions, wrong and false methods. We therefore need exercise care lest we exceed our Scriptural warrant in persuading men, lest we induce false professions and subject the Church of Christ to the ridicule of ungodly men.

The individual Christian should not be moved by such psycho-analysis. He should, however, examine the basis of his assurance. True conversion is not produced by external pressures or "mental conditioning." The Holy Spirit is the author of personal salvation.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones' booklet should provoke constructive thought and action in evangelical circles. It is worthy of careful study.

—E. C. Copeland

A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH: AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY OF THE SECOND ADVENT, by Archibald Hughes. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1958, pp. 233. \$3.75.

The sub-title reads, "An Introductory Study of the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the External Inheritance." The author is a well known Bible teacher and convention speaker in Australia. It is the opinion of the reviewer that this is a valuable contribution to the literature on the second coming of our Lord, being a clear, concise presentation of the view known as A-millennialism.

The author traces the unfolding of revelation concerning the hope of mankind from the beginning of the Old Testament until it becomes more specific and reaches its climax in the New Testament. Avoiding all speculation, he gives a simple, straight-forward exposition of the re-

levant Scriptures in Part I. In fact, it is little more than an outline of the great eschatological themes of the Bible and the texts that trace them through the Scriptures: The Blessed Hope—What First Century Christians looked for at the Coming of the Lord! The Hope of Mankind—Old Testament revelation and New Testament fulfilment of such subjects as the Seed of the Woman, of Abraham, of David, etc.; The Seed of the Serpent—the conflict with and defeat of the Devil; The Blessings of Abraham to All the Nations; The Kingdom of God and the Seed; The Throne of David; The Church; The New Covenant—The Everlasting Covenant; The New Humanity; The Eternal Inheritance. The method is to bring relevant Scriptures together, i. e. prophecy and fulfilment, type and antitype. The author's discussion is little more than sentences stating the connection between the passages and their relevance to the subject as a whole. The Scriptures are left to speak for themselves.

Part II is answers to twelve questions raised by Dispensationalists: Natural or Spiritual? Is this Age the Last? Is the Seventieth Week of Daniel Future? Does the Second Coming of Christ Extend over Seven Years? The Great Tribulation—When? Are There Two Gospels? What did John the Baptist Proclaim? Did the Lord Jesus Offer a Kingdom to the Jews? What of the "sheep and the goats" of Matthew 25? Is there a Second Chance? What of a Millennium? How will the Righteous be Preserved in the Day of Fire? The answers given are a clear, Scriptural refutation of the system of interpretation as well as the conclusions of the Dispensationalists.

Mr. Hughes concludes that as the hope of the first century Christians was for the New Heaven and New Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (1 Peter 3:1-18), so our hope must be set not in an earthly, material kingdom, but on a heavenly, eternal kingdom. His final paragraph bears repetition: "If we love our Lord Jesus Christ and His appearing, the time of His coming will be relatively unimportant; what will matter most will be our watchfulness and diligence to be found faithful to our stewardship should He come or we be taken to be with Him through death."

We welcome this work as a positive statement of the A-millennial view of eschatology, and we heartily agree with the conclusions reached. The approach is praiseworthy. In as much as we find it in harmony with our Confession of Faith, we heartily recommend it. It will prove a valuable reference book in private and church libraries.

—E. C. Copeland

PELOUBET'S SELECT NOTES FOR 1960, by Wilbur M. Smith. W. A. Wilde Company, 10 Huron Drive, Natick, Mass. 1959, pp. 426. \$2.95.

This is the eighty-sixth annual volume of the well known "Peloubet's Notes" on the International Bible Lessons for Sabbath Schools. Edited by Dr. Wilbur M. Smith, Professor of English Bible at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, they form a very practical, usable body of helps on the Sabbath School lessons. Much expository and illustrative material is provided with quotations from noted Christians at appropriate points. The viewpoint is soundly evangelical, and Dr. Smith's loyalty to the Bible as the infallible Word of God is beyond question. Here and there appear details of interpretation which this reviewer cannot accept, especially on the subject of eschatology or prophecy. These however are minor features of the work and need hinder no one from getting great benefit from the use of the book. It is remarkable, in these days of high prices, that a book containing over 400 pages of carefully prepared material can be purchased for the modest sum of \$2.95 — less than one cent a page. This book is recommended to our readers.

—J. G. Vos

REVELATION AS STUDIED BY A LAYMAN, by R. P. Joseph. Published by the author at Hopkinton, Iowa, 1959, pp. 32, paper cover. \$1.00.

This booklet presents a brief but very carefully written survey or outline type of interpretation of the Book of Revelation. Though there are only 32 (rather closely printed) pages, it is evident that the author has spent a great amount of labor on the production of this exposition of the last book of the Bible.

Mr. Joseph's general theological viewpoint is that of the Reformed theology, and in particular he holds to the verbal inspiration and infallibility of the text of the Bible. He believes that Scripture should interpret Scripture, and his work gives evidence of very careful comparison of passage with passage.

The book starts by raising the question of what view of the Millennium is Scriptural. Pondering this problem led to a detailed study of the book of Revelation as a whole. Basic to the author's interpretation is the fact that Rev. 10:7 (the seventh trumpet) marks the end of the world, or the end of human history. This of course is no new discovery, as it has long been recognized by orthodox interpreters — what is called the "Principle of Recapitulation" holds that the Book of Revelation does not form one continuous historical sequence from beginning to end, but repeatedly scans the future with some viewpoint, envisages the end, and then starts again with a somewhat different viewpoint. Points at which the end is predicted or seen in vision are 6:17, 10:7, 11:19, 16:21 and 20:15. Mr. Joseph also recognizes that some, at least, of these

points mark a vision of the end of the world, for he says of 16:21, "This is evidently the end of the world" (p. 21).

In dealing with chapter 13, Mr. Joseph discusses not only the **meaning** of this prophecy but also the **identity of its fulfilment** (these are of course two distinct and separate questions, though not every interpreter has recognized as clearly as Mr. Joseph that this is so; many have multiplied confusion by failing to distinguish between the meaning and the fulfilment). He tentatively suggests that the first beast of Revelation may be world Communism or something even more terrible of which present-day Communism is a prelude, while the second beast (the "false prophet") may be a "world union of religions," possibly to be identified with the great "falling away" mentioned by the Apostle Paul in 2 Thess. 2. This of course departs from the old-line Protestant interpretation that the beast (first or second) of Revelation 13 in the Pope of Rome, or the Papacy as an institution. In dealing with the possible nature of the fulfilment Mr. Joseph displays a most commendable caution and refrains from dogmatic assertion about something which in the nature of the case cannot be known with absolute certainty until the fulfilment takes place.

Mr. Joseph's interpretation of Revelation 20 —the prophecy of the thousand years—holds the general type of view commonly classified as Amillennial; that is, he holds that the thousand years signifies the age of the Gospel, or the period of the history of the Christian Church, and that no **future** thousand year kingdom (either before or after the second coming) is predicted. This is the general type of interpretation found in **The Gospel According to Revelation**, by Dr. D. H. Elliott, **More than Conquerors**, by Dr. William Hendricksen, **Millennial Studies**, by George Murray, and **The End of the Ages** by the present reviewer (see series of Bible lessons in this issue of **Blue Banner Faith and Life**).

It is not to be expected that every reader will agree with every detail of interpretation in a study of one of the most difficult and mysterious books of the Bible. Some of our readers will not even agree with Mr. Joseph's main lines of interpretation. But the reviewer is sure that none of our readers can fail to gain a blessing and an increase in Biblical knowledge by reading Mr. Joseph's book with open Bible at hand, searching the Scriptures to ascertain whether these things are so. We recommend this study to our readers and commend its author for a very carefully done piece of work.

—J. G. Vos

DAILY MANNA CALENDAR FOR 1960, edited by Martin Monsma. Zondervan Publishing

House, 1415 Lake Drive, S. E., Grand Rapids 6, Mich. \$1.95.

The **Daily Manna Calendar** consists of 365 separate sheets, each 4 x 6 inches in size, packed in a very neat box which is so constructed that it can be either hung on the wall or stood at an angle on a desk or shelf. There is one page for each day of the year. At the top in bold print are the month, date, and day of the week, followed by a brief theme or title. Under this in bold-face type is a verse or brief portion of Scripture, followed by a meditation on same. The writers of the meditations are named, and each contributor has written several meditations. The theological viewpoint is that of the Reformed Faith, and the material is truly edifying.

We recommend that **Daily Manna Calendar** for use by our readers in family worship or in personal devotions. The reviewer considers this production vastly superior to some widely used family worship helps which while strongly stressing the love of God are silent, vague or non-committal on some of the "grand particularities" of the Biblical system of truth. If those who signed the Covenant of 1954 were sincere and honest in their expression of adherence to the Reformed Faith, they should prefer truly Reformed devotional materials to those which at best are merely evangelical in a general way, and sometimes not even that. This reviewer is sometimes amazed to note how people making a public profession of the Reformed Faith (Calvinism) nevertheless often seem to prefer tracts and other Christian literature of an Arminian or vaguely non-committal type to those which really ring true to the Reformed Faith (which is nothing more nor less than consistent Biblical Christianity). Buy the **Daily Manna Calendar** and use it in your personal or family devotions throughout 1960.

—J. G. Vos

THINE IS MY HEART: DEVOTIONAL READINGS FROM THE WRITINGS OF JOHN CALVIN, compiled by John H. Kromminga. Zondervan Publishing House, 1415 Lake Drive, S. E., Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1958, pp. about 365. \$3.95.

Dr. John H. Kromminga, President of Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, has compiled a devotional book from the wide range of the writings of the Reformer John Calvin. Those who form a mental image of the word "Predestination" when they hear Calvin's name mentioned, and take for granted that Calvin's thought concerned nothing else, will have a great surprise when they open this book and note the wealth of rich devotional material within its covers.

Approximately one page is devoted to each day in the year, with the month and date in bold-

face type at the head of the pages. This is followed by a text or brief portion of Scripture, printed in italics. The rest of the page is devoted to a meditation on the cited Scripture, taken from Calvin's writings. The exact source of each meditation is not given, except in the case of those taken from **The Institutes of the Christian Religion**, in which the Book, Section and Paragraph are cited in detail. For the rest, the meditations are only identified as taken from "Commentaries", "Sermons," "Correspondence," etc.

Those who suppose Calvin's writings to be either as dry as dust or too deep for the ordinary person to understand will find these meditations very different from any such expectations. They are interesting, edifying and well within the intellectual grasp of the ordinary adult Christian of average education.

The book is attractively bound and the printing is in very clear, readable type. This book is heartily recommended to our readers.

—J. G. Vos

THIS WAS JOHN CALVIN, by Thea B. Van Halsema. Zondervan Publishing House, 1415 Lake Drive, S.E., Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1959, pp. 180. \$2.95.

This book presents the life of Calvin in story form. One of its attractive features is the pictures — both drawings of scenes in the Reformer's life, and reproductions of portraits, facsimiles of documents, a panoramic view of the city of Geneva in Calvin's day, and others. The material reads smoothly and easily holds the reader's interest.

In our day when there is so much misinformation about Calvin in circulation, and so much blind prejudice against the great Reformer and everything connected with him, we should welcome everything which will clear away the mists and spread the real truth. The present volume makes a notable contribution to that end. This would be an excellent book for any church or Sabbath School library, as well as for study groups, young people's societies and the like. We are happy to recommend it.

—J. G. Vos

THE LIFE OF TEACHINGS OF JOHN CALVIN: A STUDY MANUAL, by John H. Bratt, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1958, pp. 72, paper cover. 75 cents.

This little book discusses the life and teachings of John Calvin in twenty-one lessons. Each lesson includes several "Discussion Questions" as well as several "Fact Questions." The material is suited to a somewhat more mature group than Miss Van Halsema's book **This was John Calvin** (see preceding review). Yet it is not difficult in the sense of being obscure or baffling. It

would be well suited to an adult group of church members led by the pastor or a well-informed elder. Approximately two-thirds of the book deals with Calvin's life and time, while the remaining one-third deals with his teachings. Among the latter are the Sovereignty of God, Predestination, the Sacraments, Common Grace, Marriage and Divorce, Missions, Pleasures and Amusements and Ecumenicity. The whole body of material is calculated to provoke thought, and any group which takes up this book will have plenty of lively discussion and will certainly experience considerable clarification of views on a number of subjects. This book is heartily recommended to our readers.

—J. G. Vos

INTO THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY: THE BASIC DOCTRINES OF THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE, by William J. Schnell. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1959. pp. 211. \$2.95.

This new book on Jehovah's Witnesses is by the author of **Thirty Years a Watch Tower Slave** (same publisher; \$2.95). Whereas the former book told his life story, the present one, while telling some of his life and experiences, is chiefly an analysis and refutation of the doctrines of the Jehovah's Witnesses sect.

Without necessarily committing ourselves to every interpretation found in Mr. Schell's book, we commend him for his courage and his clarity in exposing the false teachings of this soul-destroying cult. With devastating force of Scripture and logic he exposes the falsity of the basic doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses, especially their man-pleasing, conscience-deadening claim that there is no real, eternal hell.

Any of our readers who are in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses, or who live where they are active, should by all means possess both of Mr. Schnell's books, as well as **Jehovah of the Watchtower** by Martin and Klann (the last-named is published by Biblical Truth Publishing Society, Inc., 70 Union Ave., Paterson, New Jersey).

— J. G. Vos

MEN SPAKE FROM GOD: STUDIES IN THE HEBREW PROPHETS, by H. L. Ellison, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1958, pp. 160, \$3.00.

A conservative introduction to the Old Testament prophetic books, dealing briefly with critical problems, historical background, and principal teachings of each book. The author's conservatism, however, is not of a vigorous sort, as illustrated by his apparently hesitant acceptance of the unity of Isaiah in terms of probability. Concerning the unity of Zechariah, he says: "This view is entirely tenable, but does not really explain the facts." (p. 124). A pre-

exilic date is preferred for chapters 9-11, but no reasons for this are presented.

The sections on interpretation are for the most part very good, but a number of statements are misleading. To cite only one example, regarding Jeremiah 8:8f: "Even the written Scriptures come under his condemnation" (p. 86). Certainly this oversimplification does violence to the clear meaning of this passage, for the condemnation of the abuse of Scripture is not to condemn Scripture itself.

—Joseph P. Duggan

FROM TRAGEDY TO TRIUMPH: THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK OF JOB, by H. L. Ellison. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1958, pp. 127. \$2.50.

In these days when orthodoxy is very much a minority opinion, it is rather remarkable that an evangelical should tell us that defenders of orthodoxy believe "that failure to agree with the dominant majority must be due to intellectual, moral or spiritual faults." (p. 52). It is very remarkable that a conservative Old Testament theologian should describe Job's friends as the champions of orthodoxy and affirm that their error consisted in the zeal in propounding orthodoxy. Yet this the author does repeatedly and consistently. For example, the second cycle is interpreted thus: ". . . orthodoxy has been outraged and is on the war-path looking for blood." (p. 58). Chapter Seven (Job 22-27) is entitled "Orthodoxy Confounded."

One is inclined to be somewhat tolerant of this attitude, holding it to be an unfortunate reaction against traditionalism parading as correct doctrine, but even this inclination was weakened in this reviewer's mind when he read that "We must hesitate in judgment, however, for often enough the heresies of yesterday are the orthodoxies of today, and where we have thought of shipwreck, they have been sailing unknown seas and gathering great wealth." (p. 53).

Perhaps this whole disturbing aspect of this work could have been avoided had the author defined the term for us, but can he seriously describe the epistemology of champions of orthodoxy thus: ". . . for Eliphaz, as we have seen, it was religious experience, for Bildad the voice of tradition, for Zophar sound common sense . . ." (p. 104). Similarly, it is confusing to equate piety for Pharisaism (p. 68). Alas—how fickle is the English language!

Quite commendably the historicity of Job, the basic integrity of the book, and the non-interpolation of the Elihu discourse are asserted and defended. It is, however, difficult to understand why Mr. Ellison should insist that 31:38-40 is dislocated, asserting that this is an "intolerable

anticlimax" (p. 21). Anticlimatic obviously; "intolerable", however, seems a little too dogmatic!

Now certainly the author recognizes that Job is so distraught that he is frequently very rash, but why then must he tell us that the strong words of 27:13-23 cannot be Job's, for this "is patently absurd and a contradiction of the book as a whole." (p. 21). It seems strange that (Job) 27:12 should be described as Job's words and as a partial proof of the theory that 27:13-23 are not Job's words, while elsewhere (p. 88) the author thinks it is impossible to ascribe 27:7-23 to Job! Again, Bildad rather than Job is judged to be more probably the speaker in chapter 26. There is, of course, no question but that the extant Hebrew text is not above all reproach, but the ease with which emendations are made in this book (admittedly they are not numerous) leads this reviewer to think that it is not only the "orthodox" who fall into the error of insisting that God's "revelation and will must conform to their (own) understanding and tradition." (p. 46).

Actually there is considerable merit in this book. Interpretation is sane and at the same time occasionally brilliant. The style is quite lucid and the reader will be helped toward a proper understanding of the message of the book of Job. It should, however, be read with caution.

—Joseph P. Duggan

THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE IN THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS, by Thomas F. Torrance. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 150. \$3.00.

A study of the concept of grace as understood by the church in the first half of the second century as illustrated in the Didache, First Clement, Ignatius' epistles, Polycarp, Barnabas, the Shepherd of Hermas and Second Clement. Through analysis of pertinent material in these writings it is shown that very early the understanding of the heart of the gospel suffered greatly under the influence of legalistic Judaism and naturalistic Hellenism, involving among other things a departure from the concept of grace as something proceeding only from God's love and free will and also a minimization of the significance of the death of Christ.

An introduction of 35 pages contains an excellent presentation of the Old and New Testament doctrine of grace, providing the background against which the writings of the apostolic fathers can be judged. In the conclusion Dr. Torrance very ably and clearly summarizes and indicates the significance of his studies in these ancient treatises. Abundant foot-notes and an extensive bibliography will be useful to those desiring to study such matters further.

While some knowledge of Greek and pat-

ristics would be useful in getting the most out of this book, it nevertheless constitutes a worthwhile help to anyone desirous of increasing his knowledge of the history of doctrine, an activity which should contribute much towards bringing true doctrine into clearer focus in the reader's mind.

—Joseph P. Duggan

BIBLE DOCTRINE: UNIT TWO, BOOK TWO, by Dorothy Partington Anderson. Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 627 Schaff Building Philadelphia 2, Pa. 1958, pp. 220, paper cover, spiral binding. Teacher's Manual \$1.85. Pupil's Workbook \$1.60.

Paul tells us that "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." To this end the Scriptures abound in instruction to God's people, who wish to grow as Christians. Its teachings in this regard have been carefully set forth in the Shorter Catechism, questions 88-107, upon which this workbook is based.

In this unit the means of Christian growth: the Word, the sacraments and prayer are handled in a very effective manner. Again and again reference is made to the Bible in asking questions designed to lead the student to a better knowledge of God's will or His children and of the student's own growth as a Christian.

In addition various errors and corruptions of true doctrine are presented both as historical phenomena and as recurring problems with which Christians are constantly confronted. A great number of techniques are employed with skill and variety.

Those responsible for the religious instruction of young people would do well to order a copy to see if class study could not be enriched through the use of this workbook, which—although not above any criticism—is a carefully prepared piece of work. This reviewer knows of no other such workbook which so well combines sound doctrine with an appealing and stimulating approach.

—Joseph P. Duggan

EZEKIEL, THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE, by H. L. Ellison, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1956, pp. 144. \$2.50.

This little book of 144 pages is not a commentary on the Book of Ezekiel verse by verse, but rather it is written in narrative style, each chapter covering a section of the Prophecy. He does not go into the critical view points held by so many commentators, but rather tries to help Ezekiel speak to us today. By so writing, he gives one an overall picture of the Prophecy rather than a detailed commentary on the Book. This makes it a very readable book as a commentary. However, he puts in Scripture references which enables one to follow him and

compare with other Scriptures in such a way as to make a profitable study.

The dates he gives to the Book begin with the Battle of Megiddo—the death of Josiah in 609 B. C. and end with the capture of Babylon by Cyrus in 538 B. C. Mr. Ellison gives a brief background of the Prophet and his Prophecy, touching on his use of symbols, the exiles in Babylonia, and those to whom he prophesied.

In the course of his commentary, he plainly marks his chapters with the reference to the Prophecy, so one may find a chapter of the Prophecy and read what he has to say on that particular passage without too much searching. Although he is Pre-millennial, he takes a different view of the Millennium from that of the ultra-dispensationalist. To him, the book is divided into two parts, which he calls "normal prophecy" and "apocalyptic," he interprets the visions symbolically rather than literally, rejecting the river of ch. 47 as a literal river, and rejecting the possibility of the return of animal sacrifices in the Millennium.

The book is very thought-provoking, not laborious, but useful in giving an overall picture of the prophecy. It is quite timely.

—Herbert A. Hays

METRICAL VERSIONS OF THE BOOK OF PSALMS

From time to time the editor of this magazine is asked where metrical versions of the Psalter, suitable for singing praise to God in public worship or in less formal gatherings, can be obtained. These inquiries have usually been answered by private correspondence, and have not seldom led to purchase of one or more copies of one of the books recommended. We take the present opportunity to list two old Psalters and one new book of Psalm selections, with information as to prices and addresses from which they can be obtained.

The Psalms in Metre. This is the well-known Scottish version of the Psalter, sometimes called the Rous Version. Some prefer it to the more recent versions of the Book of Psalms in metre. It contains the entire 150 Psalms of the Bible, in metrical form, though without printed music. This version can be obtained from The Trinitarian Bible Society, 7 Bury Place, London, W. C. 1, England. The price is 2 shillings sixpence per copy. This is equivalent to 35 cents in U. S. or Canadian money. We suggest that U. S. and Canadian purchasers add 5 cents per copy to cover overseas postage.

The Book of Psalms with Music. This is the form of the metrical Psalter authorized by the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, copyright 1950. It is a cloth-bound book of over 350 pages containing the

complete Psalter (the 150 Psalms of the Bible with nothing omitted) set to music, usually with one tune to a page. Some of the longer Psalms are divided into two or more parts, with a tune for each part. At least one complete metrical version is given of every Psalm, while two versions in different metres are given of many of the Psalms. The book includes a brief topical Index of the Book of Psalms, "an Index of First and Favorite Lines," an Alphabetical Index of Tunes and a Metrical Index of Tunes.

Basically this book is the well-known Rous Version improved in its literary qualities and revised with a view to greater faithfulness to the original Hebrew text of the Psalter. It is not limited to Rous Version selections, however, but includes a good many from other, and more recent, sources. In the judgment of the present writer it is the best metrical Psalter available, from the standpoint of smoothness of diction and literary form, and scrupulous faithfulness to the original Hebrew. In particular it is comparatively free of the tendency, so conspicuous in some present-day metrical Psalters, to eliminate proper names (names of persons and places which characterize the Psalter as Hebrew literature) and to introduce into the Psalter terminology derived from the New Testament Epistles or post-Biblical sources. Thus such terms as Zion, Jerusalem, Salem, "the hill of the Lord," etc., are retained and not replaced by the "Church" or other New Testament terms.

Copies are obtainable from Mr. Chester R. Fox, Treasurer of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, Empire Bldg., 537 Liberty Ave., Pittsburgh 22, Pa., U. S. A. The price is \$1.50 per copy, postpaid. This is equivalent to about 10 shillings 4 pence. We suggest that overseas customers add a little to help pay the foreign postage. The volume weighs a trifle over one pound, and when packed for mailing the postage to overseas addresses would be about 20 cents or one shilling sixpence for a single copy.

Selections from the Book of Psalms with Music. This is a new publication just off the press. It contains approximately 65 selected Psalms or portions of Psalms, with appropriate music printed on the pages with the metrical Psalm selections. There are no page numbers, but at the top of each page there appears in prominent bold-faced type the number of the Psalm in the Bible. There is also a brief caption or title at the head of each selection, such as "God is Our Refuge" (Psalm 46), "Jehovah Reigns" (Psalm 93), "How Precious, Lord, Thy Grace" (Psalm 36). At the foot of many of the pages there are one or more texts from the New Testament bearing on the subject of the Psalm selection, and serving to bring out the organic unity of the Psalter with the New Testament Scripture. At the end of the book there are some suggestions for use, and an In-

dex. This book weighs four ounces and measures 5½ x 8½ inches in size. The binding is of paper which does not look very strong. However we have been assured, by one who should know, that the paper binding is tough and will stand up under continued use. It is to be hoped that this is true.

This book of selections is not intended to replace the complete metrical Psalter in the public worship of God. It was published to meet the need for an inexpensive book suited to informal gatherings, Sabbath schools, children's Vacation Bible Schools, young people's camps, and similar gatherings and occasions.

The price is 65 cents per single copy, or 50 cents per copy in quantities of ten or more and the book can be obtained from Mr. Chester R. Fox, Treasurer of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, Empire Building, 537 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh 22, Pennsylvania, U. S. A. The price for a single copy is equivalent to about 5 shillings (this includes 8 cents for overseas postage). The price on quantities would be 3 shillings 7 pence per copy; overseas postage on quantities would be about 5 cents per copy.

—J. G. Vos

Note on Darwinism — Yesterday and Today

In view of the fact that at least one reader of "Blue Banner Faith and Life," in reading my review of **Temptation and Sin**, by John Owen (July-September, 1959, page 166) understood the last paragraph of the review to refer throughout to the personal views of Charles Darwin, and also to represent him as a philosopher, your reviewer wishes to make it clear that this is not so. Darwin was a naturalist who developed a theory of the Universe, and in this sense held a philosophy. The philosophy described in the second sentence of the paragraph in question is, of course, the Communist philosophy manifest in Russia and China. But Darwin's evolutionary ideas, which were increasingly presented in an agnostic context, have, nevertheless, yielded a bitter harvest in Europe. Many find it impossible to believe that Darwinism has no ethical implications. Theistic Evolution is the speculation of many theologians; but how many leading evolutionists in the scientific world today are theists? Darwin in later life was not.

When Darwin's **Origin of Species** appeared, Professor Sedgwick, the Cambridge geologist

said that it was "a dish of rank materialism cleverly cooked and served up merely to make us independent of a Creator." He prophesied that if Darwin's views were accepted, humanity "would suffer a damage that might brutalize it, and sink the human race into a lower grade of degradation than any into which it has fallen since its written records tell us of its history." Darwin referred to Sedgwick as a prejudiced "old Bird" — but some old birds are wise!

Nietzsche was influenced by Darwin, and grumbled that he did not carry his ideas to their logical conclusion. He felt that Darwin's treatment of evolution was "no call for battle to prepare for the superman, but a sedative belief that the process of evolution will take care of itself, that our environment is automatically turning out better men, that natural selection is still going on." Nietzsche opposed Christianity because he regarded it as unbiological in nature — "Christianity is the reverse of the principle of selection. If the degenerate and the sick man is to be of the same value as the healthy man . . . the natural course of evolution is thwarted and the unnatural becomes law."

When Marx read the **Origin** in 1860, he wrote: "Darwin's book is very important and serves me as a basis in natural science for the struggle in history."

We are not suggesting that the Dictators and present-day Communists have applied evolutionary principles as Darwin would have wished — we cannot lay their sins to his charge — but we are unable to overlook the fact that Darwin's ideas have permeated modern thought — and the setting is no more theistic now than a hundred years ago.

The **Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church** (1957) states: Darwin himself became gradually more and more of an agnostic in religion." Those who wish to study the connection between Darwin's theory and his own experience, and the consequences of his views in subsequent history, should read **Darwin: Before and After**, by Dr. Robert E. D. Clark (Paternoster Press, 11 Great James Street, Bedford Row, London, England, price 10 shillings sixpence).

—Fred S. Leahy

Blue Banner Question Box

Readers are invited to submit Biblical, doctrinal and practical questions for answer in this department. Names of correspondents will not be published, but anonymous communications will be disregarded.

Question:

A textbook used in the public schools of

Pennsylvania at the present time contains the following statements about Presbyterianism:

"Presbyterianism is based upon Calvin's doctrine of predestination: the life of every man has been plotted out for him before birth. There is nothing the individual himself can do to win salvation. However he can lose it unless he fulfills his predestined role as a leader in God's work. This belief led to strict attention to work and duty. Dancing, card playing, and other amusements were frowned on as 'wasting time.'" (Page 131, column 2).

"Presbyterian ministers rode on horseback from one community to another preaching the religion of their founder, John Calvin." (Page 131, column 1 and 2).

The book from which the above quotations are taken is **Exploring Pennsylvania: Its Geography, History and Government**, by Sylvester K. Stevens, Ralph W. Cordier and Florence O. Benjamin, published by Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York and Chicago; copyright 1953 by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Incorporated.

What comment would you make on the above quotations?

Answer:

We shall comment first on the second, briefer, quotation. John Calvin was not the "founder" of Presbyterianism any more than Thomas Aquinas was the founder of Roman Catholicism, or William Blackstone the founder of English Law. What the early Presbyterian ministers of Colonial Pennsylvania preached was, of course, the Christian Faith founded by Jesus Christ. It is impossible to preach Christianity except in accordance with some interpretation of Christianity — the person who thinks he can do so is merely naively preaching Christianity according to his own interpretation of Christianity. Among the various interpretations of Christianity which have as a matter of fact existed and been held by organized bodies of Christians is the Reformed Faith, which received its classic formulation in the theological writings of the French Reformer John Calvin.

The longer quotation cannot be so easily dismissed, because it involves a whole series of erroneous presuppositions as well as actual errors of fact. One way to show this would be to rewrite the entire quotation so as to bring it in line with truth:

"Presbyterianism is based upon the Biblical revelation, namely the Old and New Testaments, one important feature of which is the doctrine of divine predestination, which teaches that God from all eternity, has foreordained everything that happens in space and time, including the eternal destiny of all His rational creatures. This doctrine received its logical formulation in relation to other aspects of Christian truth in the writings of Calvin. It is held along with the doctrine that man is a free agent who is responsible for his decisions and acts. Salvation is regarded as some-

thing of which God is the Agent and man is the recipient, therefore the individual cannot save himself, yet it is his duty to respond to the Gospel command by repenting of sin and believing on Christ as his Saviour. If and when he does this in sincerity, he manifests the fact that God from eternity had chosen him to be saved. A person who is truly saved cannot lose his salvation, but if any individual goes through life and finally dies without repentance and faith in Christ, he thereby manifests the fact that he had not been chosen by God from eternity to be saved. What God has foreordained is absolutely sure to come to pass; therefore there cannot be such a thing as anyone failing to fulfill his predestined role. Furthermore, there is no necessary relation between salvation as such, and being "a leader in God's work." Some, not all, Christians are predestined to be "leaders in God's work." One effect of this interpretation of Christianity was a strong emphasis on the ethical or moral life of the individual. Dancing and card playing were generally disapproved because they were characteristic of non-Christian society, while a serious attitude toward life implied that recreation should be engaged in moderately and temperately, not with the abandonment and excess which were characteristic of many persons who made no Christian profession."

The teaching of the true religion is ruled out of our public schools because of insistence on the principle of separation of Church and State. It is even reported that in one state a judge has ruled that the name of God may not be mentioned in the public schools of that state, as such mention would be an "establishment of religion." Meantime some extremely crude misinformation is found in public school textbooks, as the specimens cited above exemplify. It would be better to omit mention of Presbyterianism and Calvinism altogether, rather than to publish statements which are so far from fact that they amount to no more than an absurd caricature of the faith being described.

The authors of the textbook cited, in their statements about Presbyterianism, manifest the tendency to deal in mere words without any understanding of what the realities are. Any minister of any one of the various Presbyterian denominations in the State of Pennsylvania could have informed the authors of the textbook more accurately, so that their gross blunders would have been avoided. Even brief glancing through the Westminster Confession of Faith, or briefer glancing through the Westminster Shorter Catechism, would have shown the authors that Presbyterianism is something very different from what they have described. If a person is ignorant of a subject, the thing to do is to consult someone who knows about it, or a standard book on the subject. The **Confession of Faith or Shorter Catechism** would

have been the obvious source of information in this case.

We have examined the textbook cited at some length, and found it, on the whole, interesting, informative and well-written. On page 456 it mis-spells the name Westminster (College) as "Westminster" — a common error apparently

based on the notion that the name has some connection with the noun "minister", meaning a clergyman. It has no such connection, being derived from the Latin word for **monastery**. The treatment of Pennsylvania history was good, and the reviewer learned quite a bit from reading it.

—J. G. Vos

This Is the True God

By. F. W. Pitt

The Maker of the universe

As man for man was made a curse.

The claims of laws which He had made

Unto the uttermost He paid.

His holy fingers made the bough

Which grew the thorns that crowned His brow.

The nails that pierced His hands were mined

In secret places He designed.

He made the forest whence there sprung

The tree on which His body hung.

He died upon a cross of wood,

Yet made the hill on which it stood.

The sky that darkened o'er His head

By Him above the earth was spread.

The sun that hid from Him its face

By His decree was poised in space.

The spear which spilled His precious blood

Was tempered in the fires of God.

The grave in which His form was laid

Was hewn in rocks His hands had made.

The throne on which He now appears

Was His from everlasting years,

But a new glory crowns His brow,

And every knee to Him shall bow.

Blind Bartimeus

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Blind Bartimeus at the gates

of Jericho in darkness waits;

He hears the crowd — he hears a breath

Say, "It is Christ of Nazareth!"

And calls, in tones of agony,

"Jesus, have mercy now on me!"

The thronging multitudes increase;

Blind Bartimeus, hold thy peace!

But still, above the noisy crowd,

The beggar's cry is shrill and loud;

Until they say, "He calleth thee!"

"Fear not, arise, He calleth thee!"

Then saith the Christ, as silent stands

The crowd, "What wilt thou at my hands?"

And he replies, "O give me light!

Rabbi, restore the blind man's sight!"

And Jesus answers, "Go in peace,

Thy faith from blindness gives release!"

Ye that have eyes, yet cannot see,

In darkness and in misery.

Recall those mighty Voices Three,

"Jesus, have mercy now on me!

Fear not, arise, and go in peace!

Thy faith from blindness gives release!"

Only A Word!

(Author Unknown)

Only a word of anger,

But it wounded one sensitive heart;

Only a word of sharp reproach,

But it made the tear-drops start;

Only a hasty, thoughtless word,

Sarcastic and unkind,

But it darkened the day before so bright,

And left a sting behind.

Only a word of kindness,

But it lightened one heart of its grief;

Only a word of sympathy,

But it brought one soul relief;

Only a word of gentle cheer,

But it flooded with radiant light

The pathway that seemed so dark before,

And made the day more bright.



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And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

Exodus 12:13

A Quarterly Publication Devoted to Expounding, Defending and Applying the System of Doctrine set forth in the Word of God and Summarized in the Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanter) Church.

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What Then?

By J. Whitfield Green (adapted)

When the great plants of our cities
Have turned out their last finished work;
When the merchant has sold his last yard of silk
And dismissed his last tired clerk;
When the banks have rolled in their last dollar
And paid out their last dividend;
And the Judge of the world says:
"Close for the night,"
And calls for a balance—
 What then?

When the actors have played their last drama,
And the mimic has made his last fun;
And the movie has flashed its last picture,
And the billboards displayed their last run;
When the crowds seeking pleasure have vanished,
And gone out into darkness again;
And a world that rejected its Saviour
Is asked for a reason —
 What then?

When the choir has sung its last anthem,
And the preacher has made his last prayer;
When the people have heard their last sermon,
And the sound has died out on the air;
When the Bible lies closed on the altar,
And the pews are all empty of men;
And each soul stands facing his record,
And the Great Book is opened —
 What then?

When the bugle dies out in the silence,
And the long, marching columns are still;
When the millions of earth are gathered
From ocean and valley and hill;
When the day that has no morrow
Has come to the last, last end;
And the voice of God from the heaven
Says, "It is done!" —
 What then?

Linger Not

By Horatius Bonar

The time is short!
If thou would'st work for God it must be now;
If thou would'st win the garland for thy brow,
Redeem the time!

Shake off earth's sloth!
Go forth with staff in hand while yet 'tis day;
Set out with girded loins upon the way;
Up! Linger not!

Fold not thy hands!
What has the pilgrim of the cross and crown
To do with luxury or couch of down?
O Pilgrim, on!

With His reward
He comes; He tarries not: His day is near;
When men least look for Him He will be here.
Prepare for Him!

Let not the flood
Sweep the firm feet from the eternal rock;
Face calmly, solemnly, the billow's shock,
Nor fear the storm.

Withstand the foe!
Die daily, that thou may'st forever live;
Be faithful unto death; thy Lord will give
The crown of life.

I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes

By John, Duke of Argyll

(Based on Psalm 121)

Unto the hills around do I lift up
 My longing eyes:
O whence for me shall my salvation come,
 From whence arise?
From God the Lord doth come my certain aid,
From God the Lord who heaven and earth hath
 made.

He will not suffer that thy foot be moved:
 Safe shalt thou be.
No careless slumber shall His eyelids close
 Who keepeth thee.
Behold, He sleepeth not, He slumbereth ne'er,
Who keepeth Israel in His holy care.

Jehovah is Himself thy keeper true,
 Thy changeless shade;
Jehovah thy defence on thy right hand
 Himself hath made.
And thee no sun by day shall ever smite;
No moon shall harm thee in the silent night.

From every evil He shall keep thy soul,
 From every sin:
Jehovah shall preserve thy going out,
 Thy coming in.
Above thee watching, He whom we adore
Shall keep thee henceforth, yes, for evermore.

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The Resurgence of Arminianism

By the Rev. Kenneth A. MacRae, M. A.

Note: The author of this article is a minister of the Free Church of Scotland who has shown a deep concern for Scriptural purity in both doctrine and worship. One of the merits of this article is the able way in which the author shows the connection between corruption in doctrine and departure from Scriptural purity in worship. This material was originally published in Scotland in booklet form. The author has kindly consented to its publication anew in **Blue Banner Faith and Life**. It will be published, D. V., in two or perhaps three installments. — Editor.

INTRODUCTION

Calvinistic theology has long been associated with Scotland where, by preachers and people alike, it has been accepted without question as being true to the teaching of the Word of God. The advent of Arminianism on the Continent early in the 17th century had very little effect upon religious belief in Scotland, while, later on, the Arminian creed of Laud fell dead in the land. Moderatism, in spite of all its frigidness and legalism, did not tend to be Arminian, and for well over 200 years Calvinism retained its pristine supremacy. To tell the story of how Arminianism came to Scotland and attained its present place in Scottish theological life is one of the main objects of this booklet, but, before going any further, let us see what Arminianism really is and what are the characteristic features of its teachings.

1—THE DOCTRINES OF ARMINIANISM

I. The Universal Extent of the Atonement

The basic or fundamental doctrine of the Arminian system is its assertion of the universal efficacy of the death of Christ as constituting an atonement for the sins of all mankind, i.e., that Christ died a sacrificial death in the room and stead of every man.

In support of this contention certain texts are frequently quoted which, taken by themselves and given a literal interpretation, may seem to favour such a view. In this category one finds such texts as: "Who will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4); "Who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due season" (1 Tim. 2:6); and "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," etc. (John 3:16).

As against such texts we have a wealth of Scripture which goes to show that Christ's atonement was limited in its saving efficacy to those whom it was the Father's will to save, e.g.; "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48); and "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).

In the 17th chapter of John we find Christ speaking repeatedly of those whom the Father has given Him, and He makes it very clear that these were the sheep whom He had come to save. For them He prays and not for the world, for they have been given Him out of the world; cf. John 10:28 10:15; 17:2, 6, 9, etc.

Now it is an axiom accepted by all Christians that Scripture never contradicts itself; consequently these two sets of texts, which at first sight appear contradictory, must be interpreted in such a way that the apparent contradiction disappears. How can this be done? Simply by understanding the universal terms to refer to all the Lord's people in all ages and in all places throughout the world. By this simple and wholly reasonable expedient the difficulty disappears and there is no contradiction.

Besides the foregoing Scriptural argument which is quite conclusive, there are many other considerations which reveal the fatuity of the Arminian position.

If Christ has suffered as a Substitute for every man and thus has rendered for all a complete satisfaction to Divine justice, how comes it about that all are not saved? Surely if He died for all He died with the intention of saving all, else why die for those whom He did not design to save? If this then were His intention, how comes it that His intention was not realised? It is difficult to see how one is to escape the conclusion upon this theory that Christ must have failed somewhere—which for the Divine One is unthinkable.

Further, if He rendered a complete satisfaction to Divine justice on behalf of all, how can some be punished for sin over again? Those who are not saved must suffer the punishment of their sins, for that is what being lost means; but how can they justly be punished if their Substitute has already borne their punishment? This theory, therefore, directly reflects upon the integrity of the justice of God.

Again, if Christ offered up Himself as a ransom for all, i.e., everyone, why did He not see

to it that He would secure all? What was worth dying for—although we measure it not in the worth of the creature—was surely worth saving. What conceivable answer can be given to the question—Why did He not go on to save all those for whom He had laid down His life? To suffer for them was the hard and difficult part. As compared with this, to save was easy. Why then did He stop short?

The redeemed in glory praise the Lamb as those who were bought by His blood. Can it possibly be—and yet by the Arminian theory it must needs be—that the lost in hell can cry: “But we were blood bought, too, and it has availed us nothing. The price was paid for our deliverance, but Christ never came to save us. He bought us, indeed, by His blood, but either He omitted to claim us or the Devil made it impossible for Him to save us?”

One has only to dwell for a little upon the conclusions, which, of necessity, arise from the Arminian view of the extent of the atonement to be convinced that it is a conception which is most dishonouring and derogatory to Him who has wrought out an all sufficient salvation for His people.

II. The Rejection of Predestination

Following upon the foregoing fundamental tenet of Arminianism, by the inexorable law of logic comes the denial of the doctrine of predestination and of the fore-ordination of all things. No fair-minded person can fail to see this doctrine clearly revealed in Scripture. The first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians is full of it: “According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world,” v. 4; “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself,” v. 5; “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His Own will,” v. 11.

But the Arminian, because he cannot contest the mention of predestination in the Scriptures, in faithfulness to his own peculiar theories, must needs invest it with a meaning which the word was never meant to bear, and thus predestination in Scripture is regarded as meaning God's fore-seeing what will come to pass through the exercise of the free-will of the creature, in virtue of which He confirms and thus ordains what He fore-sees. But this is not predestination. It is simply a confirming of that which is fore-seen by the exercise of a certain power, which is known among men as the gift of prophecy. In fact, it is playing with words. If God fore-sees that certain things will come to pass, what need is there for Him to ordain them? If they are to come to pass they will come to pass, ordination or no ordination. And if God sees certain things in the future as bound to come to pass, what makes them bound to come to pass but His Own will? And if He has

willed them before they come to pass, wherein lies the difference between this and Scriptural predestination?

Hence there is no sense in maintaining that God ordains what He has willed; on His part willing and ordaining constitute the same exercise of His power. Although Christ as Mediator is a Prophet to His people, in the exercise of the God-head there is no such power as prophecy, for prophecy implies time, and there is no time with God. Consequently, the Arminian view of predestination is absurd.

Deny predestination and we are left with the uncertain fluctuations of time and sense, utterly bereft of both purpose and order — which again is absurd. To this extreme, however, Arminians allow themselves to be driven by the very logic of the position which they take up with respect to their view of the universal aspect of the atonement. The one false position constrains the other.

III. The Denial of Man's Total Depravity

Arminianism is nothing if it is not logical. Basing its system upon the substitutionary death of Christ for all, it feels itself under necessity to adjust all related doctrines in accordance therewith. Hence, faced with the question as to why all men are not saved, it proffers the explanation that those who are lost are lost because of their rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ and His salvation. This explanation, however, cannot reach the case of the heathen, who have never heard the Gospel and consequently have never rejected it. No explanation can be accepted which does not cover and account for the case of the heathen.

With the emphasis of Arminianism upon the responsibility of the sinner for his rejection of the Gospel offer we are in full accord, but the logically minded Arminian cannot rest satisfied with the Scriptural paradox—human responsibility and Divine sovereignty. To human reason these two dogmas can never be reconciled, but, since they are the declaration of Him who has constituted reason and who is reasonable in all His ways, we are content to receive them as the Scriptures declare them. Not so the Arminian. If, he argues, the sinner has a power of rejection when the Gospel is presented to him through the free exercise of his own will, it follows that he must have a like power of acceptance, and therefore the final issue must depend upon his own will.

This then is tantamount to a rejection of the doctrine of man's total depravity as taught in our Calvinistic standards. The Arminian may, indeed, admit the innate depravity of man through the Fall, but he will by no means subscribe to the doctrine that man has lost all ability of will to any spiritual good. The terms of the Westminster Confession of Faith are very clear—Chap. IX, Sect. III—“Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good

accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself or to prepare himself thereunto." These are terms, for the Scripturalness of which the Confession furnishes ample evidence in its proof texts, which the Arminian will by no means accept; for to do so would wholly cut away the ground from under his conception of the doctrine of saving faith.

IV. The Arminian View of Faith

The full-blown Arminian makes no secret of the fact that he believes that every man by nature possesses the faculty of faith, and that it lies entirely with himself as to whether or not he will exercise it. If he does he will be saved; if he does not he will assuredly perish. The issue is made to appear perfectly straight. Salvation is in his own hands. God Himself, according to this teaching, cannot save him so long as he, the sinner, is unwilling. Hence the appeal so often heard with Arminian preachers—"Let Christ save you!" Christ undoubtedly wishes to save, but it is a dogma in the Arminian theology that the sinner can balk Him. Hence, also, the strenuous efforts of many modern evangelists to get sinners to come to a "decision." To decide for Christ is the act which, according to their view, brings the sinner into salvation and constitutes his conversion.

A certain amount of lip-service may, indeed, be paid to the necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit, for the testimony of Scripture cannot be wholly ignored, but, in actual fact, His vitalising and energising activity is denied. By these teachings the work of the Spirit is confined to the presentation of the Gospel and of motives which may sway or persuade to its acceptance, but, so far as the soul is concerned, it is a work which is external. The vital, decisive work within must be done by the will, or it will never be done at all. Conversion, therefore, according to this theory, is not the work of the Holy Spirit, but that of the individual concerned. Until he makes that great decision he is told that the Holy Spirit is powerless to bring him over from death unto life.

That the foregoing is no overdrawn picture may be amply verified by the utterances of Arminian preachers and by the expressions and statements of their tract writers.

How different are the teachings of all our Calvinistic confessions and of the Word of God! These declare in unmistakeable terms that the sinner has lost all ability to spiritual good and that he lies dead in trespasses and sins. Saving faith is not a faculty common to man, but the sovereign gift of God (Eph. 2:8), and no man can possess it until it has been given. Instead of Christ having to wait upon the consent of the sinner—as per Arminianism—He maketh through the Holy Spirit a willing people in a day of His power (Ps. 110:3). Consequently, the credit for the

bestowal of life upon a soul hitherto dead in sin must pertain to God alone. For this Calvinism gives Him all the glory and praises free, sovereign grace; whereas Arminianism unblushingly lays the crown upon the brows of the creature. The teachings of Arminianism are, therefore, distinctly dishonouring to the Holy Spirit.

In view of the perspicuity of the teachings of the Word of God upon these points it is difficult to understand how Arminianism could ever have committed itself to its own peculiar doctrines were it not that its root heresy, its insistence upon the universality of the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, could not have stood alone without them. Let one false premise be adopted, the rest must be brought into adjustment thereto, and all these other doctrines which we have been considering are but the adjustments found necessary in order to give credence to the fundamental heresy. Once accept as established the conception of Christ as dying for every man and there remains no possible explanation for Christ's strange failure to save every man, but the conclusion that the lost are responsible for the tragedy by refusing to be saved. This, in turn, forces one on to the further conclusion that those who are saved owe it to their own decision to accept Christ in His offer of salvation. The whole system is strictly logical; the one doctrine grows out of the other, and, therefore, as the human mind is eminently reasonable, it has a great attraction for the ordinary man. Nevertheless, what may appear to be its strength may turn out to be its undoing, for it is so logical and so connected together that if one part be destroyed the whole edifice comes tumbling down. Were it less logical it would be less vulnerable. After all, if a religious system is to stand it must be more than logical, it must be Scriptural. Only what is in accordance with the Word of God will stand. And the Arminian system is definitely not Scriptural. It quotes Scripture copiously, but it does not treat Scripture fairly, for it does not hesitate to distort its doctrines to suit its theories.

We have seen then that Arminianism is sharply at issue with our Calvinistic standards, such as the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Shorter Catechism, with respect to such fundamental questions as: (1) the extent of the atonement; (2) the meaning of predestination; (3) the extent of man's depravity; and (4) the nature of saving faith. There yet remains one other doctrine which Arminianism, by the very nature of its system, is logically constrained to deny, i.e., the perseverance of the saints.

V. The Denial of the Perseverance of the Saints

That this doctrine is taught in Scripture is evident from such passages as: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands" (John 10:28); and "Being confident of this very thing,

that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). The declaration of the Confession of Faith is very clear:

"They whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved" (Chap. XVII.).

But Arminianism, teaching that a man is brought into a saving relationship to Christ by an act of faith on his own initiative, must logically go on to teach that his continuance in this blessed state is dependent upon the continuance of his faith. Should he cease to exercise faith then he must inevitably lose what he has won by faith. The Calvinist, on the contrary, teaches that Christ not only stretches forth the hand to save, but by the power of that same almighty Hand keeps all those whom He has saved. How different is this from the position of the Arminian, who teaches that the sinner is saved by the faith's grip he takes of Christ, but, should he ever relax it, he must inevitably fall away and be lost. To the believer, who has come to know that in the flesh there dwelleth no good thing, the Calvinistic doctrine is full of the sweetest comfort, whereas the Arminian theory, that the salvation of his soul must needs depend upon the believer's own retention of Christ by the power of his faith, must furnish for him an uneasy pillow to rest upon.

The Arminian system makes the salvation and well-being of the soul throughout the whole of life to depend upon the will of the individual. He chooses Christ to begin with, and he it is who chooses to adhere to and follow Him. Should the

believer renounce Christ in the last moments of his life under some terrific assault of the Enemy, according to this system, he would assuredly be lost. It is man—man all through. Christ provides the motive power, but it is man who drives, and, therefore, to him must pertain the supreme credit. Christ's part is definitely subordinate. Such is the Arminian system.

Arminian doctrines can be presented in a very plausible way, and, because of the logical nature, they tend to win the assent of a mind which has not had the advantage of a sound Scriptural training. In the days of our fathers, just because the people in general were well versed in the doctrines of the Shorter Catechism, the sophistical teachings of Arminianism had very little appeal. But in our day the situation is entirely changed. Scripture and the Shorter Catechism have been in large measure laid aside, and what saved a former generation from plausible and dangerous doctrines no longer is ours. It is, therefore, incumbent upon all who desire the preservation of Calvinistic truth in the religious life of Scotland to do all in their power to expose the fallacies of Arminianism and to adopt an emphatically positive attitude in the presentation of Calvinistic doctrine in these present days of spiritual unsettlement. Without knowledge the people perish, and sound instruction in this matter is long overdue. Today, even in avowedly Calvinistic churches, there is too much soft-peddling so far as Calvinistic doctrines are concerned, and it is no over-statement to say that some of their younger ministers in their presentation of the Truth border upon the Arminian position—a matter which may well give cause for serious misgivings.

(To be continued)

Sketches of the Covenanters

By J. C. McFeeters

Chapter XLII.

Young Life Under Persecution.

When the shepherd is smitten, the sheep will be scattered. When the father is persecuted, the family will suffer, the mother and children cannot escape. The fire that enfolds the oak with a sheet of flame will not pause at the more beautiful maple or the flowering shrubs.

God's Covenant with the fathers included mothers, sons, and daughters. It also embraced future generations. "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The Covenant of our fathers was their acceptance of God's promise on His own terms. The terms were these: unswerving fidelity to His truth, and steadfastness in His service. They who were true in spirit, honest at heart, firm in purpose, and con-

sistent in life, were able to enter into the deep, broad, marvelous meaning of the Covenant. The secret of the Lord was with them. The Holy Spirit came upon them with power, shed light, gave strength, ministered comfort, inspired hope, produced courage, wrought wonders. In their presence the wilderness blossomed as the rose; gardens sprang up in the solitary places; the apple tree bore fruit in the woods. The Lord Jesus Christ was with them in the rich abundance and wonderful variety of His grace; they dwelt in the heavenly places; glory covered the ground whereon they trod.

The children of the Covenanters, being included in the Covenant, suffered with their parents in the persecution, and received also the recompense of reward. A few of these lovely lives may be mentioned, but the fascinating story of thou-

sands will never be told. The few, however, will suggest the many. We look at a bunch of violets, then think of the acres of delicate beauty bathing in the warm sunbeams and fluttering in the soft winds.

The young Covenanters in those days confronted severest conditions and learned hardest lessons in discipleship. Sometimes they had to forsake father and mother to prove themselves worthy of Christ. Andrew Forsyth, verging on manhood, was required to drink this bitter cup. The family had not yet espoused the Covenanted cause. One day Andrew was entrusted with a flock of sheep for the market. He was over night on the way. As he lay that night guarding his sheep in the field, he heard solemn music. Following the sound, he came to a moss-hag, where a group of Covenanters were worshiping God. A moss-hag is a cut on the hillside, formed by frost and rain; and overhung with moss, heather, and other growths. In such places the pursued Covenanters often hid themselves. The cold grotto was their house; the damp earth their bed; the hole cut out of the hill without hands their sanctuary. Andrew listened with breathless interest. They were singing a Psalm of David. There followed an earnest prayer. He could not endure the suspense, but revealed himself to the little company. They received him gladly, and spent hours talking of Christ, His precious blood, His amazing love, His royal glory, and His unrivalled supremacy. Andrew was a Covenanter when he went home. His father was angry, his mother was sorry, and he had to leave. In a distant moor he made himself a bed under a booth of heather and moss, and supported himself by working for the neighboring shepherds. The dragoons heard of his affiliation with the Covenanters, and were quickly on his path; his life was ever in danger. One day they fired on him, but he escaped and reached his mossy den, carrying a bullet wound received from their fire. There he lay several days, suffering, bleeding, hungry, lonely and helpless, yet full of peace and joy in the Lord. Often did he think of his father's house, and his mother's love; of the gentle hands that had in other days smoothed his bed and made his bread; yet his heart bloomed with thoughts of love of Jesus Christ and His sweet promises. His religion had cost much, but he never regretted the bargain by which he had lost the world and gained his soul. At length a shepherd found him, and kindly ministered to his wants. This good boy lived to be an old man, whose grey hair was a crown of glory.

The young people often manifested presence of mind equal to those of riper years. Bessie Willison was one of those brilliant characters. Once she heard of a Field-meeting to be held under trying circumstances and resolved to attend it. It was winter; the ground was covered with snow; the place was distant and difficult to reach; the weather was rough; the journey was perilous; dragoons might be met at any turn of the

road. What girl would brave such hardships for a day's preaching? Bessie arrayed herself in her winter wraps, and started early in the morning. She was willing to endure hardness for the Lord's sake. She could face the driven snow, or sit on an icy stone, or laugh at the blasts that reddened her cheeks, in order to hear the Word preached by a true servant of God. She walked alone; yet not alone, for her heart burned within her while the Lord talked with her by the way. As the road led around a hill, she suddenly came upon a troop of dragoons. They drew up their horses, soldier-like, and spoke rudely to her; she replied with much dignity. They persisted in their vile language, taunting her and railing on the Covenanters. But even with their horses, guns, swords, and rough speeches, they were unable to daunt the lonely girl. Conscious of purity, and flaming with indignation, her eyes flashing into their faces, she administered a reproof that cut like a lancet. They shrank and made room for her to pass on without further molestation. What inspiration would come to the Field-meeting from the presence of a Covenanter like that! The Lord was with her, and therefore she brought joy and strength to others.

The little children, too, had their difficult places in Scotland's hard fight for liberty. The persecution still increased in violence. At length when for any reason a town had fallen under the king's displeasure, all the inhabitants were subject to punishment. On one occasion, the people had been warned of the coming of dragoons. The parents, not being able to take their children with them, and hoping the "bairns" would find pity, left them and fled to a hiding-place. The children were sharply interrogated by the soldiers concerning their parents, but gave no satisfaction. They were then led to a field and placed in front of the soldiers. This greatly terrified them, but they revealed nothing. The officer commanded his men to take aim. Up went the guns; the sight was dreadful for children; yet they would give no information. "Lead us to the hiding-place, or you will be shot," cried the officer. There were sobs, tears, and trembling, but no response.

"Will it hurt much, Janet?" said a little boy, as he clasped the hand of his sister.

"I dinna ken, Willie", replied the sister tenderly, "but I'm sure it will no last lang."

"Fire!" shouted the officer. The terrible volley flashed from every gun. Some of the children dropped, thinking they had been shot. The soldiers had been told to shoot over their heads to frighten and not kill. The officer, outmatched by the brave children, and we hope heartily ashamed of himself, led his men away. As they rode off, the children sang:

"The Lord's my shepherd; I'll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green; He leadeth me
The quiet waters by."

Their sweet voices mingled with the dying clatter of the horses' hoofs.

The young bridegroom and his bride were also involved in hardships that tried their souls. The soldiers that raided the country had equal disregard for old age, youth, and infancy. The mother, whether surrounded by a houseful of children, or clasping her first infant on her bosom, found no pity. One morning the dragoons surrounded the house of a happy couple, John and Sarah Gibson. They had come to seize both, whether to kill or imprison was not yet determined. John was absent; Sarah, seeing the troopers gallop toward the house, poured a prayer over her babe, as it lay asleep in the crib, and fled in terror, hoping that sweet infancy would appeal to their hearts. A ruffian rushed in, and grasping the babe, shouted, "The nurse is not far away." He made it scream, to bring the mother back. She heard its pitiful cry; her heart was breaking, yet she was utterly powerless. She might expose herself, but she could not help the infant. They carried it away. She was almost insane with grief. The soldiers, going back from the house, met the father, but he was not identified. They, being bewildered on the moor, compelled him to be their guide. He saw the child, but did not recognize it as his own. The officer, ashamed of the cruel deed, ordered the man who had carried off the babe to take it back to the house. He galloped off and laid it again in the crib. The mother quickly clasped

it to her bosom. That night the father returned. Telling of his adventures, he mentioned the babe he had seen with the soldiers. The mother, bursting into tears, arose and laying the infant in his arms said, "This is the babe you saw."

The young people are the hope of the Church. The congregation whose young people are loyal to Christ and true to the Covenant is greatly blessed of God. The Covenant embraces children, claims their allegiance, calls for their service, honors them with responsibilities, and lays at their feet the privileges and beatitudes of the kingdom of heaven.

Points for the Class

1. Does the Covenant of the fathers include posterity?
2. How did the children suffer in the persecution?
3. Describe the case of Andrew Forsyth.
4. How did Bessie Willison meet her trials?
5. Tell about the little children of a persecuted town.
6. Describe the cruelty done to the babe of Mr. and Mrs. Gibson.
7. What may the Church expect, when her young people are true?

The Puritan Principle of Worship

By the Rev. William Young, B. Litt., Th. D.

(Continued from preceding issue)

As a first reason for his faith and practice in this restriction of sung praise in worship to inspired songs to the exclusion of uninspired hymns, Cotton adduces texts which might on a superficial reading seem to support the contrary view, Eph. 5:19. Col. 3:16. "In both which places, as the Apostle exhorteth us to singing, so he instructeth us what the matter of our song should be, to wit, **Psalmes, Hymnes, and Spirituall Songs**; Now these three be the very titles of the Songs of **David**, as they are delivered to us by the Holy Ghost himselfe: (Some of them are called **Mizmorim**, that is **Psalmes**; some **Tehillim**, that is **Hymnes**; some **Shirim**, that is Songs, spirituall Songs.) Now what reason can be given why the Apostle should direct us in our singing to the very titles of **Dauids Psalmes**, if it were not his meaning that we should sing them? Yea, either we must exclude the **Psalmes of David**, from the name of Psalmes, and Hymnes, and spiritual Songs; or else we must be forced to acknowledge, that we are exhorted to sing them, as well as any other." (Ib. pp. 16 f.).

Observe that Cotton rests his argument on the regulative principle. He takes his reasons for

faith and practice "from the Commandment, or exhortation of the Apostle." The songs that are approved for use in worship are those appointed by God. Even the fact that the Psalms are inspired by God, significant as it is in indicating the content and character of songs that may be sung in worship, is secondary in relation to the fact that these are the songs which God has appointed or authorized for use in his worship. Sung praise is to be restricted in its content to Divinely inspired songs not simply because they are inspired and therefore superior in quality to be best of uninspired compositions, but basically because inspired Psalms and Songs are warranted by express command and approved example, while uninspired compositions lack such warrant.

Cotton devotes an entire chapter of 19 pages to a clearing of objections against his appeal to Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16. He remarks: "The objections are many, and some of them seeme more weighty, and some more light; let us unpartially and evenly (by the Lords guidance) weigh them all in the Ballance of the Sanctuary" (p. 17). Within the limits of the present paper, protracted as it is, the whole range of arguments cannot be

considered. A selection of arguments will be made with a view to illuminating some points that have been raised in contemporary discussions of the issue as to the use of inspired or uninspired songs in the worship of God.

One sometimes hears it argued "If Paul meant to enjoin the exclusive use of Bible Psalms, why does he write 'Psalms, Hymns, Spiritual songs' which would then mean 'Psalms, Psalms, Psalms'?" Cotton disposes of a similar objection: "If Paul had meant **David's Psalms**, or Scripture songs, it had been an easie matter to have named **Dauids Psalms**, or Scripture-songs, as **David** himselfe named **his songs**, The **Psalms** or **Songs of David**, when he delivered them to the chiefe musician, and to his company to be sung" (Ibid). Cotton answers, first, that it could be as well argued that Paul might have used language explicitly excluding David's Psalms and enjoining "such **Psalms** and **Songs**, as the Spirit should suggest unto their hearts." Secondly Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual songs are the very express titles of the Psalms in the Book of Psalms, and thirdly, David's name was appropriately set to the Psalms at their first publication but need not be mentioned in every subsequent reference to the Psalms. Cf. Luke 24:44 Acts 13:33.

To the objection that the expression "the word of Christ" is properly the Gospel, by way of eminency, in way of opposition to the Law given by Moses, Cotton gives a brief but apt reply "Through the words of Christ be the Gospel, yet the words of **David** are not to be shut out of the Gospel; for the Gospel was preached to **Israel**, when David and the other Prophets were preached, yea and some parts of **Moses** also, Heb. 4:2 John 5:46." (p. 19).

To the somewhat curious argument that "**Paul** biddeth the **Ephesians** to be filled with the Spirit in singing the spirituall songs of the New Testament, as drunkards are filled with wine, and in the strength and spirits of their wine, invent and sing their wanton Sonnets," Cotton gives the following instructive reply: "**Paul** did exhort them to be filled with the Spirit, as drunkards be with wine, not that they might invent, and sing spirituall Songs as drunkards doe wanton Sonnets; for neither do drunkards filled with wine, usually invent Sonnets, but sing such as they learned before, when they were sober; nor doth the Apostle speake of inventing Songs at all, either wanton Songs by drunkards or spirituall Songs by the faithfull; but only to be filled with the Spirit, as drunkards be with wine, that so they might avoyd the riotous and excessive mirth of drunkards, and employ and improve their holy mirth and joy, to the singing of **Psalms** and **Hymnes** and **spirituall Songs**, for their own mutuall edification and consolation, and for holy thanksgiving and praise unto the Lord." (pp. 19 f).

Cotton's interpretation of Psalms, Hymns, and Spritual Songs as referring exclusively to the in-

spired compositions found in Holy Scripture is standard Puritan exegesis. This is evident from the Commentary on Col. 3:16 by N. Byfield (4th Ed. London, 1649). "The matter is here three wayes to be considered: First, in the ground, foundation, or authority of the **Psalms** we use, viz. they must be the word of Christ, that is contained in the Scriptures. Secondly, in the kinds of **Psalms**: there are many sorts of **Psalms** in Scripture. The **Psalms** of **Moses**, **David**, **Solomon**, and other Prophets: but all are here referred to three heads; they are either **Psalms**, specially so called, or **Hymnes**, or **Songs**, great adoe there is among interpreters to find a difference in these; some would have **Psalms** to be the songs of men, and **Hymnes** of Angels: some think they differ especially in the manner of musicke. Some are sung by voice, some plaid upon instruments; but the plausiblest opinion is not to distinguish them, by the persons that use them, or by the kind of musicke, but by the matter, and so they say **Psalms** containe exhortation to manners or holy life. **Hymnes** contain praises to God in the commemoration of his benefits. **Songs** contain doctrine of the chiefe good, or mans eternall felicity. But I think there needs not any curious distinction: it may suffice us that there is variety of **Psalms** in Scripture, and God allowes us the use of every kind. Thirdly, the property of the **Psalms**, they are **Spirituell**, both because they are indited by the Spirit, and because they make us more spirituall in the due use of them." (Byfield on Col. p. 101). Byfield draws two uses from this text, "first for instruction, when we are merry to sing **Psalms**. . . Secondly, for reproofe of such as set their delight in fleshly lusts and sports, in dancing, gaming, etc. in singing of carols, balads, filthy rymes etc. . ." (p. 102). Byfield's metaphrase of the verse runs "And in speciall be carefull of the **Psalms**, remembering that they also are the Word of **CHRIST**, and the rather considering the exquisite variety of sweet matter in them. . ."

A favorite argument for the supplanting of Psalmody by hymns of uninspired writers or at least for the introductions of such hymns is drawn from Scripture references to singing a New Song. Psal. 96:1; Rev. 5:9; Rev. 15:3, 4. Cotton replies in considerable detail: "1. There is no estate and condition that ever befell the Church and people of God, or can befall them, but the Holy Ghost, as he did fore-see the same, so he hath provided and recorded some Scripture-Psalme, suitable thereunto. And these **Psalms** being chosen out suitably to the new occasions and new conditions of God's people, and sung by them with new hearts and renewed affections, will ever be found new songs. Words of eternall truth and grace, are ever old (as the Gospel is an eternall Gospel) and ever new; as the commandment of love is a new commandment as well as old. . . ."

2. **Dauids** exhortation to sing a **New Song**, pertained to them in the old **Testament**, as well as to us in the **New**. And yet they upon new occa-

sions sang the old Songs of **David**, and that with acceptance, II Chron. 5:13; II Chron. 20:21; Ezra 3:11.

3. **Asaph, Heman, and Ethan**, were men indued with an infallible measure of a Spirit of Prophecy, in enditing those **Psalmes**, which the Church of **Israel** received from them. Give us the like men with the like gifts, and we shall receive their **Psalmes**, as the Church of **Israel** did the other.

4. The places objected out of the **Revelation** admit a further answer, though the former might serve; the new song mentioned **Rev. 5:9-10** may either be understood metonymically for a Doxology or Thanksgiving, which the Saints in the Church should give to Christ upon occasion of his revealing a cleare exposition of the **Revelation**; or else, if it be understood, literally that they sang that very song, as it is there penned by the Holy Ghost, then it appeareth, that at such a time that song shall be translated into number and meeter, fit to be sung, and shall be sung by the Church . . . And thus, this place only sheweth, that it will be lawful to sing other songs, beside those of **David** and **Asaph**; but yet such only, as are penned by an infallible Spirit; or else upon speciall occasion, by men of spiritual gifts, which we deny not.

"The Song of the 144,000 followers of the Lambe, it is not expressly said to be a **New Song**, but as it were a **New Song**, **Rev. 14:3**. **New** to them who had been wont to hear the worshippers of the Beast to **sing** and rejoyce in their own merits, and superstitions devotions: And new also in respect of the renewed affections, wherewith they sang it: But yet the same ancient song which the sheepe and Saints of Christ were wont to **sing** even in **David's** time, of the righteousnesse of Christ, even of his only, and of their owne blessednesse in his not imputing their sinnes to them.

Thus **David's Psalmes** in the spirituall use and sence of them are new Songs or as it were **New Songs**, to this day, unto all that are renewed by grace. . ." (pp. 251).

Cotton gives the following exposition of the Song of Moses and of the Lamb: "The Song of those who had gotten victory over the beast (**Rev. 15**) is said to be the **Song of Moses and of the Lambe**, ver. 3. And surely the matter of **Moses Song** (**Exod. 15**) might justly yield fit matter for the like Doxology (or thanksgiving) upon the like occasion; As the like did fall out in the yeare 88. **Rome** being spirituall Egypt. **Rev. 11:8**. And the Pope with his Prelates resembling **Pharaoh** with his Task-masters, and the **Spanish Armada** marching forth with the like pride and fury . . . upon which miraculous deliverance, not only the matter of **Moses Song**, but the very words also were then fitly used and still may be for a spirituall Song of thanksgiving unto the Lord, both for that and the like deliverances.

And as for the **Song of the Lambe**, which those that had victory over the Beast did **sing**, surely all those Songs of **David**, which celebrate either his own deliverances from Saul, or the deliverance of the Church from Aegypt, or **Babylon**, or from other enemies may justly own and beare that Title. For when **David** acknowledgeth and professeth that in his **Songs** the Spirit of the Lord spake by him, and that his word was in his tongue (**II Sam. 23:2**) what Spirit of the Lord was that but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus? And what are then such **Songs**, but the **Songs of the Lambe**, through whose Redemption the Church and Saints enjoy all their deliverances? (pp. 27 f.). The Song of the Lamb recorded in **Rev. 15: 3, 4** appears to be compiled from **Ps. 86:8-10; 111:2, 4, 7; 71:22; 9:16 and 64:9**.

(To be continued)

Teaching by Parables

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

Jesus' well-known mountain discourse was a presentment intended for the disciples only and no others. But when, accompanied by the disciples, He came down from the mountain the multitudes were still there and immediately followed Him and the disciples in the way.

As the record shows, a certain amount of time was to elapse before the next great event of his teaching career. This would come in the form of a sudden shift to teaching by parable, when there would be a great outpouring of this form of address.

In the meantime, however, great and stirring events were taking place. There were important incidents and teachings, and great and good deeds came thick and fast. Each day was filled to overflowing with strenuous endeavor and great activ-

ity. The inner circle was enlarged and many new converts made. The twelve were chosen and appointed, commissioned and sent forth to extend, as it were, His own presence to many parts as yet unvisited and unevangelized.

The story of this intervening period is covered in **Matthew's** gospel in chapters 8 to 12. It is essentially the same in each of the other two synoptic gospels. One gospel adds material that another or the others lack and omits what another provides. **Mark's** account is the less fulsome of the three. For instance almost no attention is given to the content of the teaching as given in **Matthew 5-7** and **Luke 6** and **11**. There is difficulty as to the exact order of events, as a precise chronology does not appear to be a major concern of the writers. The teaching ministry of the period con-

tinues on the same course and in the same general form although with minor variations in detail. What is given is only representative of the teachings as a whole.

Interest centers largely in the miracles. It is to be observed that these are not just miracles but were given as signs of the kingdom. They should have convinced everyone but they actually did convince only those who were inwardly delivered from their natural aversion to the kind of kingdom Jesus preached. Besides this, and their place in Jesus' ministry of compassion to every kind of human need, they were also part of His teaching ministry. They not only manifested His glory but reflected the very inner nature of his work of salvation from sin on the higher level of His ministry to the souls of men.

Jesus Himself tells the story of His life and labours during this time in His reply to John (Mt. 11:1-6). "The blind", He says, "receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached unto them."

The record as given in Matthew's gospel includes the following. A leper is cleansed of his dread disease, a centurion's servant is healed and the man Himself commended for his faith. Jesus appears in His ministry to the minds as well as to the bodies of men as He treats first the weakness of an impulsive scribe and then the defect of an irresolute disciple. A storm on the lake is stilled as the Master demonstrates His dominion over wind and wave. Next a demoniac is delivered from not just one but from a whole legion of evil spirits. Now it is a paralytic, borne of four, who sees the look of exquisite tenderness on the Saviour's face as He speaks the word of His divine forgiveness; after which the man rises up at Christ's command, takes up his bed and walks back home again.

The series continues with the case of a chronic invalid who came from behind and pushed her way through to touch but the hem of His garment and be healed. Which reminds us that

"The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press
And we are whole again."

Now death itself is vanquished as Jairus' little daughter is restored to life.

Finally lost faculties are restored as the blind receive their sight and the dumb speak. After this was done, so the record states, "the multitude marvelled saying, It was never so seen in Israel." The examples cited are obviously only samples of the many great and good works of the Lord.

Everywhere throughout this story there are ever increasing signs of rising resistance both on the part of the leaders and to some extent among the populace. The enemy is obviously on hand

and actively engaged in aggressive opposition in the field. Particularly significant in this respect are the instructions given to the twelve as the Master sends them forth (Mt. 10). Recognition of His rejection by the nation as a whole is given in Matthew 8:11, 12. Whole cities appear to have been involved in the general revolt, and are upbraided for their impenitence and hardness of heart (Mt. 11:20-24).

The Pharisees take counsel against Him to destroy Him and inflame their following with the ultimate blasphemy (Mt. 12:22-45). Lastly even Jesus' own kith and kin are found to be involved in the growing skepticism and unbelief.

Jesus is faithful in His administration of reproof and correction. "An evil and adulterous generation," He says, "seeketh after a sign." And the "wicked generation" of His day is unfavorably compared to what others had or would have been. In all love and faithfulness He does not spare his defamers and detractors. There is attack on both sides; but there is more than a world of difference between His just judgments and their unjust and cruel aspersions.

"Light was come into the world" and still it appeared that "men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jo. 3:19). Light was feared and hated because it brought to light the hidden things of darkness in men's hearts and lives. "Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reprov'd" (Jo. 3:20). The rising tide of unbelief and hate was simply the violent reactions of the wickedness of men's hearts to the grace and the goodness of God in Christ.

And so we come to the story of the parables (Mt. 13, Mk. 4). It was a new turn in the teaching of the Lord, introducing a new phase in the prophetic ministry. It came as a swift and complete transition from one teaching method to another. Not that there was any essential change in the content of the teaching, but only progress in it. The Master was still expounding the things of the kingdom. The theme was the same but there was drastic alteration in the form. Previously the teaching had been mostly in the form of direct and simple statement. Now it was altogether and only in parables. As for the completeness of the change this was only for the time, although as time went on it issued in greatly enlarged use of this form all the way through to the end of His days.

The parable was a literary device which served as a vehicle for the continuing exercise of the teaching ministry. It served its purpose admirably and Jesus is revealed as a master artist in its use.

Not that there had been no parable before this first great day of parables. The "sermon on the mount" ended with a parable, and all the previous teachings had been enlivened and adorned by a liberal use of every kind of figure of speech. Figurative language itself was nothing new

but has always been common in the language of all men. God's Word itself is everywhere enriched and beautified with image, picture and analogy.

But as for Jesus' use, consider the artistic imagination in exercise in such terms of expression as "the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth." Or "they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns" and "they toil not, neither do they spin." Or "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Think of a son who having asked for bread is given a stone, or for a fish is given a serpent. And of grapes that grow on bramble bushes and figs on thorn trees. Jesus' deeper meaning and intent, we know, was always serious; and yet, even so, at times a touch of humor is clearly evident. Think of the play of the imagination involved in the comparison of the rugged John to a reed shaken with the wind, or to a man clothed in soft raiment, such as are found in royal palaces. And could anything be more ludicrous than a man with a beam in his own eye labouring to extract the mote from his brother's eye? Or a camel trying to squeeze through the eye of a needle? Or a man straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel?

But the day came when a striking change to parable suddenly occurred. The record states that "the same day went Jesus out of the house and sat by the seaside. And multitudes were gathered together unto Him, so that He went into a ship and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And He spake many things unto them in parables" (Mt. 13:1-3). At the conclusion of his account Mark says that "with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples" (Mk. 4:33, 34).

Those spoken on this first great day of parables were eight in number, plus a ninth which was added by way of application (Mt. 13:51, 52). These eight are as follows: - sower and seed, tares and wheat, seed growing secretly, mustard seed, leaven, hid treasure, pearl of great price, and net gathering all kinds of fish. Of these eight, five appear to have been spoken in public, the other three to the disciples in private.

The disciples felt that this new kind of teaching presented difficulties and very naturally inquired concerning the meaning of the parables. Jesus Himself was well aware of this and said "Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables? (Mk 4:13). And in the last, the ninth of the series, He indicated the fact that students of the Word would be working on their meaning through all the years to come.

Parable is a form of teaching in which, in the nature of the case, the meaning does not lie plainly on the surface. Thus interpretation is required and only the correct interpretation will give the meaning. In recognition of the difficulty

the Master Himself gave the disciples a send-off by giving His own interpretation of the first two of the eight. From there on He left the interpretation to the spiritual imagination of the believers as led by the Spirit.

In view of the special difficulty involved caution is surely indicated. It would do no harm to recall the saying that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." It would not be at all amiss to emulate something of the feeling of Moses as he was called upon to put off the shoes from off his feet. Surely, if anywhere, this is a place to tread lightly, to walk softly before the Lord and humbly with our God.

A general principle of interpretation is the recognition of the imaginative quality of the parables. As imagination entered into their production so also it is required for their interpretation.

It is in order to pause to admire the wonder and beauty of this literary form as employed by the perfect intellect of the Master Teacher. We can only marvel at the holy ingenuity in evidence and the artistic perfection achieved. Here is literary artistry at its best; the beauty of perfection and the perfection of beauty in literary form. Where in all literature is there anything to equal the parable of the sower or the story of the man seeking goodly pearls? Not to mention other later parables as the prodigal son and good Samaritan.

Who is there who in view of all the evidence can fail to observe that Jesus, along with everything else, was a man with the soul of an artist? He had a gift, if not for poetry itself, at least for poetic prose. He knew and understood the rules of rhetoric though it was not a subject listed in the synagogue school curriculum.

Each parable is a gem of priceless worth; not only beautiful but of more value than any jewel. But as we marvel and admire let us also carefully observe that as holy imagination was active in their production so sanctified imagination is necessary if we would interpret them aright.

Beyond this it is always in order to consult the great Bible interpreters. Especially recommended in Dr. Alfred Edersheim's massive work on the life of Christ. He finds three stages in the parables as a whole and points out that "they were all occasioned by some unreceptiveness on the part of the hearers." This view of the case provides a general clue to the interpretation. Dr. Edersheim further indicates that each stage in the presentation of the gospel in this form is associated with some definite advance, some distinct new stage in the situation relative to the opposition and the conflict.

As for the first series or group of parables, the view taken is that it was occasioned by the newly devised charge of Jesus' adversaries to the effect that "His works were of demoniac agency." A further factor in the case was the appearance

on the scene of His mother and brethren with their well-meant but unbelieving and misquoted affection.*

The net result of the parabolic form of teaching was that while the disciples went on learning and increasing in wisdom, the opposition was confused. For them, for the time being at least, the meaning was obscured. They were permitted to listen to some of the teaching and carry it away with them as they could. But as long as they continued in their unbelief in regard to the essential point of Jesus' Messiahship they could never know with any certainty what it was that the Master meant. Thus the parables served as a kind of temporary protective covering designed to hide the teaching from one class of hearers while it went on growing in the hearts and minds of the others (Mt. 15:10-17). The same teaching which came as bright gleams of holy light to the "insiders" were only "dark sayings" to those "that were without."

One point remains to be considered and that is the divine provision for such things as the parables in the basic structure of the world. God, in His works of creation and providence, has made the world in layers, so to speak. The universe is constructed in distinct levels or dimensions one upon another from the lowest to the highest. And yet there is a divinely constituted correspondence which pervades all levels. Thus the world was so designed that the lower should be available

for the service of the higher. In other words the lower level has been fitted out and furnished in such a way as to lend itself to the uses of the higher. The result is a certain suitability of the lower for the elucidation of the higher level.

Provision has been made for the expression of the higher in terms of the lower. This situation obtains to such an extent that it is possible to express in a way things which otherwise and in themselves would be quite inexpressible.

God is both a king and a father and yet infinitely transcends them both. The Lord Jesus is the Word made flesh, the Life, the Light of the world and the Light of Life, etc.; but the use of these characterizations illustrates the usefulness of the lower for the expression of the higher. So heaven is "a sweet and blessed country" a "city foursquare", and hell "a bottomless pit" and "lake of fire"; but we know that these expressions are essentially figurative.

So also with regard to the parables. They are every one true and teach truth but we never grasp the things they teach until we understand their use. They are pictorial representations and depend upon an inherent correspondence which extends through all levels of persons and things and joins all together in one world all of which is the work of the one great Architect and Builder - God.

(To be continued)

Women and the Ministry: Some Guidance From St. Paul

By the Rev. C. Stewart Petrie, B.A., B.D.

Note: This article is reproduced by special permission from the October, 1959 issue of **The Reformed Theological Review** (Australia). It deals with a subject which is increasingly becoming a controversial issue in the Protestant world. More and more of the large denominations are admitting women to ordination to the office of the ministry, as well as to the office of ruling elder. It is remarkable that the arguments advanced in favor of such a course are usually either based on expediency rather than on Scripture, or they consist of an appeal to general principles of Scripture as cancelling specific statements of Scripture on the subject. In the judgment of your editor, Mr. Petrie's article has unusual merit in that he argues his case, and proposes to settle the question, strictly and solely upon the basis of the relevant statements of Scripture. As ordination of women to the ministry and eldership becomes increasingly common in the Protestant world around us, we should be able to render an intelligent judgment as to the bearing of Scripture teaching on this

modern development. Mr. Petrie's article is recommended as a contribution to this end. — Editor.

Among the controversial themes in current trends of theological fashion, that concerning the ordination of women to the ministry is persistently being thrust into the foreground for consideration, as of paramount importance for the continued well-being of the Church. Any full assessment of the claims and implications that arise would involve excursion into the much wider doctrines of the Church and the Ministry, both of which themselves are in need of considerably more understanding and clarification if the prevailing confusion and uncertainty are to be resolved. For the present, the more restricted quest is undertaken of seeking such guidance as may be found in the writings of St. Paul, where he touches upon the position of women. For this purpose it is not proposed to discard any of the letters generally attributed to the apostle. The most confident denial to him of epistles such as Ephesians or the Pas-

*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah. Vol. 1, Chap. XXIII, pp 579, 580.

torals is largely offset by the acknowledgement that even these have a very strong Pauline background and content.

The apostle Paul has from time to time suffered many harsh things at the hands of his interpreters, the chief offenders, of course, being those who would seek his patronage for an issue already determined in their own minds, or those who for their own reasons are in any case predisposed to resent his counsel. Not least has he been maligned for the attitude towards women that has been wished upon him, an ungracious streak of misogyny being read into his occasional writings as its result. At best this sub-Christian outlook is either minimized or tolerantly excused on the grounds of his earlier Jewish upbringing and his inevitable subservience to the long-established customs of his day. At worst he is stigmatized as a forthright woman-hater, who was in pressing need — if the recently reported opinion of some who profess an expertness in such experimentations be correct — of psychoanalysis and consequent readjustment. But this is not new: even in his lifetime literal stigmata were not unknown to the chief of the apostles.

The charge of antipathy to the opposite sex is firmly refuted from numerous passages in his own writings, as, for instance, the cordial salutations to women given in Romans 16, the grateful recognition recorded in Philippians 4, and the high commendation offered in the early verses of 2 Timothy. Constructively, the dignity of womanhood is enhanced by Paul's noble conception of marriage, most tellingly set forth when he applies the figure of husband and wife to Christ and His Church, with great emphasis on Christ's cherishing the Church, in Ephesians 5:22-33.

In the search for guidance from St. Paul, it is essential to stress the precariousness of playing with isolated verses. If texts are simply listed and set off against each other in a nice balance of words, it is impossible to reach worthwhile conclusions. Thus, to call on single verses, we may observe that, whereas Galatians 3:28 declares that there are no distinctions of sex, Ephesians 5:22 requires wives to be in subordination to their husbands; and, although in 1 Corinthians 11:5 women apparently are permitted to speak when Christians come together, yet in 14:34 they are enjoined to silence. We must seek to discover whether there is a consistent teaching in which these seeming contradictions are resolved. In any case, it is to be observed that those who are most anxious to rely on solitary verses to sustain their cause frequently show much reluctance in attending to context circumstances.

A satisfactory understanding of Paul's standpoint in regard to women certainly cannot be gained from selected sentences treated in isolation. Besides, whilst he is not unready to offer immediate and concise guidance on specific points that arise, it is generally noticeable that Paul

judiciously avoids petty rules for trivial occasions. He will be observed rather to enunciate great guiding principles which his readers must be wise enough to heed and to apply.

One such principle is set forth in his great epistle of freedom to the Galatians. He brings his readers to see how, in contrast with their former state of pupillage under the law, they are now in full sonship. "Ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (3:26). Then he goes on to affirm, "There is no Jew nor Greek, there is no slave nor free, there is no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (3:28). We must not take from Paul the credit of so clearly enunciating this principle. But he is not alone in recognizing it. It runs through the New Testament in one form or another, beginning from Peter's perception at Joppa that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). Indeed, it is adumbrated in Deuteronomy 10:17. But of course it was in the life of Jesus that the theory was truly revealed in practice. We recall that His ministry of teaching and healing was to men and women without distinction, perhaps reminding ourselves specially of His attitude to women as shown in His interview with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (John 4), in the ministrations He accepted from certain women of substance (Luke 8), in His treatment of the woman taken in adultery (John 8), or in the joy of friendship that He shared in a Bethany home (Luke 10, John 11).

From his Master, Paul has learned that "In Christ" all are one. Race or class or sex precludes no one from acceptance into the family of God. Sex confers no spiritual preference. Men and women alike are regarded as persons, none having the right to special privileges, none handicapped by special disability.

Yet this emancipating declaration has been quaintly overpressed and distorted. It is quoted to enforce the view that in Christ immediately all differences literally and completely vanish. With this dissolution of all sex distinctions, men and women are at once in all respects on an equal footing, sharing without any discrimination the same activities and responsibilities. It is insisted that the only real equality existing in Christ is that which in its application at once resolutely and finally obliterates all differences of sex.

But this is thoroughly to misunderstand Paul's meaning. It is wrongly to turn oneness into identity. Paul is concerned with the spiritual status of those who are "in Christ." His principle gives special emphasis to the truth that God is no respecter of persons, that in Christ everyone, regardless of race or class or sex, has the standing of a person who is a child of God. This principle pervades the new life in Christ. It is not relaxed when Paul deliberately persuades the slave Onesimus to return to his master Philemon. Nor is it contradicted when Paul continues to observe the properties pertaining to the relationships between

men and women. The Christian community continues as male and female. It is not an asexual society whose members are unsexed as in Christ they are accepted into the family of God. But as men remain "Jew" or "Greek," without being compelled to renounce their nationality and live in some non-political state, as they may continue "bond" or "free" without change to their social standing, inevitably more so must they retain their characteristics as "male and female," even while they are accepted, and must accept one another, as "all one in Christ Jesus." For each is now in his own right a person, neither more nor less than a child of God, "in Christ Jesus."

Now it was the mis-application of this principle with which Paul had to contend at Corinth, and with which in consequence he deals in the first epistle to the church there, chapters 11 and 14. So eager apparently were some of the women to assert their new-found emancipation in Christ, to demonstrate their spiritual equality with men in Him, that they did at least two things that were not customarily attributed to their sex. Some of them had promptly discarded one of the most distinctive of womanly habits and had appeared in the gatherings for prayer with unveiled heads. Others seemingly had gone further by taking some speaking part in the public services, but whether this was by claiming the right to preach or by asking questions we cannot say with certainty.

Wherein lay the real impropriety of their behaviour? That the head covering was discarded in a city notorious for its immorality, when the woman who went abroad unveiled thereby unmistakably advertised herself as a shameless hussy, may be part of the picture, but it is not the essential part. In dealing with disorders in Christian worship — and obviously there were many in Corinth — Paul is concerned with much more than the observance of outward decorum. The covering of the head was of significance both as indicating woman's subordination to men and also, more positively, as marking her true sphere which was found in the home. So, by divesting herself of the covering, she was not merely setting herself on an equality alongside her male fellow-worshippers, but she was by her demeanour disdaining the womanly obligations which were peculiarly hers and which she alone could fulfil.

This is the first step towards undue self-assertion, and there went along with it a consequent depreciation, leading to avoidance and neglect, of her own essential characteristics. Paul is therefore at pains to deal with the problem in some detail. Later, in enjoining women to be silent in the services, he does not need to cover all the ground again, but insists that they be "in subordination" according to "the law." In 1 Timothy 2:12, a sharper tone appears: women are forbidden in this way "to domineer" (*authentain*).

To meet this situation at Corinth, with its hazardous implications, Paul is impelled to recall another fundamental principle which does not contradict his words to the Galatians but is complementary to what is said there. Whilst remaining true to his insistence that men and women are persons without distinction in Christ, he nevertheless refuses to ignore the God-given and therefore fundamental differences between the sexes, which in the Christian community are rightly neither belittled nor magnified. The precise details of his presentation and application may sometimes be difficult and even obscure for us, but there can be no doubt as to the general tenor of his argument. That Paul's direction may be unpalatable to those who despise scriptural guidance in this "enlightened" age is beside the point. Its truth is ultimately inescapable.

The basis of Paul's teaching is clear and unequivocal; "I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3).

Some who are disposed to accept Paul's teaching with qualification insist that here Paul is speaking only of the married state, and that consequently he did not intend any general application. It is argued that, since *aner* may mean either "man" or "husband," and *gyne* may mean either "woman" or "wife," the reference here, in conformity with Paul's teaching elsewhere regarding the subordination of wife to husband, is concerned only with those who are married. It is thus not a general statement for all, but should be restricted to mean, "The head of the wife is the husband." Some add their own grammatical rules to give support to the rendering. *

But this would appear to be against the required sense of the passage. "The head of every man (*andros*) is Christ." *Aner* is obviously used here instead of the more general *anthropos* in preparation for the antithesis with *gyne*. If *aner* in the second clause be rendered "husband," it should also be similarly translated in the first clause; "the head of every husband is Christ." Those who arbitrarily shift throughout the passage from "man" to "husband" and from "woman to wife" are hardly consistent and appear to be pressing some private interpretation.

In other places, Paul writes specifically concerning husbands and wives, but here he appears to be dealing with man and woman generally, not merely with husband and wife. Yet, as will be pointed out later, were the restriction allowed, it would not affect the main position. For the present, in any case, we may regard the relevant burden of Paul's declaration to be that "the head of the woman is the man," and, a little later, "the woman is the glory, i.e., the reflection (*doxa*) of the man."

*So. e.g. recently, R. C. Prohl; *Woman in the Church* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1957, p. 24.

It is generally agreed that Paul is appealing to the early narratives in Genesis, and so some consideration must now be given to these. In Genesis 1 we read that "God created man in his own image . . . male and female" (v. 27f.), to have dominion and to be fruitful and multiply. This is a general statement, but what it says is important: not just "man," but "male and female." In chapter 2 the story is told differently. There man is created first, and afterwards since it is not good that he should be alone, he is given a helper, "meet" for him, that, is corresponding to him, befitting his dignity. She is taken from his side, and he recognizes her as belonging to him: "she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (vv. 23-24). The significance of this narrative is carefully and fairly brought out by S. R. Driver, it being design-

ed, he says, "to set forth the moral and social relation of the sexes to each other, the dependence of woman upon man, her close relationship to him, and the foundation existing in nature for the attachment springing up between them, and for the feelings with which each should naturally regard the other. The woman is formed out of the man's side: hence it is the wife's natural duty to be at hand, ready at all times to be a 'help' to her husband; it is the husband's natural duty ever to cherish and defend his wife, as part of his own self." The events of chapter 3 do not change the relationship; they result in its being underlined and emphasized: "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (v 16). The implicit dependence of 2:21ff, is now made explicit. (The punishment of the man furnishes a parallel: although sentenced to toil for his bread, he had already been appointed to work (2:15) before "the fall.")

(To be concluded)

Religious Terms Defined

PERFECTIONISM. The doctrine that it is possible for a Christian, in this life, to reach a state in which he no longer commits sin. Perfectionists almost invariably define what they mean by "perfection" as something short of the absolute moral ideal which God requires man to attain. Thus they lower the absolute moral standard of the Bible, in order to hold that it is possible in this life for the Christian to attain it. In other words, perfectionism teaches that it is possible to reach an imperfect perfection.

POSITIVISM. The system of philosophy which holds that the only real knowledge is knowledge of phenomena, that is, knowledge of facts obtained through our senses, such as sight and hearing. This philosophy is destructive of Christianity because it teaches that it is impossible to have any real knowledge of God or of the human soul.

QUAKERS. A religious sect, properly called the Society of Friends, which arose in England in the 17th century and soon spread to various countries of Europe and to America. The chief distinguishing characteristics of the Friends are: (1) their Mysticism, by which their highest authority is the "inner light" rather than the written Word as such; (2) their rejection of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as unnecessary; and (3) their Pacifism, or conscientious refusal to participate in war. There are now in America several associations of Friends, with a total membership of about 125,000 people.

PROBATION. A trial or test of someone or something. The situation in which God placed Adam and Eve, commonly called the Covenant of

Life or Covenant of Works, was essentially a test or probation with regard to their obedience to God.

PROPIATION. A satisfaction of the violated holiness of God by the sacrifice of a Substitute provided by and acceptable to God. Christ by His death on the cross is the propitiation for our sins. All "theories of the atonement" which deny that it was essentially a propitiatory sacrifice are unsound.

REFORMATION. The great religious movement of the 16th century, beginning with the work of Martin Luther, by which the original truth and purity of Christianity, which had become corrupted by grievous error during the Middle Ages, were in large measure restored. The Protestant churches which arose out of the Reformation are not new churches, as maintained by Roman Catholics, but a return to the true and original Christianity set forth in the Word of God. The fact that the Protestant bodies do not have a formal history before Luther's time does not prove that they are new and therefore false. What counts is not mere continuity of organization, but identity of teaching with that of the apostles.

REFORMED FAITH. That interpretation of Christianity which gives full recognition to the absolute sovereignty of God and to man's absolute dependence upon God for every factor of his faith, salvation and life. Also called Calvinism.

REFORMED THEOLOGY. That system of theology which sets forth the Reformed Faith, or Calvinism.

REGENERATION. That supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which a sinner is instantane-

ously changed from being dead in trespasses and sins to being a new creature in Christ Jesus. In regeneration the dominant bent or tendency of the soul is, by the almighty power of God, re-created holy and good. In Scripture this is also called being "born again," "the washing of regeneration," "the new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17), being "begotten of God," etc.

REPENTANCE. "Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience" (S.C. 87). It should be noted that this definition involves the intellect and the will, as well as the emotions.

REPROBATION. That element in the eternal decree of God by which those whom He has chosen to pass by and not elect unto eternal life, are foreordained to eternal dishonor and wrath to be inflicted on them as the just punishment of their own sin. (See Westminster Confession of Faith, HI.7).

RESTITUTION. That act of justice by which we restore to our neighbor whatever we have unjustly deprived him of (Buck's Theological Dictionary). Our repentance will not be accepted by God unless we make proper restitution where it is possible for us to do so.

RESURRECTION. The supernatural event which will immediately follow the second coming of Christ, in which the bodies of all the dead shall be raised to life and re-united with their souls forever.

RESURRECTION BODY. The body as raised from the dead at the Last Day, in some way iden-

tical with the body which was buried, yet different in its properties; in the case of the redeemed, a body spiritual, incorruptible, like Christ's glorious body.

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. Christ's rising from the tomb on the third day following His death, in the identical body in which He suffered, but glorified.

REVELATION. An activity of God by which He communicates truth to men.

RIGHTEOUSNESS. Moral perfection, uprightness or virtue.

RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. The infinite moral perfection of God's being and of all His relations to His creatures. Also called the justice of God.

SABBATH. The day appointed by God to be kept holy unto Himself, which is, since the resurrection of Christ, the first day of the week, to continue unto the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath.

SACRILEGE. The sin of treating something sacred or pertaining to God as if it were common or profane.

SADDUCEES. A sect of the Jews in the time of Christ, who had control of the priesthood and temple worship, and opposed the principles of the Pharisees. They denied the resurrection of the body, the existence of angels and spirits, and the doctrine of foreordination or predestination. As a class they were materialistic, worldly and self-satisfied.

SAINT. The name applied by the New Testament to all Christians, meaning "holy person."

Some Noteworthy Quotations

WHERE THERE IS MUCH DESIRE to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making.

—John Milton

ALL THE PARTS of man's nature have suffered each their own peculiar injury by the catastrophe of the Fall, but it is those parts that have more immediately to do with God and His revealed will that have suffered most. And no part has suffered such a shock and hurt as the will. It is now by nature and in every unregenerate man turned away from God, and in bondage to sin and evil. It is not that man would do good, would return to God if he could; it is not that he cannot, he **WILL not.** "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." There was no hand holding them back, no cord binding them but the bands of their evil will. This is what is meant when learned

divines treat of the bondage and inability of the will.

—Alexander Whyte

GOD WILL NOT BE HONORED with exceptions, nor will He allow us to cut off from His law what is less pleasing to us. It is not said of a part of the law, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

—John Calvin

A MAN IS SPOTTED though he have only one stain; a cup is broken, if only the top be broken; one disease will make a man sick; and there are a hundred ways to wander in, but only one to life and immortality.

—Jeremy Taylor

THE SOLIDARITY OF THE LAW is such, that it does not admit of being broken in one point, and yet not in the whole.

—Henry Alford

THE KINGDOM OF GOD among men is nothing else than a restoration to a happy life; or, in other words, it is true and everlasting happiness.

—John Calvin

THE BEGINNING OF TRUE NOBILITY comes when a man ceases to be interested in the judgment of men, and becomes interested in the judgment of God.

—J. Gresham Machen

OPEN COMMUNION logically leads to open

church membership, and a church membership open to all, without reference to the qualifications required in Scripture, or without examination on the part of the church as to the existence of these qualifications in those who unite with it, is virtually an identification of the church with the world, and, without protest from Scripturally constituted bodies, would finally result in its actual extinction.

—Augustus Hopkins Strong

The Spanish Protestant Church Today

By D. E. (A Spanish Minister of the Gospel)

(Note: This article was written for **The Banner of Truth** (London, England). It is reproduced here from the January, 1960 issue of that publication (No. 19). Suffering experienced by any member of Christ's body concerns all the members (1 Cor.12:26). Let us, in the enjoyment of our precious God-given liberties, not forget our fellow-Christians who are suffering under grievous tyranny. — Editor).

ALTHOUGH for the last few years Spain has experienced a great increase of tourists and visitors from abroad, and the number of books written about that country, besides being many, are widely distributed, the fact still remains that very little, to say the least, is known about the Spanish Evangelical Church. Spain, the country of sunshine, has a dark side. A side where the sun does not shine and where the breeze of freedom is never felt. A side where Protestants are persecuted and the Romish superstitions are enthroned. A side where people die and die without Christ.

The purpose of this article is twofold. On the one hand we shall describe the struggles and vicissitudes of the Spanish Protestant Church, and in doing so the reader will get a glimpse of the "dark side" to which we alluded. And, on the other hand, we shall mention some of the internal problems, needs and opportunities of that Church.

Spain is a large European country with a population of almost thirty million souls. Of these, an estimated twenty thousand are Protestants. Because of a slightly higher degree of religious tolerance in the big cities, we find there most of the Protestant chapels. Practically all the Protestant denominations are represented; the Baptist and Brethren being the largest. For over a hundred and fifty years, the evangelical work was closely connected with England, to the extent that practically all the foreign missionaries were British. However, at present their number has decreased to a handful, whereas, the number of American missionaries has increased. We shall see later the repercussions which this American influence has been having on the doctrinal changes in the Spanish Church.

Compared with the total population the number of evangelicals is very small. From this fact wrong conclusions have often been drawn. According to Rome, this small minority proves that Spain wants to keep her traditional faith. To this we answer that the cause for this Protestant minority has to be found in the religious intolerance under which the Protestant Church finds itself, rather than in any fancied Catholicity on the part of the Spanish people.

In 1953 the Spanish government, a mere playing of the Catholic Church, signed a concordat with the Vatican. In this concordat, which is regarded by the Romish Church as the ideal agreement with a political power, the Spanish government agreed to undertake the support of practically all the financial needs of the Catholic Church: stipends for priests, grants for seminaries, church construction, all missionary activities, etc. Besides, clergy are immune from civil suit unless permission is given by the Church. All schools are under the obligation to teach Catholic doctrine. Priests have the religious control of the army, police, hospitals and orphanages. These provisions, and many others, give the Catholic Church a complete monopoly of Spain. It is therefore not difficult to guess the sort of regulations and laws to which Protestants are subject. They are not allowed:

To meet together for worship except in a small number of recognized churches. These cannot be identified by any outward sign or notice.

To open new places of worship.

To teach in public schools nor to have private schools to educate their children.

To be officers in the army nor hold any official post.

To marry outside the Roman Church if one of the couple was previously baptized in the Romish Church. In some places even funeral services for a deceased Protestant have been forbidden.

This crushing of human liberties, is based and justified on that which Rome calls "a privilege of the truth." By quoting a statement which ap-

peared in the *Civiltà Cattolica*—a Jesuit journal published in Rome—the reader will have a clear idea of what is meant by this “privilege of the truth.” It reads thus:

‘The Roman Catholic Church, convinced through its divine prerogatives, of being the only true Church, must demand the right of freedom for herself alone, because such a right can only be possessed by truth, never by error. As for other religions, the Church will certainly never draw the sword, but she will require that by legitimate means they shall not be allowed to propagate false doctrine. Consequently, in a state where the majority of the people are Catholic, the Church will require that legal existence be denied to error, and that if religious minorities actually exist, they shall have only a *de facto* existence without opportunity to spread their beliefs . . .’¹

We live in a time when people, particularly in countries of a Protestant background, show the most striking naivete in judging the Romish Church. For the Reformers, Catholicism was a serious threat, not only to the purity of the Gospel, but to the essential liberties of the individual. This is not the attitude today. To many the Romish Church is just another branch of Christianity, as good as any other, to be invited to join the great ecumenical family.² It seems as if a drifting away from the purity of the Gospel carries with it a certain spiritual blindness with regard to the enemies of the Gospel. Rome is, and has always been, an enemy of the Gospel. The Spanish Evangelicals, like the heroes of the Reformation, have learned this in the furnace of persecution and intolerance.

And now, turning our attention to the difficulties, needs and opportunities of the Spanish Evangelical Church, we are immediately confronted with a very disappointing fact: the Evangelical movement is not as effective as it was a decade ago. With the exception of some Baptist churches, the rest of the evangelicals seem to have lost a great deal of spiritual vitality. The reasons for this are obvious. Since the end of the Second World War the evangelicals have been under the influence of two theological currents, namely: modernism and Arminianism. These two represent a more serious threat to the Spanish Evangelical Church than Catholicism itself.

Modernism, in its Barthian form, permeates the preaching of mostly all the ministers and professors associated with that which used to be Union Theological Seminary of Madrid. The deplorable thing in this connection is that these men have taken over congregations which were basically evangelical, and whose members know nothing of

modernism, nor are in a position to unmask the doctrinal errors of their dialectical preaching. These congregations are falling fast into a condition of lethargy and retreat.

Arminianism, on the other hand, has introduced, besides the peculiar doctrines of its own, the so-called modern type of evangelism. Right after the Second World War, the Spanish Protestant congregations experienced what could be called an invasion of young evangelists from the United States. Their main purpose seemed to be no other than the training of the evangelicals in unscriptural methods of making converts. Great has been the harm done to the Protestant work in Spain by these new methods of evangelism. The doctrines of grace are hardly heard from the pulpit. A great majority of evangelicals have lost sight of the fact that conversion is a work of Divine Sovereignty. The person and work of the Holy Spirit has been relegated to a secondary level in order to make room for the free-will of man. There is no evangelical grit in the Gospel preached in many of the Spanish churches of today. Everything is directed to create an immediate response on the part of the unconverted. Sinners are demanded, not to say forced, to accept Christ on the spot. To achieve this end all the tactics of salesmanship are employed. Often even coarse language is used. The fruits of this false evangelism are obvious. It produces a crop of converts who profess a pseudo-gospel or soon become backsliders.

In spite of this modernistic and free-will influence, it must not be thought that the situation is hopeless. There are quite a few evangelicals who are discontented with the present condition of their churches, and who pray for a return to the Gospel and methods of the past. We have good reasons to believe that much can be done in Spain by all those who love the doctrines of Sovereign Grace. This could be done as follows:

1. **By establishing a Sovereign Grace Mission.**—This would involve the purchasing of a building to be used as a meeting hall and for the general headquarters of our mission. Here the Gospel of free grace could be preached on Sunday and Bible Classes conducted during the week. This building could also be used as a training centre for any possible candidate for the ministry.
2. **By the printing and distribution of sound Reformed literature.**—With a few exceptions, practically all the Protestant literature that circulates in Spain is decisively Arminian. We feel that through the ministry of the printed page the evangelical churches could be led into the truths of Free Grace.

¹Christianity Today, October 27th, 1958

²“We should like to see the churches of England, Scotland, the United States and any other countries, bound together in one body. If the Pope would like to come in as chairman, we should all welcome him.” — The Archbishop of Canterbury reported by the *Church Times*, May 31st, 1957.

Spain, in spite of the Catholic opposition and the great internal difficulties of the Protestant Church, is a country of countless missionary opportunities. The Catholic Church controls and rules that country, not by the will of the people, but by force. The great majority of Spanish people are Catholic only in name and they show a strong antagonistic feeling toward the Church. As a matter of fact, they blame the Roman Church for all the political corruption of the government and the poor economic situation of the land. Even among sincere Catholics there is dissatisfaction with the totalitarian methods of their Church. In many cases this dissatisfaction has doctrinal roots. Many priests have left the Church and others have been converted to the evangelical faith. Several

pastors and missionaries now preaching the Gospel in South America were former priests in Spain but for fear of losing their lives they have left their native country.

The bitterness which the average Spaniard shows against Rome changes into sympathy when he looks upon the small evangelical minority. He admires and respects their genuine convictions, he even shows interest in the teachings of the Evangelical Church.

A pure Gospel is a powerful Gospel. It is only with the preaching of such a Gospel that the foundations of the Iberian Peninsula can be shaken. It is only with this Gospel that the Sun of Righteousness will shine in that dark country.

The Word of God as a Means of Grace

(Note: The questions and answers at the beginning of each lesson are from **The Larger Catechism** of the Westminster Assembly).

LESSON 1

Q. 154. What are the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation?

A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to his church the benefits of his mediation, are all his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for their salvation.

Scripture References:

Matt. 28:19,20. The preaching of the Gospel, and the sacrament of baptism, appointed by Christ as means of salvation.

Acts 2:42,46,47. The word and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper are means of grace, used by God for the salvation of His elect.

Eph. 6:17,18. The word of God and prayer are appointed means of grace.

Questions:

1. Why does the Catechism speak of "outward and ordinary means" used by Christ for the salvation of His people?

These means—the word, sacraments and prayer—are called "outward" to distinguish them from the inward work of the Holy Spirit by which we are born again, sanctified, etc. These means are called "ordinary" because in ordinary cases the Holy Spirit makes use of them to bring about a person's salvation, although in special cases (infants dying in infancy; persons mentally incapable of using means) the Holy Spirit may bring about a person's salvation entirely by His inward work, apart from any use of outward means.

2. Are means of grace, such as the word, sacraments and prayer, necessary for salvation?

As explained in the previous question, these

means of grace are necessary in ordinary cases. They are the appointed way by which the Holy Spirit does His work. Therefore these appointed means of grace ought to be used with earnestness and in faith, if we would make sure of our salvation. However the saving grace of God is not absolutely tied to these outward means, as if the Holy Spirit could not work without them. We should avoid the error of Romanism, on the one hand, which regards salvation as absolutely dependent on sacraments, and the error of Mysticism, on the other hand, which regards the sacraments and other outward means as unnecessary and without value. Our Catechism sets forth the exact truth as presented in the Bible, namely that the word, sacraments and prayers are "the outward and ordinary means" by which God's elect are brought to salvation.

3. What benefits come to us by the use of the word, sacraments and prayer?

The benefits of Christ's mediation; that is, all the benefits and blessings which Christ purchased for His people through His perfect life and His sufferings and death on the cross. These benefits include the sum total of all that is good and valuable, for all eternity. We are made "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:16, 17).

4. What does the Catechism mean by "the word"?

By "the word" the Catechism means the Holy Bible, the written Word of God, and the message of truth about God, man and salvation which the Bible presents. Of course a person can be saved without having actually read the Bible itself, provided certain truths of the Bible have become known to him. But it would hardly be possible to overrate the importance of the Bible itself as

a book. All real knowledge of the way of salvation can be traced back to the written Word of God.

5. What does the Catechism mean by "the sacraments"?

By "the sacraments" the Catechism means Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These only were appointed by Christ, and therefore these are the only true sacraments. Those added by the Church of Rome are not sacraments. Part of them (such as marriage and ordination) are divine ordinances; part of them (such as penance and extreme unction) are human inventions or corruptions of the worship of God. But only Baptism and the Lord's Supper are sacraments.

6. What does the Catechism mean by "prayer"?

By "prayer" the Catechism means CHRISTIAN PRAYER. There are two things necessary to make a prayer a Christian prayer: (1) It must be a prayer addressed to the true God, the God revealed in the Bible; (2) It must be a prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, who is the only real way to approach to the throne of God. Thus prayers to the gods of the heathen religions, and prayers to the Virgin Mary, the saints and angels, etc. are both useless and wrong; and any prayer which attempts to reach God's presence directly

without faith in Christ as Mediator, is not a Christian prayer.

7. To whom are the means of grace made effectual for salvation?

To the elect of God. Acts 2:47. Those whom God has foreordained to eternal life, He will, sooner or later, bring out of their sin into a state of salvation. In ordinary cases, this is accomplished by means of the word, sacraments and prayer. The fact that a person is really in earnest about using these means of grace is a sign that the Holy Spirit is working in that person toward bringing about his salvation.

8. Since the Holy Spirit makes these means of grace effectual for the salvation of the elect, is it necessary for us to make any effort ourselves to use the means of grace?

Yes. The Bible commands us to use the means of grace diligently. We are not to wait for some special impulse, but to avail ourselves of the appointed means of grace immediately, without delay, and continuously. It is true that a harvest of grain depends on rain and sunlight, which only God can provide; but that is no excuse for neglecting to plant the seed, which God expects men to do. Faith in the Holy Spirit and His work is no excuse for spiritual laziness, or neglect of the use of appointed means.

LESSON 2

Q. 155. How is the word made effectual to salvation?

A. The Spirit of God maketh the reading but especially the preaching of the word an effectual means of enlightening, convincing and humbling sinners; of driving them out of themselves, and drawing them unto Christ; of conforming them to his image, and subduing them to his will; of strengthening them against temptations and corruptions; of building them up in grace, and establishing their hearts in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation.

Scripture References:

Neh. 8:8. Acts 26:18. Psalms 19:8. The Word of God is used by the Holy Spirit for enlightening sinners, that is, imparting to them a knowledge of the truth.

1 Cor. 14:24, 25. 2 Chron. 34:18, 19, 26-28. The Spirit uses the Word for convincing and humbling sinners.

Acts 2:37, 41; 8:27-39. The Word is used by the Spirit to drive sinners out of themselves, and draw them to Christ.

2 Cor. 10:4-6. Rom. 6:17. Believers are to be subdued to Christ's will by the power of the Spirit, who works through the Word.

Matt. 4:4,7,10. Eph. 6:16,17. Psalms 19:11. 1 Cor. 10:11. By means of the Word of God, the Holy Spirit strengthens God's people against temptations and corruptions.

Acts 20:32. 2 Tim. 3:15-17. 1 Thess. 3:2,10,11, 13. Rom. 1:16; 10:13-17; 15:4; 16:25. Through the whole course of the believer's life, until he finally enters the state of glory, the Holy Spirit uses the Word as a means for his spiritual development and progress.

Questions:

1. What do the first five words of the answer to Q. 155 teach us?

The first five words are: "The Spirit of God maketh . . .". These words teach us that the Bible or the Word of God does not have any INHERENT power of its own, apart from the inward work of the Holy Spirit in a person's heart, to accomplish anything toward a person's salvation. It is of course not impossible for the Spirit, in special cases, to work apart from the Word (see the Confession of Faith, Chap. X, Section 3). But the Word by itself alone, without the inward, saving work of the Holy Spirit, can NEVER bring about any step in the salvation of a person. The Spirit is not helpless without the Word, but the Word is useless for salvation without the Spirit.

2. Can the Bible not accomplish any good apart from the special work of the Holy Spirit?

Yes. Apart from the saving work of the Holy Spirit, the Bible may, by God's common grace (His grace which is not limited to the elect, but is given to the elect and the reprobate in common), have the effect of restraining sin, stirring up people's consciences to a certain extent, and promoting what is called "civic righteousness", that is, ordinary virtues in the sphere of human society. For example, a man might read the Ten Commandments, and as a result decide not to commit a murder or theft that he had been planning. This would not contribute anything to his salvation, but it would make the world a more tolerable place to live in.

3. If the Word of God by itself alone cannot accomplish anything toward the salvation of human beings, is there any use in publishing and circulating the Scriptures far and wide as is done by the American Bible Society and similar organizations?

Yes. Circulating the Scriptures is scattering the seed. It is true that apart from the saving work of the Holy Spirit the seed can never spring to life and lead to salvation, but we can never know when and where the Holy Spirit will use Scripture portions that have been circulated to bring about the salvation of souls. Men have been converted to Christ by reading Bibles placed in hotel rooms by the Gideons, and by reading small portions of the Bible printed on thin, cheap paper and circulated on foreign mission fields.

4. What two methods of using the Word of God does the Holy Spirit make use of to bring about the salvation of sinners?

(a) The reading of the Word. (b) The preaching of the Word.

5. Which of these two methods is especially used by the Spirit?

The preaching of the Word is the method especially used by the Spirit, though of course the Spirit uses both methods, sometimes in combination and sometimes separately. We see this illustrated in the account of Philip and the Ethiopian (Acts 8:27-39). The Ethiopian had been reading the Scripture, and had no doubt gotten some light from it, but he was still in a confused state of mind, as his question addressed to Philip revealed. When Philip sat down in the chariot with him and "preached unto him Jesus", his confusion was cleared away, and the Holy Spirit used the Word for his salvation.

6. Why is the special work of the Holy Spirit

absolutely necessary if the Word of God is to lead to a person's salvation?

Because by nature we are alienated from God and dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1). Because of our natural corruption and total spiritual deadness or helplessness, the life-giving and life-sustaining work of the Holy Spirit must accompany the Word if salvation is to result.

7. In what experiences of the Christian life does the Holy Spirit make use of the Word to bring about a person's salvation?

The Spirit uses the Word as a means of grace in every stage and phase of the process of salvation, from the new birth to the believer's entrance upon the state of glory at death. The believer's soul being at death "made perfect in holiness" is of course accomplished solely by the almighty power of the Holy Spirit, apart from the Word. So also the final stage of salvation, the resurrection of the body at the Last Day, will be accomplished directly by the Holy Spirit apart from the use of the Word as a means (Rom. 8:11). It is true that we read, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first . . ." (1 Thess. 4:19), but this "shout" is not the use of the Word (Scripture) as a means, but a NEW word of Jesus Christ at His second coming, at which the dead shall rise. Therefore those final stages of the process of salvation which take place after death are accomplished apart from the use of Scripture as a means. But for every part of the saving process in this life, from beginning to end, the Spirit's ordinary way of working is by the use of the Word as a means of grace. (Regeneration, or the New Birth, is a supernatural act of the Holy Spirit wrought directly in the human soul, not by the use of means but by the direct, creative power of God. In this experience the human soul is as passive as it was in its own creation. However Regeneration is always accompanied by the Holy Spirit's use of the Word as a means of grace, by which the person is convicted of his sins, given an understanding of the way of salvation, etc. There are two exceptions to this use of the Word by the Holy Spirit to accompany the act of regeneration, namely (1) infants, who because of their immaturity are incapable of knowledge of the truth; and (2) the insane and mentally deficient, who by reason of their mental abnormality are incapable of knowledge of the truth. See the Confession of Faith. Chap. X, Section 3. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit even before he was born (Luke 1:15); in such a case Regeneration clearly must have taken place without being accompanied by the use of the Word by the Holy Spirit).

LESSON 3

Q. 156. Is the word of God read by all?

A. Although all are not to be permitted to

read the word publicly to the congregation, yet all sorts of people are bound to read it apart by themselves, and with their families: to which

end the holy scriptures are to be translated out of the original into vulgar languages.

Scripture References:

Deut. 31:9-13. Neh. 8:2, 3;9:3-5. Reading the Word of God publicly to the congregation is a duty of those especially called as ministers of the Word.

Deut. 17:19. Rev. 1:3. John 5:39. Isa. 34:16. All classes of people are bound to read the Word of God privately.

Deut. 6:6-9. Gen. 18:17,19. Psalm 78:5-7. The duty of reading the Word of God in the family.

1 Cor. 14:6, 9-12,15,16,24,27,28. As the Scripture would be useless in an unknown language, we infer that it is to be translated into the various languages in common use by the people of the world.

Questions:

1. Why are not all Christian people "to be permitted to read the word publicly to the congregation"?

Reading the Scripture "publicly to the congregation" is a part of conducting the public worship of God and therefore it is to be done only by those who have been properly called to that office in the Church. Of course in the absence of an ordained minister or licentiate, the elders of the Church may properly appoint some person to read the Scripture and conduct a prayer meeting or "fellowship meeting". What the Catechism denies is that any private Christian may lawfully take it upon himself to conduct public worship, without being appointed to do so by those whose office it is to rule the house of God.

2. What classes of people are under obligation to read the Scriptures privately?

All classes of people, everywhere in the world where the Scriptures have been circulated. To read the Bible is not only a duty of Christians or Church members, but of all people whatever who are old enough to be able to read.

3. If a person has never learned to read, is it his duty to read the Bible?

Yes. A person who has never learned to read should realize that it is his Christian duty to learn to read, so that he may read and study the Word of God. The fact that God has given us His Word in written form implies that it is the duty of all people to learn to read, that they may read the Scripture. Modern experiences on many foreign mission fields proves that there are practically no people who cannot learn to read. It is worthy to note, too, that the spread of the Gospel in mission lands is accompanied and followed by a remarkable increase of literacy, or the ability to read and write. Even many persons

past middle age have learned to read a script as difficult as that of China, that they might read the Bible for themselves. On many mission fields it is considered a shame for a Church member to be unable to read.

4. Why do we believe that the Word of God is to be read in the family circle?

As the family is the basic unit of human society, so too the family is the basic unit in God's Covenant of Grace. It is through the Christian family that the body of God's covenant people is perpetuated from generation to generation. Parents together with their children are participants in this Covenant of Grace. Therefore the Christian family is a covenant institution, and has covenant obligations as well as covenant promises and covenant blessings. Among these obligations is the obligation to maintain family worship. Of course family worship could be carried on without the actual reading of the written Bible, as was no doubt often necessary before the invention of the art of printing. But since in the providence of God the Word is available to all in printed form, it is obvious that family worship is greatly facilitated and also rendered more effective by the reading of the printed Bible. (See also "Blue Banner Faith and Life", Vol. 1, No. 7, July-September, 1946, pages 138-139, "Is the practice of family worship commanded in the Bible, and if so, where?")

5. What is the meaning of the expression "vulgar languages"?

This expression, which might easily be misunderstood, means simply the ordinary living languages in common use by the peoples of the world. The word "vulgar" has come to have the meaning of "lacking in refinement or good taste", but in the Catechism it simply means "ordinary" or "common". English, French, German, Chinese, etc., are "vulgar languages" in the sense intended by the Catechism.

6. Why must the Bible be translated into modern languages?

The Old Testament was written in the Hebrew language, which at the time of the writing was the common language of the covenant people of God; and the New Testament was written in Greek, which at the time of writing was the language most widely known in the Roman world. Today these languages are known only to the comparatively few who have made a special effort to learn them. The Bible is a message for all mankind, and the Gospel which it contains is to be proclaimed to all nations. The Great Commission cannot be carried out adequately without translating the Bible into the various languages of the world. This work of Scripture translation has been going on since very early times, but by far the greatest progress has been made during the past 100 years. Today the Word of God, in whole or in part, speaks to men in more

than one thousand languages and dialects. This great achievement has been accomplished by the toil of multitudes of missionaries working in co-

operation with the great Bible societies of the world. Today the Bible is diffused through the world as never before.

LESSON 4

Q. 157. How is the word of God to be read?

A. The holy scriptures are to be read with a high and reverent esteem of them; with a firm persuasion that they are the very word of God, and that he only can enable us to understand them; with desire to know, believe, and obey the will of God revealed in them; with diligence, and attention to the matter and scope of them; with meditation, application, self-denial, and prayer.

Scripture References:

Psalm 19:10. Neh. 8:3-10. Ex. 24:7. 2 Chron. 34:27. Isa. 66:2. We are to read the Scriptures with a high and reverent esteem of them.

2 Pet. 1:19-21. We are to read the Scriptures with a firm faith that they really are the Word of God.

Luke 24:45. 2 Cor. 3:13-16. In reading the Bible, we are to realize that only God can enable us really to understand it.

Deut. 17:19,20. We are to read the Bible with a real desire to know and obey the will of God revealed in it.

Acts 17:11. The Word of God is to be read with diligence.

Acts 8:30,34. Luke 10:26-28. We are to pay attention to "the matter and scope" of the Scriptures, that we may grasp their true meaning.

Psalm 1:2; 119:97. The Word of God is to be read with meditation.

2 Chron. 34:21. In reading the Word of God, we are to apply it to our own selves, that is, to seek to discern its bearing on our own lives and needs.

Prov. 3:5. Deut. 33:3. We are to read the Word of God with self-denial; that is, we are to be willing to give up our own opinions, preferences and prejudices, and to accept and obey the will of God instead of our own ideas.

Prov. 2:1-6. Psalm 119:18. Neh. 8:6,8. The reading of the Word of God is to be accompanied with prayer.

Questions:

1. What is meant by reading the Scriptures "with a high and reverent esteem of them"?

This means that in reading the Bible we should do so with an attitude different from that which we would have toward any other book. The Bible is the only source of saving truth; all

other religious books, in so far as they present the truth, are based on the Bible. The Bible is the standard by which all other books are to be judged; in reading them, we are always to do so with an attitude of reserve and caution, accepting their statements only in so far as we find them to be in accordance with the teachings of the Bible. We may never commit ourselves implicitly, or without reservation, to any book but the Bible. In reading the Bible, on the other hand, we are to commit ourselves to it implicitly, without any reservation whatsoever. Many people who have the outward appearance of reverence and piety in their handling of the Bible are in point of fact extremely irreverent in their attitude toward it. A minister once said, "We must not accept all the teachings of Jesus, but only those of His teachings which we find to be true". Such an attitude toward the Bible is blasphemously irreverent; it amounts to placing our own human reason above the Word of God, and accepting only those teachings of God's Word which agree with our own reason. We may never regard the Bible as a mixture of truth and error; we may never try to decide what teachings of the Bible are true. We are to accept all the teachings of the Bible as true, and to judge and measure the teachings of all other books, and the opinions and judgments of human reason, by the Scriptures. We may of course have doubts or difficulties in ascertaining what is the true meaning of a text or portion of Scripture; but we must always commit ourselves without reserve to the true meaning, whatever it may be. That is to say, our attitude toward the Bible must always be a wholly RECEPTIVE attitude, never a hesitant or CRITICAL attitude.

2. Are we to regard the Scriptures as the word of men, or the Word of God?

We are to realize, of course, that every word in the Scriptures was written by men. At the same time we are to understand that the real Author of the Bible is God the Holy Spirit. Consequently we are to read the Bible with a firm conviction that it is "the very Word of God". The fact that a particular portion of the Bible was penned by Moses, Isaiah or Paul is a minor, secondary consideration; the important thing is that God is the real Author of it and that it is really the Word of God.

3. How does modern religious "liberalism" undermine people's faith that the Scriptures are the very Word of God?

Modern religious "liberalism" does not believe that the Bible as a whole, in the entirety of its content and teachings, is the Word of God. It

holds that the Bible is a human book which, however, "contains" the Word of God; that is, the Bible is partly the Word of God and partly the word of man. Since the human mind must decide which statements of the Bible are the Word of God and which are only the word of man, this viewpoint really amounts to enthroning the human faculty of reason as the real authority for faith and life. If we must pick and choose among the contents of the Bible, accepting one statement and rejecting another, then obviously the Bible is no longer our real standard. Only when we accept all that the Bible teaches, without question, as the Word of God, do we really regard the Bible as our standard.

4. What currently popular religious viewpoint subtly destroys the authority of the Bible as the Word of God?

The comparatively new brand of theology called "Barthianism", which has been developed by the Swiss theologians Karl Barth and Emil Brunner and their many disciples. This new theology is also called "the theology of crisis", "neo-orthodoxy" and "the dialectical theology". It denies that the Bible, as a written book, is really the Word of God. At the same time the Barthian theology teaches that any statement of the Bible may BECOME the Word of God to a person when it grips that person's conscience or comes home to that person as a revelation of God's will. This makes the authority of the Bible depend, not on the fact that the Bible itself, as a book, is the inspired Word of God, but on human experience in connection with the Bible. Barthianism adheres to the "higher critical" theories about the Bible; it holds that many statements of the Bible are not true in their common, plain meaning; and yet it tries to hold on to the Bible as an instrument by means of which the Word of God takes hold of people. In spite of its current popularity, "neo-orthodoxy" must be adjudged to be extremely dangerous and unsound.

5. Why is it true that only God can enable us to understand the Scriptures aright?

Because the human mind is darkened and clouded by sin, so that it is not a reliable judge of truth and error. The fall of the human race into sin resulted not only in a perversion of the moral sense, so that men love sin rather than righteousness, but also in a darkening of the mind or intellect, so that men love falsehood rather than truth. The human race is deeply prejudiced against the truth of God and in favor of sinful error. "Their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1:21); "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge" (Rom. 1:28). Only by the regenerating and illuminating work of the Holy Spirit can this natural sinful darkness of the human mind be taken away, so that a person becomes spiritually discerning and receptive of the truth. While regeneration is an act which is complete in an instant of time, the Spirit's work of illuminating

the minds of God's people is a gradual process which must continue through our whole earthly life. We must always seek the illumination of the Holy Spirit to understand the Scriptures.

6. What should be our motive in reading and studying the Bible?

In reading and studying the Bible we should have a practical motive, namely, a desire "to know, believe, and obey the will of God" which the Bible makes known to us. Many people study the Bible with wrong or inadequate motives. Some study the Bible merely as literature; others merely as history. There have even been those who studied the Bible in order to contradict its teachings and argue against the Christian religion. Still others have studied the Bible with a kind of idle curiosity, or with some fanatical idea or fad; for example, there have been those who have studied the Bible merely to tabulate its teachings about baptism, or about hell, or about the powers of magistrates; such people have a kind of "collector's interest" in some one line or element of the Bible's teaching, but they have no intention whatever of applying the teachings of the Bible to their own personal condition as lost sinners in need of salvation. They collect items from the Bible as a person might collect antique furniture or porcelain ware. All such study of the Bible is inadequate and wrong. No person studies the Bible aright unless he has studied it first of all as a message from God concerning the salvation of his own soul. We may properly study the Bible as literature, as history, etc., but only after we have paid heed to the Bible as God's Word revealing the way of salvation to lost and guilty sinners. For those who reject or neglect the great message of the Bible, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to play with the Bible as literature, etc., must be an abomination in the sight of God. What would we think of a guilty, convicted criminal who, when offered a free pardon, would pay no attention to this offer, but merely write an essay on the literary form and style of the message by which the offer was conveyed?

7. Why must we read and study the Bible "with diligence"?

The Bible is a big book and contains many things that are hard to understand. It contains not only milk for babes but strong meat for mature Christians. We will never gain an adequate understanding of the Bible by reading it for five minutes a day. No one would expect to gain a grasp of chemistry or mathematics by occasional slight exposure, without any conscious effort, to these sciences; why should anyone expect to understand the Bible without any effort or hard work? It is a tragedy that many professing Christians and Church members are so spiritually and intellectually lazy that they remain spiritually "babes" all their life and have to be fed with carefully prepared "milk"; anything like the "strong meat" of which the Bible speaks (Heb. 5:11-14)

they immediately protest against as “too deep”. Instead of regarding the Bible as “too deep”, or wishing that God had given us a shallower Bible, we should pray with the Psalmist, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” (Psalm 119:18). And we cannot pray that prayer sincerely if we are too lazy or indifferent to study the Bible seriously. God will not open our eyes to behold wonderful things in His Word if we are neglectful or indifferent in reading His Word.

8. Why must we pay attention to the “matter and scope” of the Scriptures?

In studying the Bible, we must make use of all the intelligence that God has given us. Piety is not contrary to a right use of the faculty of reason. In studying any text or portion of the Bible, we should always note not only what is said, but who the speaker is, what the occasion and circumstances, and the relation of the statement to other statements before or after it, and to the chapter and book as a whole. In the Bible we read these words: “There is no God.” We cannot grasp the true import of this statement unless we note the fact that it is reported as a sentiment of “the fool”: “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Psalm 53:1), and that in the remainder of the verse people who cherish such sentiments are declared to be “corrupt” and to “have done abominable iniquity”. Similarly we read: “Skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life” (Job 2:4). Quoted by itself, out of its context, this verse would be very misleading; it is only when we note that Satan, the father of lies, is reported as having made this statement that we can discern its true import.

9. What is meant by “meditation”, and why is it necessary in connection with reading the Bible?

Meditation means thinking carefully and seriously, for a greater or less length of time, about the meaning of something. Meditation does not mean, as many people wrongly suppose, a mere idle wandering of the thoughts or vague day-dreaming. It is definite; it calls for effort. Meditation is necessary in connection with Bible reading because we cannot expect to gain the real riches of its truth by a hasty skimming of its surface. It is true in Bible study as in all other fields that serious thinking requires time. The Bible is not a modern super-market with its wares all packaged and arranged on shelves ready to be checked out with the least possible effort; the Bible is a gold mine that has to be methodically and patiently worked if we are to gain possession of its treasures. We have more and better helps for Bible study today than ever before, but the haste and complexity of modern life, with its many activities which make demands on people’s time, have resulted in many Christians who have only an elementary and superficial knowledge of the Bible, and who live from one year to the next

with virtually no real increase in their understanding of Bible truth. There is no shortcut to success in Bible study: meditation is needed, and that takes time.

10. Why must we study the Bible with “application”?

The Bible is not a merely theoretical or abstract message, but a personal message suited to the needs of those who read it. A person might study geometry or astronomy out of sheer intellectual interest and curiosity, without any intention to make any practical application to these sciences to his own life. But to study the Bible in such a way as that would be to miss the real meaning and importance of the Bible. Unless we apply its teachings to ourselves personally, our Bible study will not only do us no good, but will actually add to our guilt at the Judgment Day.

11. Why does the Catechism speak of “self-denial” in connection with Bible study?

Presumably the Catechism does not here refer to that self-denial which a person must practice in order to have sufficient free time for adequate Bible study. The Scripture references which are cited indicate that the meaning is that we must deny ourselves by giving up our own prejudices, preferences and special ideas, and accepting the teachings of the Word of God as our standard for faith and life. We are to accept ALL the teachings of the Bible, not merely those which commend themselves to us as reasonable, desirable or helpful. We are to deny ourselves by surrendering our own reason as our supreme standard of truth, and becoming as little children, accepting God’s Word on God’s authority.

12. What is the place of prayer in relation to Bible study?

Clearly prayer has an important place in connection with Bible study. If a real understanding of the Bible is dependent on the inward illumination of the Holy Spirit, it follows that we must pray for the continuance and increase of this illuminating work in our hearts and minds. But the place of prayer in connection with Bible study has sometimes been sadly misunderstood. A person will say, “I know that such-and-such is the true interpretation of this text, because I got it in answer to prayer.” We have no warrant for expecting the Holy Spirit to reveal the true interpretation of any text of Scripture to us miraculously, without study on our part, in answer to prayer. Prayer is not a substitute for dictionaries and commentaries and other reference books. We are rather to pray that in our diligent use of the best available helps, the Holy Spirit will bless and guide us into the real truth. To claim that an interpretation is true because a person “got it in answer to prayer” is foolishness. If it is really true we will be able to set forth substantial reasons why it is true, and why other interpretations are false. Obviously the fact that Mr. A. “got it in

answer to prayer" will not carry any weight with Mr. B. When prayer becomes a substitute for

thinking and study, it is not the kind of prayer that is pleasing to God.

LESSON 5

Q. 158. By whom is the word of God to be preached?

A. The word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office.

Scripture References:

1 Tim. 3:2,6. Eph. 4:8-11. Hos. 4:6. Mal. 2:7. 2 Cor. 3:6. Those who preach the Word of God publicly must be possessed of certain qualifications, which are set forth in the Bible.

Jer. 14:15. Rom. 10:15. Heb. 5:4. 1 Cor. 12:28,29. 1 Tim. 3:10; 4:14; 5:22. The Word of God is to be preached publicly only by those who have been lawfully called to the office of the ministry of the Word.

Questions:

1. With what kind of preaching of the Word does this question of the Catechism especially deal?

With public preaching of the Word in a congregation of Christ's Church. This may be inferred from the words "publicly to the congregation" in the answer to Q. 156. A person who is not an ordained minister or licentiate may witness for Christ privately or publicly as opportunity is afforded, but the official public preaching of the Word in the Church is to be done only by those duly set apart for that work.

2. Why is the official preaching of the Word to be done only by "such as are sufficiently gifted"?

It is clear that the preaching of the Word is a work of very great importance. For it to be done adequately, proper qualifications are necessary. There are spiritual qualifications, intellectual qualifications and educational qualifications which must be insisted upon if the Church is to have an adequate ministry. A man who is not a born-again and consistent Christian clearly is not fit to preach the Word of God to others; he would only be a blind leader of the blind. A man who cannot think straight, who is unable to detect a fallacy in an unsound argument, will be likely to be led astray by false teachings himself, and to lead others astray in turn. A man who lacks adequate general and theological education will ordinarily not be able to do justice to the great work of preaching the Word of God, and will be in danger of preaching an unbalanced or one-sided message. When God calls a man to the work of the ministry he also equips him with the

necessary abilities and qualifications that he may execute the work adequately.

3. Why does our Church, along with most Protestant Churches, require a full college and seminary education for the office of the ministry?

The more important a work is, the more important it is that those who must do that work have adequate training. There have always been those who have thought that it is more or less a waste of time to spend seven years in college and seminary in preparation for the work of the ministry. In many denominations today there is a constant pressure to relax such requirements and admit men to the ministry who have had less than a full college and seminary course. Some consider college subjects such as philosophy, European history and literature as useless for the ministry, and as a waste of time which could be spent on "winning souls". Similarly there are those who think that a short course on "the English Bible" together with such practical subjects as public speaking and pastoral work should be sufficient, and that extended study of Hebrew, Greek, Church history and systematic theology is a waste of time.

No person who needed to have an operation performed would willingly go to a surgeon who had obtained his training by a shortcut. The State rightly insists that those whose decisions and actions involve the life and death of their fellow men be thoroughly trained for their work. How much more important it is that ministers of the Gospel, whose work may affect the eternal destiny of human beings, be thoroughly educated for their appointed task. Considering the length of time required for training for the medical and other learned professions, four years of college and three years of seminary work are not too much for ministerial training.

The minister who lacks college training will hardly be able to understand the modern world in which he must deliver his message. The study of philosophy, history and other academic subjects is far from a waste of time; such study gives the background of modern thought and enables the minister to proclaim the whole counsel of God in a way that will really come to grips with the present-day situation. Similarly the study of Greek, Hebrew, systematic theology, Church history, etc., is anything but a waste of time. Such study enables the minister to have a thorough first-hand knowledge of the Bible and its teachings, and to preach a Scriptural, consistent and integrated message.

The modern trend toward cutting down on "theoretical" studies in preparation for the minis-

try, and increasing "practical" studies, is deplorable and should be resisted. There are in America two kinds of theological seminaries and Bible institutes. In one kind, the aim is to equip the student with a certain amount of prepared material, which he can go out and preach. In the other kind, the aim is to place the tools of Bible study and theological research in the student's hands, and to train him in their proper use. He can then go out and preach, and will never run out of material to the end of his life. We believe the latter is the proper and only adequate type of training for the work of the ministry.

The foregoing must be taken to mean that there are never to be any exceptions to such rules. Clearly some of our Lord's disciples had but little formal education, yet they became effective ministers of the Word. They however had the priceless advantage of three years of association with Jesus and personal instruction from Him. God sometimes calls to the office of the ministry a man who has had but little formal education, and in such exceptional cases, where the divine call is evident, the Church should not hesitate to ordain the candidate to the ministry. Such cases will however be quite rare, especially in times when there are normal opportunities for getting an education. The exception should not be allowed to become the rule.

4. What is meant by being "duly approved and called" to the work of the ministry?

There is a divine call to the work of the ministry, and there is a call of the Church. We should always remember that the ministry is not a profession, but an office. A person may not simply decide to become a minister, as he would decide to become a lawyer or to go into some line of business. He must have some reason to believe that he is called by God to the ministry. This does not mean a special revelation from heaven, such as a dream or vision, but a consciousness that one possesses some measure of the requisite qualifications, together with an earnest desire to preach the Gospel, a willingness to make sacrifices for the cause of Christ and a readiness to endeavor to gain the necessary preparation. Those whom God

calls to the ministry, He will lead into it in His own way.

The call of the Church consists, first, in authenticating the call of God by "duly approving" of the candidate, his religious convictions, his general ability, and his academic and theological preparation. This "approving" is ordinarily divided into various stages; first, the candidate is received under the care of a presbytery as a student for the ministry; then, after partial preparation he is licensed to preach; finally, after full preparation and a call from a congregation or mission board, he is ordained to the office of the ministry.

The formal call of the Church consists of a call by a congregation upon the candidate to become their pastor, or the call of a mission board or other agency of the visible Church to engage in home or foreign missionary work or some other phase of the work of the ministry. In every case there ought to be a definite call, either to the pastorate of a congregation, or to some other specific field of work, before a man is ordained to the office of the ministry.

5. Why must a man be duly called by God and the Church before entering upon the office of the ministry?

Even the Lord Jesus Christ did not make himself a high priest, but was called of God to that office, as Aaron had been (Hebrews 5:4,5). While there are today many "free-lance" and independent preachers and missionaries, this is a wrong tendency and ought to be discountenanced. Many of these independent preachers and missionaries may indeed have been called of God, and may be doing a good work in preaching Christ and Him crucified; but there is a certain contempt and neglect of the visible Church as a divine institution involved in their attitude, which cannot be endorsed. The call of God and the call of the Church are not contrary to each other; every true Church is an instrument of God in training and ordaining men to the office of the ministry. Some who claim a superior kind of piety hold that the call of God is sufficient, and that they do not need the call and ordination of the Church. Such disregard of the visible Church is not Scriptural and should be discountenanced.

LESSON 6

Q. 159. How is the word of God to be preached by those that are called thereunto?

A. They that are called to labor in the ministry of the word, are to preach sound doctrine, diligently, in season and out of season; plainly, not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; . . .

Scripture References:

Titus 2:1,8. The duty of preaching sound doctrine.

Acts 18:25. 2 Tim. 4:2. The duty of preaching the Word diligently and persistently.

1 Cor. 14:19; 2:4. The Word of God to be preached plainly, with dependence not on human cleverness, but on the power of the Holy Spirit.

Questions:

1. What is meant by "sound doctrine"?

The expression "sound doctrine" means TRUE doctrine, or doctrine that is in accordance with the truth revealed in the Bible.

2. Why is the preaching of sound doctrine important?

The preaching of sound doctrine is important because it is only through knowledge of the truth revealed in the Bible that we can come into real contact with Christ and experience salvation through Him. If pure food and medicine are necessary for our bodily health, how much more important is pure spiritual food for the life and nourishment and healing of our souls!

3. How can ministers make sure of preaching sound doctrine?

The only way to make sure of preaching sound doctrine is by a steadfast loyalty to the written Word of God, the Holy Bible, and an unceasing effort to grasp its real meaning. Only by continuous and careful Bible study can sound, true doctrine be maintained.

4. Why is it necessary that the Word of God be preached diligently?

What God commands, is to be done diligently. The preaching of the Word is commanded by God, as an appointed means of the salvation of souls and extension of His kingdom. This work, being of such great importance, should of course be carried on with diligence and continuous earnest effort.

5. What is meant by preaching the Word "in season and out of season"?

This expression means that preaching the Word is not to be limited to formal occasions such as the regular services of the Church, but is also

to be done informally, whenever opportunity offers and occasion demands. The minister is to be a witness for the truth at all times, not only in the regular Church services.

6. What is meant by preaching the Word of God plainly?"

This means making the meaning plain and clear to those who hear. The preacher should not aim at being regarded as "deep", but at being understood by his hearers. It is wrong to smooth over unpleasant truths or duties for fear of offending the hearers. The minister of Christ must make the truth clear and plain, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. His aim must not be to please his hearers, but to please God.

7. On what should ministers rely for the effectiveness of their messages?

They should rely, not on "enticing words of man's wisdom", but on the "demonstration of the Spirit, and of power". That is, the minister is not to place his trust in his own ability as an orator or public speaker, nor to depend on the psychological influence of his own manner of presenting the message, but to depend on the Holy Spirit blessing the message and applying it to the hearts of the hearers. The minister's reliance is to be placed, not in psychology or "salesmanship", but in the work of the Holy Spirit that accompanies and follows his preaching. This does not mean that the message should not be presented in an interesting and attractive way, but that dependence must not be placed on the human factor, but on the divine.

LESSON 7

Q. 159 (Continued). How is the word of God to be preached by those that are called thereunto?

A. They that are called to labor in the ministry of the word, are to preach . . . faithfully, making known the whole counsel of God; wisely, applying themselves to the necessities and capacities of the hearers; zealously, with fervent love to God and the souls of his people; sincerely, aiming at his glory, and their conversion, edification, and salvation.

Scripture References:

Jer. 23:28. 1 Cor. 4:1,2. Acts 20:27. The Word of God to be preached faithfully, honestly and fully.

Col. 1:28. Tim. 2:15. 1 Cor. 3:2. Heb. 5:12-14. Luke 12:42. The Word to be preached in a wise manner, taking account of the capacities and spiritual state of the hearers.

Acts 18:25. 2 Cor. 12:15; 5:13,14. Phil. 1:15-17. Col. 4:12. The duty of preaching the Word of God

zealously, with fervent love to God and the souls of His people.

2 Cor. 2:17; 4:2; 12:19. 1 Thess. 2:4-6. John 7:18. 1 Cor. 9:19-22. Eph. 4:12. 1 Tim. 4:16. Acts 26:16-18. The duty of preaching the Word of God sincerely, with right motives, namely, God's glory and the true spiritual welfare of His people.

Questions:

1. Why must ministers preach the Word of God faithfully, honestly and fully?

Because it is not their own message, but God's message, that they are handling. A minister is an ambassador; therefore he has no right to tamper with the message entrusted to him. It must be delivered accurately and in full.

2. What is meant by the expression "the whole counsel of God"?

This expression, which is taken from the apostle Paul's words in Acts 20:27, means the en-

ture revealed truth and will of God. Ministers are to preach the whole truth of the Bible. They have no right to preach a limited, deformed or partial message.

3. How are ministers to preach “the whole counsel of God”?

It is of course impossible to preach the whole counsel of God all at one time. Ministers can proclaim only a small part of the counsel of God in any one sermon or address. To attempt too much at one time would only result in confusion and spiritual indigestion on the part of the hearers. But ministers must make it their aim to preach, in due time, all that God has revealed in His Word, omitting nothing of the system of divinely revealed truth.

4. Are all truths of the Bible equally important?

No. All are equally true, but all are not equally important. The most important ones are the ones which receive the most emphasis in the Bible itself. While aiming at proclaiming the whole counsel of God, a minister must take care to place the chief emphasis on the most important truths or doctrines, which are given the most prominence in the Bible itself, or which are most in need of emphasis because most neglected or denied at the present day. No minister should indulge in fads or hobbies, specializing on certain truths to the neglect of all others.

5. What temptation to deviate from preaching the whole counsel of God must be faced and resisted by ministers?

The temptation to say little about, or remain silent about, those truths of the Bible which are commonly regarded as “unpopular”, while emphasizing and saying much about those truths which are commonly called “popular”. Thus a minister may face the temptation to say little or nothing about sin, death and eternal punishment, while preaching much on the love of God, the teachings of Jesus about love to our neighbor, and the like. Ministers have no right to “soft pedal” part of God’s message because it may be distasteful to their hearers. As servants of God they must preach the whole truth without “trimming” it to suit human prejudices.

6. Why must ministers take “the necessities and capacities of the hearers” into consideration in their preaching?

Because if they fail to do this, their preaching will be largely ineffective and useless. The truth of God is always the same, but it must be preached in a somewhat different manner to different groups of people. The manner or method of preaching that would be suited to an audience of non-Christians on a foreign mission field would be different from that suited to a congregation of Christian believers in the same country, and the latter again would be somewhat different from that suited to a congregation of Christian believers in America. The minister may not deviate from the truth of God, but he must try to present the truth of God in such a way that his hearers, whoever they may be, will really “get the point.”

7. What is meant by preaching the Word of God “zealously”?

This does not necessarily mean an emotional pitch of excitement, but rather a deep spiritual attitude, which the Catechism describes as “with fervent love of God and the souls of his people”. That is, a minister of Christ is to preach the Gospel earnestly, regarding it as an extremely important matter, not something trifling or indifferent. The minister’s motive should not be popularity or applause, but devotion to God and desire for the spiritual welfare of His people.

8. What is meant by preaching the Word of God “sincerely”?

This word means without pretence or hypocrisy; that is, really and honestly meaning what one says.

9. What is to be the chief aim in preaching the Word of God?

The chief aim is to be the glory of God.

10. What is to be the subordinate aim in preaching the Word of God?

The subordinate aim in preaching the Word of God is to be the accomplishment of God’s purpose in the conversion, edification and final salvation of His people.

LESSON 8

Q. 160. What is required of those that hear the word preached?

A. It is required of those that hear the word preached, that they attend upon it with diligence, preparation, and prayer; examine what they hear by the scriptures; receive the truth with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind, as the word of God; meditate, and confer of it; hide it in their hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives.

Scripture References:

Prov. 8:34. 1 Pet. 2:1,2. Luke 8:18. Psalm 119:18. Eph. 6:18,19. We are to attend upon the preached Gospel with diligence, preparation and prayer.

Acts 17:11. The preached message to be tested by the Scriptures.

Heb. 4:2. 2 Thess. 2:10. James 1:21. Acts 17:11. Hearers of the preached Word are to re-

celve the truth with faith, love, meekness and readiness of mind.

1 Thess. 2:13. The truth is to be received, not as mere matter of human opinion, but as the Word of God having divine authority.

Luke 9:44. Heb. 2:1. Luke 24:14. Deut. 6:6,7. Mal. 3:16. Hearers of the preached Word are to meditate and confer concerning it.

Prov. 2:1. Psalm 119:11. The Word to be hid in the heart.

Luke 8:15. James 1:25. The Word to be fruitful in the life.

Questions:

1. What is our first duty in connection with the preached Gospel?

Our first duty in connection with the preached Gospel is to hear it. This implies regular attendance upon the ordinances of divine worship. In an age when iniquity abounds, and the love of many has waxed cold, there are many Church members who attend the services of their Church only occasionally. Some think that if they attend half of the regular services of their own Church they have done very well. We should conscientiously attend ALL the regular public preaching services of our own Church unless prevented by circumstances beyond our control. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Heb. 10:25).

2. Does regular Church attendance fulfil our duty in connection with the preached Gospel?

Certainly not. Regular Church attendance is only the first step. The Catechism not only affirms that we must "attend upon" the preached Word, but goes on to state HOW we must attend upon it. This answer of the Catechism sets forth a very high ideal for Christian people's response to the preached Word, but it is an eminently Scriptural ideal. We should certainly avoid the mistaken idea that occupying a seat in the house of worship on the Sabbath day fulfils our duty or even confers a favor on God. It is possible to attend Church services regularly and yet get no benefits whatever, because we do not pay attention to the service nor take the message seriously.

3. What are some of the practices that we should avoid during Church services?

We should avoid coming late, sleeping, talking or whispering unnecessarily, reading books or papers that have nothing to do with the service, thinking over our worldly affairs and planning our business for the following week, and all other conduct which will distract ourselves or others from paying reverent attention to the service.

4. What is the remedy for habitual sleeping during Church services?

Sleeping during Church services is sometimes blamed on the preacher, but where one or two members fall asleep and all the rest have no difficulty in staying awake it is probably not the preacher's fault. Sleepiness during Church services may be caused by poor ventilation of the building. Janitors often fail to realize this; it should be tactfully explained to them that fresh air is necessary for mental alertness, and a building which has been closed for several days needs to be thoroughly aired out before the service begins. In other cases sleeping in Church may be caused by keeping late hours on Saturday evening—something which every conscientious Christian will try to avoid. In some cases it may really be the minister's fault; he should try to make his sermons interesting so as to hold the congregation's attention.

5. What kind of preparation should we make to hear the Word preached?

We should take care of our ordinary business, except for real works of necessity, on Saturday, so that our minds will be free to think about God and His Word on the Sabbath day. We should endeavor to dismiss all worldly business and pleasures from our thoughts so that we will be receptive to God's Word. We should conscientiously avoid reading "Sunday" newspapers and listening to secular radio broadcasts on the Lord's day. No minister can preach effectively if the people come to Church with their minds full of thoughts about movies, radio, baseball, politics, business and other worldly affairs. Nor can the people pay attention to the preaching of the Word if their minds are occupied with picnics, auto trips, or other recreations planned for the Sabbath afternoon or evening. The Lord's day should be entirely consecrated to the service of God, if we are really to honor God and get blessing from His Word.

6. What should we pray for in connection with the preaching of the Word?

We should pray that the Holy Spirit will bestow spiritual gifts upon the minister, so that he may expound the Scriptures truly and effectively. We should also pray that ourselves and others may be given the grace of the Spirit to receive the Word, that the Holy Spirit will accompany and follow the preaching with His gracious working, so that sinners will be converted to Christ and the saints built up in their Christian faith and experience.

7. Is it the duty of Christian people to believe and accept whatever their minister preaches?

Certainly not. They are to "examine what they hear by the Scriptures"; that is, they are to test and judge the content of the message by the Word of God which is the infallible rule of faith and life. No real minister of Christ will want his hearers to accept anything just because he says it is true; he will want them to accept the truth

because God says it is true, and because they find that it is taught in God's Word. The minister is not only to preach the truths of God's Word, but to show the people where and how God's Word teaches those truths. The people are to believe the truth, not on their minister's authority, but on the authority of God speaking in His Word.

8. What attitude should we have to the truth of God as it is preached to us?

We should "receive the truth with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind, as the word of God". That is, we should have a **RECEPTIVE** attitude toward the truth, not an attitude of stubborn resistance to it. Such a receptive attitude can exist only by the special work of the Holy Spirit in a person's heart and mind. By nature we all have a stubborn, perverse prejudice against the truth and a tendency to resist and argue against the truth. Many can testify that when they were really converted to Christ, their opposition to the truth of God ceased, and they became meek and receptive in their attitude. Sometimes professing Christians manifest a spirit of violent rebellion against such doctrines as original sin, total depravity and inability, predestination and eternal punishment. The fact that these doctrines are taught very plainly in the Bible, which they usually do not attempt to deny, seems to carry no weight with such objectors, but rather to increase their opposition. With respect to the doctrines mentioned above, and all other doctrines, the only question that really matters is **ARE THESE DOCTRINES SCRIPTURAL?** If they are taught in God's Word, that should settle the matter for every Christian believer. Whether we like these doctrines or not is irrelevant. We are to receive the truths of God's Word with "readiness of mind", on God's authority, whether we like them or not.

9. Why should we meditate and confer concerning the preached Word?

We should meditate on it because only by spending time in serious thinking can we really grasp the truth in its relation to our own lives and problems. We should confer concerning it with our fellow Christians because this will tend greatly to increase the effectiveness of the mes-

sage. Conversation on divine truth among Christian people is greatly neglected at the present day. We are so busy with a multitude of interests and activities that we seem to have little opportunity for fellowship and conference with other Christians. A person who likes to talk about religion today is likely to be regarded as something of a "crank" or fanatic. Of course those who feel they must always be talking about religion and nothing else will come to be regarded as a nuisance and will bring reproach on the Church. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Eccles. 3:1). To confer concerning divine truth seasonably and profitably is an art that should be cultivated by the Lord's children.

10. Why must we hide the Word of God in our hearts?

To hide the Word in our hearts means more than merely memorizing portions of Scripture, though that is a very profitable pursuit. It means to retain the truth in our mind and keep on thinking it over and reflecting on its relation to every sphere of our life. This is the opposite of the "in one ear and out the other" manner of receiving the truth of God. If we really believe and receive the truth, it will remain in our hearts and we will reap benefits at future times as well as right away.

11. Why must we bring forth the fruit of the Word of God in our lives?

Because the Word of God is an intensely practical message. We should beware of being like the character named "Talkative" in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, who had the Bible and Christian doctrine at the tip of his tongue and could speak fluently on all religious subjects, but was a complete stranger to the power of godliness in his own personal and family life. "By their fruits ye shall know them". The Word of God is a message of salvation, godly living and Christian self-denial or being crucified with Christ. If a person is a stranger to these experiences he is not bringing forth the fruit of the Word of God in his life, and his habitual hearing of the preached Gospel will only add to his condemnation at the Judgment Day.

Reviews of Religious Books

The favorable reviewing of a book here is not to be understood as necessarily implying an endorsement of everything contained in it. Within the editorial policy of *Blue Banner Faith and Life* each reviewer is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in his reviews. Please purchase books from your book dealer or direct from the publishers; do not send orders for books to the manager of this magazine.

A **GOODLY HERITAGE** (Symposium). The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England. 1959, pp 56, paper cover. 3 shillings.

The articles in the book are based on papers

read at the Puritan Studies Conference, under the auspices of the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical Research at Westminster Chapel in December, 1958.

In this day of renewed interest in the works

of the Puritans of 300 years ago, this booklet brings concise and informative articles both on the thinking of individual Puritan writers, as William Guthrie, Stephen Charnock, Richard Baxter, and Morgan Llwyd; and on the conclusions reached by them on two subjects vital to contemporary Christian living — the life and work of a minister and the principles governing a proper interpretation of Scripture.

This reviewer found the booklet very searching and helpful and would heartily recommend it to those, especially pastors, who are concerned about the lack of spiritual warmth and zeal which was so much a part of the Puritan life and work.

—J. D. Carson

THE FIRST AND SECOND EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS, by Leon Morris. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich., 1959, pp. 274. \$4.00.

It is a pleasure to recommend to the readers of **Blue Banner Faith and Life** this addition to The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Leon L. Morris is Vice Principal of Ridley College in Melbourne Australia, and his ability as a biblical scholar has been noted in other writings, including two commentaries in the Tyndale Commentary series on 1 Corinthians and Thessalonians. The author deals throughout with basic issues at stake both in the understanding of the terms used and in the doctrinal teachings of Paul, and brings helpful modern scholarship to bear on these issues. All this is given, however, in a very clear and readable style, and this reviewer found much illumination of difficult passages in both First and Second Thessalonians. Mr. Morris defends strongly the historic Reformed faith, and countenances no compromise with the modern liberal theologians of our day. The reference value of the book is enhanced by the five indexes at the back of the book on the chief subjects, authors, persons and places, Old and New Testament references. The book is a worthy addition to the New International Commentary and to the libraries of pastors and serious laymen.

—J. D. Carson

AN EXPOSITION OF EPHESIANS, Chapter 1 to 2:10, by Thomas Goodwin. Sovereign Grace Book Club, 1124 S.E. First St., Evansville 13, Indiana. 1958 (reprint), pp. 824. \$5.95.

This volume is a reprint of Goodwin's commentary on Ephesians, made up of fifty-six sermons on the first one and one-half chapters of the epistle. The value of this book is shown in that now, after 300 years, the material is worthy of reprinting.

Goodwin was born in 1600, was appointed a member of the Westminster Assembly in 1643. "All accounts of the assembly picture Goodwin as a powerful influence, even though he was a sort of speckled bird because of his belief in independent church government." (Jay Green, Editor). Good-

win was a brilliant student of the Scriptures, earning his B.A. at age 16, his M.A. at age 20, his B.D. at age 30, and his D.D. at age 53. His writings give evidence of his brilliant mind in the exposition of the text, and his humility of spirit in his applications to human life. These sermons are not the kind that would tickle the fancy of the modern church-goers, but they are the kind that serve the meat of the Word of God necessary for spiritual maturity. Goodwin is thorough in his treatment, as there is an average of 25 pages on each verse of the text.

The Puritan writers were strongly devotional, and Goodwin takes his place among the leaders of that movement. If one is willing to take the time and the energy to search out the application of Scripture to faith and life, this book will provide the tools. Heartily recommended.

—J. D. Carson

THE EPISTLE OF JUDE, by Thomas Manton. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern St., London, W.1, England. 1958 (reprint), pp. 376. 13 shillings.

Thomas Manton (1620-1677) was outstanding among the Puritans, and his influence was felt in the congregation, in the Parliament, in the Westminster Confession, and in the company of his colleagues. "Archbishop Usher referred to Manton as 'one of the best preachers in England'". In this commentary of the Epistle of Jude, Manton bases his manuscript on notes used originally as sermon material. For the purposes of the book, they were somewhat changed and expanded at certain points, still keeping, however, that balance between the exposition of the text, and the practical profit of the Word.

Though written long ago, one would suppose that he was writing in our day. Consider these words, as a typical example, on verse 18: "Well, then, wonder not if you find many scoffing at the authority of the scriptures, Godhead of Christ, day of judgment, the ordinances, fasting and prayer. The latter age will yield such kind of men; and it is one of the arts of Satan, by his instruments, to make things of the saddest and most serious concernment to seem ridiculous, that when once the awe of these blessed truths is weakened, men may be more easily induced to cast off both the concernment and profession of them." (page 325)

Amid the theological confusion of our day, when the above description is so largely true, we need to come back to the position of these men of three centuries ago who were zealous for the faith, who drank deeply at the fountains of truth, and whose lives and writings have overflowed to benefit countless thousands. Manton is not difficult to read, and should be read by more people.

—J. D. Carson

REALIZED MILLENNIALISM, by Jay E. Adams. Published by the author, Jay E. Adams,

353 Frieda Avenue, Kirkwood 22, Missouri, 1959, pp. 87, \$1.00 (paper-backed).

The author was ordained a United Presbyterian minister, and later joined the Bible Presbyterian church. At present he is the General Secretary of the Committee on National Missions of the Bible Presbyterian Synod. Although he was at one time a pre-tribulation Premillennialist, through the study of Scripture he was led to embrace what he prefers to call "Realized Millennialism". In his introduction he writes, ". . . Until futuristic ideas of the Apocalypse are abandoned it is nearly impossible to come to a correct understanding of the millennium prophecy . . . It is one of the major theses of this volume that a "realized" rather than "futuristic" interpretation of Revelation is correct . . . Amillennialism has been too exclusively negative . . . A positive statement of the Amillennial position, as an orderly system, has been sorely needed . . . The primary purpose of this book is to attempt the systematization of the amillennial view."

The author holds that the millennium, rather than being a period of one thousand literal years and a "golden age", is the present church age when the power of Satan is limited. Most of the contents of the book of Revelation are viewed as "the things which must shortly come to pass", thus referring primarily to the trials of the early Christian Church.

One chapter is devoted to the exposition of Revelation chapter twenty, as the author feels that this passage, more than any others, proves a stumbling block to disillusioned Premillennialists who might otherwise embrace amillennialism.

The author cites numerous passages of Scripture in support of his views, without attempting to take them out of their context. This reviewer feels that these supporting passages have been handled sensibly and consistently. The book contains a chart of the entire book of Revelation which is a refreshing contrast to the wild, and for the most part imaginary, colorfully detailed charts that are so often seen today. The book does not attempt to give a detailed interpretation of everything in the Apocalypse, but rather attempts to set up a framework for a systematized amillennialism.

The appendices contain an explanation of the technical terms encountered in the book, an outline of the Apocalypse in diagram form, and arguments against "Unrealized Millennialism of the Premillennial sort."

This book is easy to understand, brief, and should prove a valuable help in the study of the Apocalypse, not so much as a refutation of Premillennialism, as a gathering up of some of the loose ends of Amillennialism into a positive system.

—Joseph M. Caskey

TEMPEST OVER SCOTLAND, by Norman E. Nygaard. Zondervan Publishing House, 1415 Lake Drive, S.E., Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1960, pp. 183. \$2.50.

This biographical novel by Dr. Nygaard deals with the life of John Knox of Scotland, from the time he was made a galley slave in a French ship, to the conclusion of his historic conferences with Mary, Queen of Scots. The very subject matter of the book will commend it to Covenanters, and to all who count John Knox as among their spiritual forebears.

This book is not without some faults. John Knox, as he is pictured to us, is almost too good to be true. History records that he was a man with some very great faults as well as many outstanding virtues. There are times when the author writes with a somewhat affected style; and his effort to teach history through the conversations of his characters, becomes quite obvious in places.

Nevertheless, **TEMPEST OVER SCOTLAND** is a very palatable way of imbibing history. The author has brought out a number of incidents in the life of John Knox that are not generally familiar. The chapters dealing with the conferences between John Knox and Mary, Queen of Scots, are well done. Especially fascinating, is the description of John Knox's mental turmoil as he mulls over the problems which led to his ultimate concepts of Presbyterianism and Democracy.

— G. M. Robb

AN EXPOSITION OF PROVERBS, by Charles Bridges. Zondervan Publishing House, 1415 Lake Drive, S.E., Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1959 (reprint of 1846), pp. 640. \$6.95.

This is a reprint of a work which was written about the middle of the nineteenth century. It is a very full, verse-by-verse treatment of the Proverbs.

By far the outstanding feature of this book is the author's thorough work in relating the Proverbs to the entire Bible. Charles Bridges treats the Scriptures as one who believed wholeheartedly that the Bible is a harmonious whole, and that Scripture is its own best interpreter. He does not handle the Proverbs, then, as a mere compilation of moral precepts by a wise king, but he sees them in their relationship to the redemptive message of the whole Word of God. Yet his commentary is full of plain, practical counsel for everyday Christian living.

The author's amazing knowledge of the Scriptures is brought out particularly in his wealth of Bible illustrations. For example, in his exposition of Prov. 20:24, he illustrates the overruling providence of God with eleven different incidents from the Scriptures. This could easily have become tedious, were it not that in almost every case the illustration is summarized in a single, well-written sentence.

The one who owns and uses this excellent book will not only get a new insight into the Proverbs, but will see a valuable increase in his appreciation of the whole Bible.

—John McMillan

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM, by Lawrence N. Manross. Bible Presbyterian Press, Box 947, Wilmington, Delaware. No date, pp. 13, pocket size, paper cover. 7 cents each; 50 for \$3.00; 100 for \$5.00.

A good booklet to give one who is a novice with regard to the Reformed doctrine of Predestination. The author, in discussing the Five Points of Calvinism, follows the familiar mnemonic "TULIP." (Total depravity, unlimited sovereignty, limited atonement, irresistible grace, perseverance of the saints — Ed.). He gives a brief but adequate summary of each point. Of course the length of the booklet limits the depth to which each point can be probed. On the main the author lays a good foundation for further thought and study in this area.

In dealing with these doctrines, the author discusses some of the foremost Arminian arguments against the Five Points, and demonstrates from Scripture that only the Reformed Faith holds high a truly sovereign God.

—M. L. McFarland

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM, by Frank B. Beck. The Baptist Examiner Book Shop, Ashland, Kentucky. No date, pp. 70, paper cover. 50 cents.

A well outlined presentation of the Five Points of Calvinism is the result of Mr. Beck's labors. There is nothing unusual about his presentation. He has done what needs to be done in each generation and that is to update the language of these pivotal Scriptural doctrines. In modernizing the language he has **not** watered down the content of these basic doctrines. In fact he has added strength to the doctrines by pointing out God's **love** as evidenced in election rather than a harsh sovereign choice.

Beck is not unique in this point, for other Reformed thinkers of recent years have seen the love of God manifested in His sovereignty. It should be pointed out that Beck all through his booklet presents the Scriptural basis for these doctrines. At the beginning of each chapter the author suggests certain Scripture readings as an introduction to the chapter. Included at the end of the booklet is a helpful Subject Index and a Scripture Index.

Anyone desirous of more than a superficial study of the Five Points of Calvinism would appreciate this booklet.

—M. L. McFarland

THRU THE WORD WITH CHART AND COMPASS, by Robert H. Cox. Published by the

author, 3712 Riviera Road, Columbia 5, S. C. No date, pp. 14, paper cover. 20 cents.

This booklet is a one-man publication of a series of charts and systematic diagrams of various books of the Bible. The charts are presented in a form adaptable for copying on a blackboard for presentation. There is no comment or writing other than the wording included in the chart itself.

The charts are not elaborate in detail. This is an advantage in that they are easily adapted to use for youth or adult groups. There are 13 charts in all, which means that only a broad outline of the Bible has been presented.

The purpose of the charts is to demonstrate vividly "that the Bible has a central message and all its books contribute to the theme of redemption through Jesus Christ . . .".

—M. L. McFarland

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, by Thomas Watson. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern St., London, W. 1, England. 1959 (reprint), pp. 180. 8 shillings.

The Christian's knowledge of the Scriptures cannot be frivolous, but rather must be thorough — the object of constant improvement through diligent study. Of course, no sincere believer can neglect to study the Bible for himself, but, on the other hand, none can prudently ignore the helps which God providentially provides us. Our knowledge of God's Word will quite properly be aided by hearkening to those things which our forefathers in the faith have learned.

Essential to the Christian life is a pervasive knowledge of the moral law, especially as it is epitomized in the decalogue. Here, too, the wisdom of Christian expositors will be, or at least should be, the source of great blessing, a valuable aid in our own study.

The most lucid and penetrating commentary on the Ten Commandments known to this reviewer is this work by one of the most able of the Puritan theologians. In clear and precise language the meaning of God's law is explained and its many applications shown.

The scope of his treatment of the third commandment, in which twelve varieties of taking God's name in vain are set forth and illustrated, is typical. Such sub-divisions are not figments of an over-active imagination, but clearly each contributes new and different material. Similarly characteristic of the whole book is his treatment of the second commandment, in which love to God is covered under three headings: (1) how characterized, (2) how we may know whether we love God, and (3) means of exciting love to God. Under each heading several points are developed which pointedly confront the reader. Again and again the author asks why God commands this, how we are to obey, what are the results of our obedience or disobedience, to what ends does God's action

lead, how the Christian may apprehend a certain blessing, and so forth. His answers are carefully outlined and logically organized.

The expositions are necessarily concise, but always deep. Significant illustrative material abounds and faithfulness to the whole Word of God is found throughout. Indeed here is a great storehouse of information and blessing.

In addition to the exposition of the Decalogue, nine short studies are also included in this volume, all dealing with important and vital doctrines.

—Joseph P. Duggan

HISTORIC PROTESTANTISM AND PRE-DESTINATION, by Harry Buis. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1958, pp. 142. \$2.75.

This is a one or two evening book which is an apologetic for Calvinism's doctrine of predestination, being at the same time an objective survey of the doctrine's impact on Protestant theology. It is easy reading, in large print.

The author, Harry Buis, has also written **The Doctrine of Eternal Punishment**. He is presently pastor of the Vriesland Reformed Church of Zeeland, Michigan, and a part-time member of the faculty of Hope College.

Buis' stated purpose is "to seek to document the above statements . . . (that predestination was introduced into the stream of Christian theology by Augustine, and revived by reformers before Calvin)" . . . with the greatest care, especially concentrating on the demonstration of the fact that Martin Luther held as strong a doctrine of predestination as did John Calvin."

Buis does well in accomplishing his purpose in a book as short as this one. He gives a rather detailed description of Luther's "Calvinism," with chapters on Luther's *De Servo Arbitrio* ("The Bondage of the Will") and *Table Talk*. He also describes Zwingli's, LeFevre's, Bucer's, Bullinger's, and Knox's positions on predestination, as well as, of course, Calvin's.

Another chapter deals with the Post-Reformation reaction, Melancthon's defection, and the development of Arminianism. Also Uytengaert's Five Articles, resulting in the decisions of the Synod of Dort are discussed. John Wesley's impact on the doctrine is noted with some care. Buis gives a humble criticism of Wesley and his caricature of Calvinism.

The resulting present-day synergistic position of the bulk of Protestantism, Buis says, is actually similar to that which the Roman Catholic Church held in opposition to the Reformers. Buis severely criticizes Barth's and Brunner's theologies, stating that Barth's logically ends in universalism, a charge which, as Buis says, Barth denies. Buis is strong in emphasizing that Luther did not change his firm position on predestination after 1525, as Brunner says he did.

Buis concludes his book with a description of the Biblical basis for the "Five Points" of Calvinism. A particularly interesting feature of the book in his chapter on "An Explanation to the Modern Mind."

In some ways the book may be likened to a condensed version of Boettner's **Reformed Doctrine of Predestination**, with the emphasis shifted to the historical development of the doctrine. (There is a foreward by Boettner on the dust cover). This book would be an appropriate gift for an American Christian who is sincerely open to new light from God's Word.

—Raymond P. Joseph

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, by E. M. Blaiklock. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 197. \$3.00.

This is in the **Tyndale New Testament Commentary** series. The writer, E. M. Blaiklock, Litt. D., is professor of Classics, University College, Auckland, New Zealand. He writes from a conservative viewpoint, and his scholarship is alert and thorough. He furnishes a wealth of evidence in support of an early date for Acts, probably around 62 A.D. Repeatedly he points out the very great care and accuracy with which Luke presents the facts that are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

Dr. Blaiklock is an interesting writer, and this is one commentary that makes fascinating reading. On controverted points he often presents the opinions of men who differ with him, and then sums up the reasons for his own conclusions. One notable exception to this, is his dogmatic assertion concerning Acts 16:34, that "no 'household salvation' on the strength of the faith of the head of the house is implied. All believed." Surely Dr. Blaiklock must have some familiarity with the paedobaptist opinion as represented by Dr. A. A. Hodge's assertion that "believing in God with all his house" is simply a general statement which neither confirms nor denies the presence of babies in the household. This failure to mention Dr. Hodge's comment, even for the purpose of arguing against it, indicates an anabaptist slant.

Nevertheless this is a commentary of real worth. It contains a wealth of information and pertinent and interesting side lights that are up to date. This is not a verse by verse treatment of the Acts of the Apostles, but it is quite detailed. An unusual feature is the outlined analysis of the Book of Acts.

The writer draws from a rich background. At the same time, he frequently puts the reader through a "do-it-yourself" exercise in comparing Scripture with Scripture. His treatment of the "tongues" at Pentecost is reverent, and at the same time eminently sensible. He speaks of Attic Greek as "perhaps the most perfect instrument of human expression in the history of speech." Something of the vividness of his style can be

seen in his statement concerning Attic Greek, that it "enabled the written sentence without stage directions to express irony, deprecate, cock an eyebrow, curl the lip, shrug the shoulders, and represent, in short, to the reading eye the animation of the living voice."

This commentary on the Acts of the Apostles is recommended for the use of laymen as well as ministers.

— G. M. Robb

WHY BELIEVE? by A. Rendle Short. Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 1958, pp. 96, paper cover. 3 shillings.

This is another of the Pocket Book Series. It is the seventh edition of this volume, making a total of more than 54,000 copies. The author was prominent as professor of surgery in Bristol University for many years. He was an outstanding Christian layman, and was influential in establishing the Inter-Varsity Fellowship and guiding its early years. Dr. Short wrote this book because he was convinced that many sincere people were hindered from becoming Christians by honest doubts. The reception the volume has enjoyed is evidence of his success in achieving his goal.

There are seven chapters covering six problems and giving a closing practical suggestion: Why believe in God? Why believe in Jesus Christ? What shall we think of the Bible? Is God satisfied with us? Why did Jesus die? Can we be sure of the Christian theory? The Way.

First in favor of the volume is the fact that its author was a first-rate physician, a scientist, and a layman. There is nothing spectacular about the book. The language is plain, the approach direct. Dr. Short draws his conclusions deliberately and definitely, and in such a way as to challenge his readers to independent thinking and following him to his conclusions. He makes frequent reference to history, philosophy, literature and science.

We would differ with Dr. Short in some of his statements concerning the fulfilment of prophecy (e.g., pp. 61, 62), but we believe this volume to be very useful in its intended field. We congratulate the publishers for making it available in this cheap edition.

The last chapter is most commendable. It makes a very practical suggestion, the most vital part of any effort to answer men's doubts: "Take a Bible, a pencil and paper, and write down all the passages . . . in which Jesus Christ appears plainly to state how one may become a Christian, or obtain salvation. Make a second list from the sermons and writings of the Apostles. Bring them together and analyse them carefully . . . Make a definite decision . . . Take pen and paper. Write down what is to be the relation of the Lord Jesus Christ to you. Make two copies. Post one to someone else. . . and keep the other yourself" (pp. 94-96).

Put a copy in your church library especially for the young people to help them and others in such situations. This book is obtainable in U.S.A. from Inter-Varsity Press, 1519 North Astor, Chicago 10, Illinois.

— E. C. Copeland

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES, by Donald Guthrie. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1957, pp. 228, \$3.00. Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, England. 9s. 6d.

This is another volume of the Tyndale New Testament Commentaries of which R. V. G. Tasker is the general editor. This series is published to provide at moderate cost an intelligent, informative commentary on the text of the New Testament for the general reader and student. The author of this volume is tutor in New Testament language and literature at London Bible College, a conservative non-denominational school.

In the opinion of the reviewer Mr. Guthrie has achieved his goal remarkably well. He has been comprehensive, but not bulky; informative and instructive, but not pedantic; brief, but not barren. The Greek text is artfully used for preciseness of meaning. There are numerous cross-references. The commentary is designed to be used with the open Bible (the text does not appear in the commentary), and when so used it stimulates individual study and devotion. It presents itself as an aid, not a crutch.

The introduction is a careful examination of the various views on the authorship, purpose in writing, date, language, etc., of the letters. Mr. Guthrie gives unqualified support to the Pauline authorship. In an appendix he ably refutes P. N. Harrison's arguments from linguistics (**The Problem of the Pastorals, 1921**) that the author of the Pastorals could not be the Apostle Paul.

An outline of each book is given, and this outline appears as headings of the sections through the body of the work. There is verse by verse comment on the text, giving meanings of words and phrases, and suggestive material on the meaning of the verse and its context. Skillful use is made of the Greek to give shades of meaning and useful material for sermonizing. This is done in a way to be useful to the untrained in Greek.

Mr. Guthrie makes a valuable contribution in showing that some Greek words have taken on new, distinctively Christian meanings, rather than, as some have suggested, bringing Greek ideas and concepts into the New Testament.

This volume throws significant light and emphasis on references to church officers, government, discipline, authority of the pastor, and the responsibility of every individual in all age and social groups to speak and do that which becomes sound doctrine. On Titus 2:1 Mr. Guthrie

says, "Paul had a special sense of the fitness of things."

In commenting on 1 Tim. 3:16, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit. . . ." (pp. 89-91), Mr. Guthrie says that this is a quotation from a Christian hymn which was "evidently well known." The lyrical quality of the passage, "most impressive in the Greek," is the only suggested evidence that this is such a quotation. This seems to be thin evidence. On such subjects Paul did not need to quote to be lyrical. All New Testament evidence would be to the contrary. Paul's references to Christian worship are all to the effect that in worship only the Psalms of the Old Testament under their titles "Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" as found in the Septuagint were used (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19).

We are sure that this volume along with the others of the series will take a prominent place on the shelves of Bible students everywhere, and we are glad to recommend it.

— E. C. Copeland

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST?
by Lester E. Kilpatrick. *Covenanter Laymen's League*, 410 Woburn Street, Lexington 73, Mass. 1959, pp. 46, paper cover. 35 cents; 3 for \$1.00.

The author of this booklet is pastor of the First Reformed Presbyterian Church of Phoenix, Arizona. The sub-title informs us that the booklet is a summary of the answer given by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America to the question asked in the title, "What is the Gospel of Jesus Christ?" Included in the booklet is a statement of the purpose of the *Covenanter Laymen's League* and a roster of the members of its Board.

In our day when inadequate ideas of Christianity and the Gospel are prevalent, this booklet with its truly Biblical content and its precise statements and definitions should be of great usefulness. Among other wholesome and truly Scriptural emphases, the author insists that the Bible is the sufficient and sole source of religious truth. The fact that the Gospel is not advice about what men should do but good news about what God has done and will do is brought out. Man is shown to be morally and spiritually helpless, and salvation is shown to be wholly the work of God. All this is in marked contrast to the prevalently Arminian evangelism of our day, the keynote of which is that God helps those who help themselves first.

Against the exaggerated individualism and neglect of the Visible Church which is so prevalent in American evangelical Christianity today, the author stresses strongly the necessity and divine appointment of the Church and its ordinances. Against the equally prevalent tendency to limit religion to what is called "the spiritual life", the author strongly stresses the truth that "The Gospel Reclaims every Area of Life." He specifically dis-

cusses family life, business life, social life and political life.

The discussion closes with an affirmation that God is sovereign over all. This booklet is heartily commended to our readers.

— J. G. Vos

DIVORCE, by Lorraine Boettner. Published by the author, Rock Port, Missouri. 1960, pp. 38, paper cover. 25 cents; \$2.50 per dozen.

Dr. Boettner is the well-known author of **The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination** and several other excellent books on Christian truth. The present booklet is a brief but earnest discussion of the subject of divorce in the light of the Bible. The magnitude and gravity of the divorce problem are first set forth. The author presents statistics for various years from 1890 to 1957, showing that whereas in 1890 there were 17 times as many marriages performed as divorces granted, in 1957 there were only 4 times as many marriages performed as divorces granted. The reviewer would not wish in the least to minimize the serious situation represented by these figures. However it should be pointed out in considering such statistics that the figures do not show the ratio of divorces to the number of marriages in existence, but only the ratio of divorces granted to the number of marriage ceremonies performed during the year. Thus the figures show that in 1957 there were 1,516,000 marriages performed and 378,000 divorces granted. The ratio of these numbers is about 4 to 1, but actually the 378,000 divorces occurred among, not merely the couples entering marriage during 1957, but all the marriages of previous years still in existence — certainly a much larger number than a million and a half. In any case, the trend is a tragic and serious one.

Unlike some recent writers on the subject of divorce, Dr. Boettner correctly holds that divorce is Scripturally permissible on grounds of adultery, and the innocent party is free to remarry as if the guilty party were dead, and should be able to do so without religious disabilities or social stigma. The notion that divorce is never lawful is cogently refuted from Scripture.

In discussion of separation and desertion the author sets forth varying views and states that there is room for honest difference of opinion as to desertion being a lawful ground for absolute divorce. He states it as his own view that willful, irremediable desertion affords grounds for divorce if the innocent party so chooses. He makes a telling point in asserting that "to provide for and sanction permanent separation while the marriage tie remains inviolate is something that is alien to the general tenor of Scripture teaching."

The author makes an earnest plea for Christian sympathy and kindness to be shown to

the innocent parties in divorce cases. The innocent party has already been deeply and tragically wronged, indeed has suffered a blow from which full recovery may be impossible. Fellow Christians should help such persons to rebuild their broken lives, rather than looking down on them with Pharisaic disapproval.

In discussing the question of the relation of divorced persons in heaven, Dr. Boettner points out that marriage in an institution pertaining to the present life only. The relationships of earth will fade into the background in the new life of eternity.

May the guilty party to a divorce remarry? While the general Christian sentiment is negative on this, Dr. Boettner very acutely points out that Scripture does not actually teach that the guilty party may not remarry. The prevalent attitude, he says, may be based at least partly on the feeling that the guilty party deserves to be punished. Adultery followed by divorce has **dissolved** the original marriage; it has ceased to exist, and has therefore no more binding force. Because a person has been unfaithful in one marriage it does not necessarily follow that he will be unfaithful in a second one. It is possible that by the grace of God there may be genuine repentance and reformation of life. The conclusion Dr. Boettner reaches is that "it may be better in some instances at least that such an one remarry."

After citing the official position of various denominations on the subject of divorce and remarriage, Dr. Boettner concludes by a summary of the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church on this subject. Though in theory very strictly opposed to divorce, Rome actually breaks down the Biblical sanctity of marriage by many loopholes providing for annulments and other exits from the marriage bond.

We are very glad to commend this carefully written booklet to our readers.

—J. G. Vos

DOOM OF THE DICTATORS, by Delber H. Elliott. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 92. \$2.00.

This little volume by the author of **The Trail of the Totalitarian** and **The Gospel According to Revelation** is dedicated to the cause of Christian civil government. The author, who has spent half a century in the ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, pleads for Christian democracy and freedom under God. He is against man-centered totalitarian authority wherever and under whatever guise it appears—whether it be the tyranny of dictators such as Hitler and Stalin, or the tyranny of the Church of Rome, or the tyranny of apostate Protestantism in the National Council of Churches.

Facing the problem of relation of Church and State, Dr. Elliott rejects both the idea that the Church should be supreme over the State, and the idea that the State should be supreme over the Church. Both of these are contrary to the divine plan and both result in grievous evils in human society. In place of these extreme solutions of the problem, many in our day hold the secularistic notion that the State has nothing to do with religion and the Church has nothing to do with government — a notion epitomized by the common saying, "Religion and politics don't mix." In place of this concept, Dr. Elliott pleads for separation of Church and State, but each to acknowledge God as its ultimate authority, and each to render certain definite obligations and services to the other.

Under the heading "Near Neighbors to the Communists," Dr. Elliott discusses materialism in philosophy, liberalism in religion, Darwinism in biology and socialism in government. He makes out a good case against all of these evil tendencies. In opposing socialistic tendencies in government, Dr. Elliott shows himself a true friend of freedom and opponent of "big government," bureaucracy and the "welfare state" ideology. He says: "We hold that the **one-world, world-government, welfare state** philosophy must fail because the God of righteousness is left out of its calculations. It depends on dictators, state-rule or democratic majorities to establish peace and prosperity . . . 'He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh'" (p. 48; emphasis is the author's).

The weakness of government that rests on man's planning alone is eloquently pointed out. The author pleads earnestly for a democracy that shall be strong, wise and enduring because based upon the righteousness of God and because it recognizes and honors Jesus Christ as its King.

This would be an excellent book for any of our church groups or societies to study. It is cordially recommended to our readers.

—J. G. Vos

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL MATERIALS, by Great Commission Publications, 627 Schaff Building, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia 2, Pa. Sample kit, \$3.75, returnable at no charge if returned within three weeks and if in good condition.

Although comparatively new in the field of publishing, Great Commission Publications nevertheless demonstrate their determination and ability to meet a definite need in Christian education. With more publications of this type being printed today than ever before, it has nevertheless remained extremely difficult for those committed to the Reformed persuasion to find helps that are prepared from this perspec-

tive. Perhaps this is the most rewarding feature of these Vacation Bible School materials.

The course of study which forms a basis for these materials is worked out on a three-year cycle and is divided into four levels of instruction for children from 3 to 14. It is set up for the normal period of two weeks, five days a week, three hours a day. Although every level is different in its content, nevertheless the same philosophy can be sensed in all of them, namely that it is by means of the effective application of the Word of God by the Spirit that persons are converted to Jesus Christ. Each day's schedule therefore calls for two periods of Biblical instruction in addition to the memory work, the workbook period, recreation, handwork, and singing. The emphasis is definitely evangelistic and is focused on the goal of the child's entire family.

Excellent principles of pedagogy have been incorporated in the materials. Careful instructions are given in each of the teacher's manuals, and all aspects of the program are integrated to give weight to the lesson of the day. The reviewer has carefully gone over all the handwork projects and finds them to be relatively simple and inexpensive, and yet productive. No doubt there is enough ground to cover in each day's program to meet the needs of the most ambitious pupils, but at the same time the alert teacher can

select the most needed part and make it meaningful to those not from covenant homes or familiar with scriptural terminology.

These materials are attractive and are reasonably priced. The teacher's manuals are 95 cents and the pupil's workbooks 25 cents. Handwork supplies vary, but are quite moderate. The art work is simple and eye-catching, though perhaps not as elaborate as some other materials might be. This again points up that the main emphasis of this material has been the competent putting together of the lessons. General VBS supplies and promotional materials are also available from the same address.

The reviewer finds it a pleasure to give enthusiastic recommendation of these materials if you are planning a Vacation Bible School this summer. Early planning is important for the effectiveness of any VBS, and no materials are a substitute for this. May it also be said that the publishers indicate that the effectiveness of any such school rests upon the devotedness of the teachers and helpers. Thus the thrust of this curriculum includes the visitation and follow-up by teachers on the students following the actual school. For those planning to build their church solidly these materials will furnish a real contribution.

—Kenneth G. Smith

Gamaliel's Advice

By Joseph P. Duggan

All good Christians confess and bear witness to the inspiration and authority of the Bible, affirming that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." They believe that not only are the doctrines of Scripture from God, but even that the very words are divinely inspired, for the Lord Jesus Christ Himself said to His disciples: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

Yet, while this is a simple doctrine and easy to comprehend, it is easy to fall into error by misunderstanding the nature and purpose of inspiration in certain passages.

To shun this pitfall, we must of course realize that some parts of Scripture — while being inspired records — are inspired records of the thoughts, words and deeds of the wicked, of the errant, or of the ignorant.

Thus, in Job we are accurately told what Satan said and did; and in the Gospels concerning the treachery of Judas Iscariot; and throughout both the Old and New Testaments we have

a trustworthy account of the failures of the chosen people. We all recognize that there are passages of Scripture which give us a divinely inspired account and interpretation of things said and done which are themselves not to be considered as examples or advice for the believer.

One such passage is that which contains the advice of the learned Gamaliel, Acts 5:34-39. He concludes: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

Is Gamaliel's advice sound doctrine?

Before we answer this question, let us be quick to observe that this is not to ask whether or not it was uttered with a beneficial result. For the time being we could suppose that the learned doctor's advice was utterly destitute of truth, and yet conclude that it was divinely used towards a good end.

Indeed, it was so used, for it was the fact that this advice was received that gave to the early church some little, but much needed, free-

dom in proclaiming the gospel. This advice prevailed that there might be some respite from the fierce persecution of the Jews.

In fact, it could not be otherwise. Are not all things—even persecution—and temptation by Satan—and death itself—are not all things which come to pass divinely ordained for a good purpose? Do we not know that “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28)? Certainly, then, no one can reasonably deny that Gamaliel’s advice was part of God’s wise and good providential plan.

Yet this does not at all indicate to us whether or not Gamaliel’s doctrine was sound. Actually, it becomes clear, as we proceed to investigate its true nature, that it was quite unsound. This is true for the following reasons:

First, this teaching asserts that unrighteous movements are doomed to speedy failure, and that godly movements will necessarily prosper and bloom.

In former days many Christians delighted to use such argument, saying that the phenomenal spread of Christianity proved its divine origin and authority—while the rapid decay of paganism, for example that of the Roman Empire, proved that it was of ungodly origin. This ultimately is a form of the pragmatic argument: that which “works” or succeeds is therefore good and that which appears to fail is bad. More succinctly, might makes right.

Today, of course, if such a doctrine were true it would prove quite detrimental to the Christian apologetic, for while the Church suffers losses and setbacks, ungodly movements, such as Communism and Mohammedanism, are forging ahead with great success.

Not that we ought to reject Gamaliel’s pragmatism because today it proves to be embarrassing, for we must never use our own personal well-being and happiness as a yardstick for the measurement of truth. Rather, we reject it because it is contrary to the only accurate yardstick, the Scriptures. The Word of God declares that the wicked do prosper; compare Psalm 73:12 and Daniel 11:36 among many others; and that the godly are often destitute and afflicted; compare Psalm 109:22-26 and John 15:20, again among many others.

We must reject Gamaliel’s advice because success is no proper measure of truth and propriety.

Second, we must declare Gamaliel’s doctrine unsound, because implicit in it is the idea that we are unable to determine whether or not a movement is of God until we see what becomes of it.

Can we? Certainly. However, we ought to hasten to admit that historical phenomena are in

themselves unintelligible. Indeed, that supremely important historical event—the crucifixion of Christ—is in itself meaningless to us. Without divine revelation the cross’s true significance is hidden from men. Lacking it the ungodly will conclude: “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him” (Matt. 27:42). Even the godly will say: “But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel” (Luke 24:21). Both were ready to conclude that Jesus could not have been Israel’s Messiah, for judgments on what things mean—to decide whether something is good or bad—cannot be made by men alone.

Thus, with Gamaliel we must readily admit that the apostles’ preaching of this new doctrine cannot be judged except by God. But, let the Christian and the unbeliever both harken; God’s judgments on all things of true consequence have been published to men.

To those who would turn an ear to Gamaliel, agreeing that we are unable to determine whether something is of God or not until we have seen how it turns out, good Presbyterians will protest along the lines of the words of their own Confession of Faith: “The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man’s salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture (I:6a).

Third, Gamaliel’s doctrine must be rejected for it encourages men to be neither for nor against, but to be neutral—to wait and see.

The words and works of Gamaliel’s noblest student, Saul of Tarsus—Paul the Apostle, ably opposed such an attitude. And his example is one that all Christians should follow. He did not sit back and passively wait to see what in God’s providence would prevail—though of all men he certainly had a strong faith in providence.

Thus Paul contended for the faith, asserting true doctrine and exhorting believers to live godly lives. Almost continually he was active in opposition to error, preaching against the immorality of the Corinthians, condemning heretics in his epistles to Timothy and Titus, and rebuking those who had been seduced by the Judaizers.

The wisdom which he had received of God superseded that which had been learned from Gamaliel. The former caused him to enter the fray that he might contend vigorously for the faith and for truth, and to strive against error.

And what shall we do when we see about us differences of opinion and new and strange movements? Shall we wait and see with Gamaliel or shall we enter the fray with Paul? Let us stand with Paul.

Of course we must do so cautiously, knowing that we cannot judge for ourselves but rather

must search out the judgments which God provides in His Word. Such caution, moreover, will be matched with steadfastness and the certainty which God's Word gives.

Similarly, the Christian should contend with love and true concern for those who have been misled by error, but just as certainly he must contend with zeal and vigor.

It is true that Gamaliel showed a knowledge

of God's providence—he knew that God would control all things which were to come to pass. The Christian, however, should have a better knowledge of God's providence, knowing that He achieves His purposes by the use of His servants as instrumentalities dedicated to His will and glory.

Let us, then, act on this knowledge, not content merely to look on, but as the willing and eager servants of our Lord.

The Reformed Faith We Profess

By J. G. Vos

Note: This series of articles, which is being published by request, is intended to tell what the various teachings of the Reformed Faith are, in simple, non-technical language, and to show as pointedly and clearly as possible how they differ from other views which are widely held at the present day. The purpose of these studies is not argument nor even the establishment of Scriptural proof for the various doctrines, but simple exposition. At the end of each installment the reader will be referred to literature in which the case for the Reformed doctrines is argued and in which the Scriptural proof is marshalled and displayed.—Editor.

CHAPTER IV

God's Work of Creation

"The work of creation is God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good" (Shorter Catechism, 9). The universe and all it contains is not self-existent, but is the product of an act of God, or rather, of a series of acts of God which took place at a definite time. Back of all things is the infinite, eternal, self-existent mind called "God." The doctrine of divine creation is basic to Christianity—where it is given up, Christianity cannot exist; where it becomes weak and hesitant, Christianity cannot be vigorous. In the very first verse of the Bible the affirmation of divine creation lays down the most basic distinction in all Biblical teaching—indeed, in all human thinking—the distinction between Creator and creature: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). Explicitly affirmed on the first page of Scripture, this Creator-creature distinction is assumed and relevantly influential clear through the Bible to the last verse of the Book of Revelation. Without the doctrine of creation, the Bible becomes a distorted—indeed a meaningless—book, and Christianity becomes a mere caricature of what it really is. Yet nothing is more prevalent in intellectual circles today than the denial of the Biblical doctrine of creation.

God did not Need to Create

The Westminster Confession of Faith says that "It pleased God . . . to create . . ." Orthodox theology has always insisted upon this point: creation was a sovereign act of God, that is, it was an act of God's free will—He did not **need** to create, He **chose** to create. This does not mean that God had no reasons for creating, for God, being all-wise, always has the best of reasons for what He does. It means that God was under no necessity or compulsion to create. God's act of creation was voluntary, not necessary. It baffles our finite minds, of course, to try to think of the possibility of the non-creation of the universe. Yet we must guard the freedom of God. All notions that God **has** to create—that He created because of necessity—lead inevitably toward Pantheism; they lead to the identification of God and the universe, to the denial of the Creator-creature distinction.

God Created out of Nothing

Man must use materials, but God created out of nothing, by the mere exercise of His will. This creation out of nothing included the original stuff of the universe, called in Gen. 1:1 "the heaven and the earth." It also included the framework in which the universe was to exist, namely time and space. It is incorrect to say that time and space existed of themselves "in the nature of things," and God decided to create the heaven and the earth to exist in time and space. There was no time, there was no space, that was no matter, there was no force, there were no "natural laws," there was no "nature of things" because there were no things to have a nature. All these were non-existent; there was only God. Time and space as we know them, and all things that exist and function in time and space as we know them, were created out of nothing by God. And if there are other kinds of time and space besides what we know, then those too, with all that exists in them, were created out of nothing by God.

The greatness of God shown in the creation of the physical universe is utterly staggering to

the human mind. The sun is 93 million miles from the earth—a mere trifle in the vastnesses of created space. The Andromeda Galaxy (formerly called a nebula but now known to be a galaxy containing billions of suns) is two million light years from the earth. Light travels at the speed of 186,208 miles per second, and at this speed it takes two million years for the light of the Andromeda Galaxy to reach the earth. The galaxy itself is so vast that it takes light 100,000 years to travel from one side of it to the other side of it. All this was created out of nothing by God—by the mere act of His will, or “word of His power.”

Not only the physical universe with its time, space, matter and force was created out of nothing by God. He also created out of nothing all minds except His own—not only human minds but all spiritual beings whether known or unknown to men, including the angels and archangels. Only God is uncreated; all else owes its existence to the will of God. Nothing exists of itself; God made all.

Creation out of nothing is denied and ridiculed as a preposterous doctrine. A prominent theologian has said that the idea of creation out of nothing is really a meaningless idea—it is just a way of marking off the farthest boundary beyond which human thought cannot go. We readily grant that it is an utterly staggering idea, but we must insist that it is absolutely necessary if we are to hold the Christian Faith. With belief in creation out of nothing, we can be theists and Christians; without this belief, we must inevitably become either atheists, agnostics or pantheists. The Reformed Faith dares to contradict modern thought and maintain the doctrine of creation out of nothing as true and as absolutely necessary.

Part of God’s work of creation was the introduction of order or pattern to the raw stuff of the physical universe, by which it became a cosmos (an ordered, harmonious whole) instead of a chaos (“without form, and void”). So far as this earth was concerned, this ordering was planned to make the earth a suitable dwelling place for the human race. Though this part of the work of creation used already created matter, God introduced new elements which were created out of nothing, especially life in its vegetable, animal and human forms. What transformed lifeless matter into living beings was the addition by God of new elements (life, mind and spirit) created by God out of nothing.

Scripture teaches, and the Reformed Faith holds, that the work of creation was done in six days. There is considerable diversity of interpretation, however, with regard to the nature of the six days. Among orthodox theologians, some hold that six literal days are meant (and much can be said in favor of this view), while others hold that the six days represent long periods

of time. A third interpretation advanced by some scholars holds that the six days have nothing to do with time, but are merely a literary pattern or framework in which the inspired writer of Genesis arranged his material. Something can be said for and against each of these interpretations. In favor of the literal interpretation it may especially be urged that we are dealing here with the supernatural, almighty power of God, to whom nothing is impossible. The difficulties of the literal interpretation will not seem insuperable if we keep our eyes fixed on God.

The Creation Perfect though Finite

God pronounced His completed creation “very good.” This means that it fully realized God’s intended purpose in creating it. A thing is “good” if it fully accomplishes its purpose, the reason for which it exists. The creation was good—it was a perfect embodiment, though finite as all created things must be—of some of the thoughts of God.

It is necessary for us to insist that the creation was both perfect and finite. It was free from all evil, both physical and moral evil. In all the universe there was no pain, there was no fear, there was no revolt against the Creator. To be finite (limited and dependent on God) is not evil, though Satan later seems to have suggested to Eve that it was. The origin of evil in the universe, including the fall of Satan, is a mystery which cannot be solved. We only know that as **created by God** the universe was perfect and contained no evil.

Man, the Crown of Creation

The last of God’s creative acts was the creation of man. Unlike all other creatures in this world, man was created in the image of God. This means that man is, in a true sense, like God. He is a true, though finite, copy or replica of God. The “image of God” is that in man which marks him as like God and unlike the animals. It does not refer to the physical form of man, but to the moral, spiritual and psychological characteristics of mankind. Like God, but unlike the animals, man has a rational nature, a moral nature and a spiritual nature. He has the capacity for thinking or reasoning, he can distinguish right from wrong, and he can know and love God. Though man’s body was formed of the chemical elements (“dust from the ground”), that which makes man God-like is spiritual. God breathed the breath of life into the lifeless matter, and man became a living soul. There is not the slightest suggestion in Scripture that man had a non-human ancestry—that Adam and Eve had a father and mother that were not human but mere animals. Rather, the human is most sharply distinguished and set apart from the non-human. The whole em-

phasis is not on man's partial bodily resemblance to the animals, but on his essential difference from them and his likeness to God.

Man as created was finite, sinless, but morally changeable. It was possible for him to become sinful, as indeed he actually did. We must insist, however, that **as created by God** man was perfect. It is especially necessary to insist on this because some theologians today are tending to equate sin with finitude—in other words, to deny that man was ever perfect, since (they say) to be finite is to be imperfect. This involves a denial of the doctrine of the Fall of man. Man is regarded as a sinner because he is finite, not because he is fallen; in other words, these men regard man as a sinner simply because he is man and not God. This regarding of sin as essentially finitude fits in very well with the theory of evolution but it does not fit Biblical teaching at all. And it takes the shame and the guilt out of sin. If being sinful is merely being finite, we really need not be ashamed of it any more than we are of the fact that we have only two hands and two feet. Man was originally perfect, though finite. He lacked tools and technology but he existed in a state of simple civilization and of moral uprightness. He was no "ape-man" nor was he a wild savage. Savagery came later as the consequence of moral evil.

How Creation is Denied Today

No truth of Christianity is more spoken against today than the Biblical doctrine of creation. Here is the basis of the whole structure of the Christian Faith—no wonder Satan stirs men up to attack the doctrine of creation. If this is destroyed, all goes with it. There can be no Christianity without the Biblical doctrine of creation.

One form of this denial is **denial of the independence of God**. (The independence of God may also be called His **transcendence**. It means that He is not limited by the universe, but exists independently of it, being dependent only upon Himself). Modern thought tends strongly toward pantheism, that is, toward identifying God with the universe or regarding God as merely an aspect of the universe. If God is just another name for the universe, or if God is just the universe viewed from a certain angle or viewpoint, then it becomes meaningless to talk of creation. If the universe was created by a God who is himself part of the universe, that is just another way of saying that the universe created itself—which is just another way of saying that the universe either (a) always existed, or (b) "just happened." In the end those who deny the independence of God must take their choice between an eternal universe and a universe which "just happened." All schemes of cosmic evolution and all forms of materialism must face this dilemma in the end.

If God did not create it, then it either never had a beginning or it did have a beginning. In the one case it was eternal; in the other it "just happened"—it caused itself to exist.

A most important form of denial of creation today is the extremely popular doctrine of human evolution. This is the denial of creation at the point where the foundation of man's moral life is involved. ("Theistic evolution," or the idea that God "created" man by causing him to descend from the animals, seems to be popular among clergymen and theologians rather than among prominent scientists. It is faced with many difficulties, philosophical, scientific and Biblical).

It should be realized that human evolution is a theory, not a proved fact. Indeed, even animal and plant evolution is a theory rather than a proved fact. There are many problems, difficulties, and gaps in the evidence. The important thing about all "missing links" is the fact that they are **missing**—until discovered, they do not prove anything except that the theory is weak. No person can be considered educated who does not know something about the theory of evolution, but the dogmatic teaching of evolution as "proved scientific fact," and the ridiculing of the alternative view of special divine creation, in our public schools and many colleges and universities, is a scandal that cries to heaven for correction.

The Results of Denying Creation

Deny the Biblical doctrine of creation, and science really becomes impossible. A professor was recently publicly ridiculed for "teaching Christian chemistry." In answer it was correctly stated that there is no other kind of chemistry. The atoms and molecules behave as they do, according to discoverable and predictable laws and rules because back of the facts of chemistry stands the mind of God who created matter. Deny that, and chemistry becomes an assemblage of lucky chances. Nature is a cosmos, not a chaos, only because back of nature is the God who created and controls nature. Someone has said that the odds were two billion to one that the amoeba would never evolve into man—but the amoeba and its descendants were astronomically, incredibly lucky, and so the human race exists on this planet. Really we are reduced to that if we deny creation. If the infinite Mind of God did not produce matter and energy and order, chance did it. It comes down to God or chance. The Reformed Faith says to modern man as Joshua said to the Israelites of his day: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord."

If creation be denied, the outcome of history and the destiny of the universe become utterly unknowable and unpredictable. Christian-

ity teaches that God created the world for a purpose and controls it for a purpose and will not let it explode in wreck and ruin until that purpose is accomplished. Because we believe in a divinely purposeful beginning, we can believe in a divinely purposeful end. But deny creation and anything can happen. We then have an "open" universe—open at both ends, past and future. There is no telling what may happen. All prophecy and all prediction at once become mere fantasy—mere blind man's buff, mere wishful thinking. The earth and the solar system may vanish in a puff of cosmic dust and with them all human values, all hopes, all loves, all loyalties, all achievements, everything, and no being anywhere will even know or care that man ever existed.

Again, if creation be denied, the basis for moral responsibility is cut away. Man is under moral law because he is the creature of God, created in the image of God and responsible to his Creator. Deny that, and there remains no higher motive for morality than what the majority may at any time decide is for the benefit of society. We are already seeing this sinister development in the modern world—for example, in the human ant-hill of Communist China where the only morality recognized is the decree of the totalitarian State ("the people") and where men and women are reduced to the sub-human level of machines—machines made of flesh and blood and bones, not of steel and brass, but still machines.

We Americans are perplexed and bewildered at the lawlessness of society and especially the lawlessness of youth, yet the doctrine of creation, the only real basis for morality, is rigidly excluded from our public schools, while the morality-destroying theory of evolution is dogmatically taught as assured truth on almost every hand. We will not curb juvenile delinquency by any measures which stop short of inculcating the only real basis for morality—the doctrine of creation which is the ground of moral responsibility.

Deny the doctrine of creation, and there remains no basis for evangelism. There is much concern about evangelism today, but the trouble is that too often we are trying to get people to believe on Christ when they do not really even believe in God. It seems to be taken for granted that people believe in the God of the Bible and only need to be won to the redemptive truths of Christ. But this cannot be taken for granted any more—at least not in America. The Gospel depends absolutely on basic truths such as the doctrine of creation, and where these are not known or not believed, it is futile to try to persuade to faith in Christ as Saviour. When Paul spoke to the philosophers at Athens he did not start with John 3:16 but with the doctrine of creation. And we in modern America should realize that in many cases evangelism

will have to begin, not with John 3:16 but with Genesis 1:1. For without Genesis 1:1 John 3:16 is futile and meaningless.

Some Questions to Ponder

1. What is the importance of Genesis 1:1 in the system of Christian truth? In the structure of science? In daily life?
2. Why is it incorrect to say that God needed to express Himself by creating the universe?
3. What is meant by saying that God created out of nothing?
4. Why must we hold that time and space were created?
5. What is the Andromeda Galaxy? How big is it? How far from earth? How many suns does it contain? What does it show about God?
6. What alternatives do we face if we give up the doctrine of creation out of nothing?
7. What interpretations are held of the six days of creation?
8. What is meant by saying that God's completed creation was "very good"?
9. What is meant by the image of God in man? Does man have this image of God today, or was it lost by the Fall?
10. Why is it wrong to say that sin is the same as finitude?
11. What is meant by denial of the independence of God?
12. If God's independence be denied, what alternatives must be faced?
13. What should be thought of "theistic evolution"?
14. Why is the prevalent teaching of evolution in schools and colleges scandalous?
15. What is meant by saying that "Christian chemistry" is really the only kind of chemistry that there is?
16. What must be the effect of denying the doctrine of creation on people's belief about the future of the world?
17. What is the effect of denial of the doctrine of creation on the sense of moral responsibility?
18. What is the relation between ignorance of or unbelief in the doctrine of creation, and the prevalence of delinquency and crime?
19. What is the bearing of the doctrine of creation on evangelism?

20. Why did Paul preach the doctrine of creation to the philosophers on Mars Hill at Athens?

Some Literature on this Subject

On the doctrine of creation in relation to Christian truth about God, man, sin, salvation, moral responsibility, etc., **Christianity and Liberalism**, by J. Gresham Machen (Wm. B. Eerdmans

Pub. Co., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 189 pages, paper binding, \$1.75). **Systematic Theology** by Charles Hodge (same publisher). **Systematic Theology** by Louis Berkhof (same publisher).

On the theory of evolution in relation to Christian truth, **After Its Kind**, by Byron C. Nelson (Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota). **Genes, Genesis and Evolution**, by John Klotz (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, Missouri).

Blue Banner Question Box

Readers are invited to submit Biblical, doctrinal and practical questions for answer in this department. Names of correspondents will not be published, but anonymous communications will be disregarded.

Question:

What is the Biblical view of capital punishment?

Answer:

The following quotation from pages 65-66 of **Biblical Theology**, by Geerhardus Vos (William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan, 198), is presented as a concise statement of Scriptural truth on this subject. The connection is the revelation given by God to Noah after the Flood (Genesis 9:5, 6):

"The last point relates to the protection of human life from the assault of man, and lays down the divine law for the punishment of murder: 'At the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man.' Some in order to evade the institution of the death penalty for murder, would understand these words as a mere prediction, that murder is apt to be followed by blood-vengeance under the *lex talionis*. This exegesis is made positively impossible by the added clause: 'for in the image of God made He man.' The image of God in man can never furnish a motivation for the likelihood of the exaction of blood-vengeance. The question remains what the image of God in man has to do with the infliction of the death-penalty. Two answers have been given to this. According to the one this clause explains why such an extraordinary power of taking away the life of another man can be conferred upon man's fellow creature. It is in virtue of the sovereignty of God, being part of the divine image, laid upon him that man can execute justice in capital matters. Others understand the clause as furnishing the reason why assault upon the life of man should meet with this extreme penalty; in life slain it is the image of God, i.e., the divine majesty that is assaulted. The

latter of these interpretations deserves the preference. Notice the difference that here the instrument for the execution of the divine ordinance is clearly indicated: 'by man shall his blood be shed,' whereas in the case of retribution upon the animals this aspect of the matter is left indefinite. Further, the ground for the institution of the penalty appears to be a twofold one; on the one hand, the larger context in which the ordinance occurs proves it to be a measure of protection for society. At the same time the reference to the image of God shows that something still deeper underlies. It may well be questioned, whether the former alone, and that without an explicit injunction from God, could ever justify the infliction of death from one man upon another. Purely utilitarian, social considerations would hardly be sufficient here. They can come in as a secondary reason only after once the matter has been put upon the high ground of the administration of justice sanctioned by God. The argument so frequently met with, that capital punishment adds but a second murder to the first is an argument based either on total ignorance of the facts of Scripture or on open denial of the obligatory character of what the Bible teaches. How can that be characterized as a duplicated murder that professes to rest on the most explicit command of God, and over against which men have nothing to put except sentimental objections, and an unproven theory about the meliorating efficacy of forms of discipline which from their very nature exclude the punishment of death?" (Copyright, 1948, by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company).

In addition to the above, it may be pointed out that recent discussions of capital punishment in the public press have been almost entirely occupied with the question "Does capital punishment deter people from committing murder?" Even religious leaders have been quoted in the press as arguing the question on this basis. The Biblical argument for capital punishment is on an entirely different basis. It does not primarily

concern the matter of probable results, but the matter of **justice**. Belief in the sanctity of justice seems almost to have vanished from our national life. It is stated on every hand that the only reason for penalties is to deter others from similar crimes and thus to protect society. While this may certainly be a secondary reason for the infliction of penalties, it can never be the main reason. The primary reason is that justice requires the infliction of penalties. The murderer **deserves** to die, and **God commands** that he be put to death. Bible-believing Christians should argue the question on this basis and decline to enter into interminable discussions on the question of whether the death penalty does or does not benefit society.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

How can we answer one who claims that death means the end of a person's existence?

Answer:

The terms "death" and "life" are used in various senses in the Bible. Life may mean merely the biological functioning of the body as an organism. As long as a person breathes and his heart beats he has this kind of life. But there is a higher kind of life, called spiritual life. This is what is meant where the Bible says "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). There is also the fulness of life which the redeemed shall enjoy in heaven. In the Bible the essential idea of life is not merely quantitative, but qualitative. It is not mere continued existence, but **enjoyment of the favor of God**. This is brought out by our Lord's saying, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3); also Psalm 30:5, "In his favor is life." This is not mere endless existence; it is endless existence filled and made glorious by the conscious enjoyment of the favor of God.

Similarly, the Bible speaks of death in various senses. Death may mean merely the death of the body — the end of the body's functioning as an organism, after which it is subject to decay and eventually returns to "dust." Secondly, there is death as the penalty of sin: "The wages of sin is death." This means being under the righteous displeasure of God because of sin. It includes the death of the body, but more also. Finally there is what the Bible calls "the second death." This is not extinction of personality (an idea foreign to the Bible), but endless existence in consciousness of the wrath of God. We might say that the second death is a condition so terrible that it is much worse than non-existence. It is this fact that is brought out by our Lord's statement about Judas Iscariot, that it would be better for him if he had never been born (Matt. 26:24). The idea that death ends all is a lie planted in people's minds by

the devil, who seeks ways to bring about people's eternal misery in hell. Those who confidently say that death ends all will discover in hell that death does not end all — the human personality can never cease to exist.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

Please explain the text which says that the body of Jesus would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. In John 19:31 it says it was the preparation and that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, and in John 20:1 it says that the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre early on the first day of the week. This seems to mean that Christ was in the grave two nights, one whole day, and part of two other days, which by the Jewish way of counting would be three days. How can Matthew 12:40 be reconciled with John 19:31 and John 20:1?

Answer:

In facing a problem of this kind, we must realize first of all that our modern, very precise ways of reckoning time are foreign to the Bible and the thought and language of Bible times. It is common in Biblical statements to count a part of something as the whole. In giving the length of the reigns of the Israelite kings, it is evident that sometimes part of a year was counted as a whole year. We even have something like this in America today; if a baby is born before midnight on December 31, it can be counted as an income tax exemption for the whole year, even though it was born late on the last day of the year.

The actual period during which our Lord's body was in the tomb was from late afternoon Friday to early morning on the first day of the week (commonly called "Sunday"). **The New Bible Commentary** states that "The expression means that three periods of twenty-four hours, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, were wholly or partly covered" (page 789). Our Lord's prediction that his body would be in the tomb "three days and three nights" would not have been misunderstood by any of these who heard Him say it at the time; it would not have occurred to them that the Lord meant three **full** days and nights, or a period of 72 hours. They would naturally understand the meaning as some part of three 24-hour periods.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

Could you inform me about the developments in the American Covenanter Churches since 1891, and about the present condition of the denomination?

Answer:

This query came from a reader of Dutch origin now living in Canada. He has been reading

some books on Covenanter history, including the "Cloud of Witnesses" and "The Scottish Covenanters" (the latter by the editor of this magazine). It would require much space to present a full answer. A brief statement will be attempted, however.

The denomination lost some congregations and some ministers by the division in 1891 following the trial by Synod of some who were seeking in an unconstitutional manner to change the Church's position on the question of voting and holding political office under the present Constitution of the United States. The denomination continued its life and testimony as before. The membership has never been large, and in recent years there has been a net loss in the number of members. This may be due in part to disagreement with the Church's testimony, doctrinal position and general strictness. It is also certainly to a considerable extent due to the geographically scattered situation of the congregations. Many have no doubt left the denomination because of distance from the nearest congregation.

A prominent feature of the life of the denomination in the twentieth century has been the vigorous promotion and support of foreign missions. Work has been carried on in Turkey, Syria, Cyprus, China, Manchuria and Japan. Of these fields, Cyprus and Japan have American Covenanter missionaries in residence at the present time. A new field in Ecuador, South America, is to be opened in the near future, D. V.

At present the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America has 9 Presbyteries, 73 congregations, 102 ministers, 11 theological students, 4778 communicant members, 1400 baptized children, 21 foreign missions, 56 parsonages, 324 elders. Fuller statistics, as well as addresses of ministers, congregations, etc., can be obtained from the **Minutes of Synod** (1959), obtainable at \$1.00 from Mr. Chester R. Fox, Treasurer, Empire Bldg., Pittsburgh 22, Pa.

The Church has a liberal arts college, Geneva College, located at Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, with about 800 students in day classes and almost 1000 in evening classes; a theological Seminary located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and a Home for the Aged, also in Pittsburgh.

Official publications include **The Covenanter Witness** (weekly), **Blue Banner Faith and Life** (quarterly) and **The Goal Post** (fortnightly young people's paper).

—J. G. Vos

Questions:

The Solemn League and Covenant (1643) pledges the Covenanters to endeavor the "extirpation" of heresy, schism, etc. The Rev. Mr. Guthrie in 1663 argued in a sermon that the covenant continues binding. Therefore even if "extirpation"

is wrong (i. e., the use of force against heresy, etc.), is it not still a binding obligation if you hold the Solemn League and Covenant as binding? Joshua made a wrong promise to the Gibeonites, yet once made it was binding and had to be kept.

Answers:

The signers of the Solemn League and Covenant pledged themselves to endeavor the "extirpation" of heresy, etc., and beyond question this meant elimination of religious deviation by the use of force. The wrongness of using force to promote religious orthodoxy was not yet recognized at that time. The Reformed Presbyterian Church today seeks the "extirpation" of heresy, etc., but only by means of persuasion. We do not believe that an oath or covenant can bind one to an unethical practice. The Westminster Confession, for example (XXII.4) says that an oath "cannot oblige to sin: but in anything not sinful, being taken, it binds to performance, although to a man's own hurt. Nor is it to be violated, although made to heretics, or infidels."

The case of Joshua's hasty oath to the Gibeonites does not seem to be truly parallel to the matter of "extirpation" in the Solemn League and Covenant. The covenant with the Gibeonites, though contrary to God's command that the Canaanites be exterminated, nevertheless established a bond between Israel and the Gibeonites which could not be broken without sin. The Gibeonites believed that an oath taken by Israel in the name of the Lord would be treated as binding. To violate this oath, once it was taken, would have betrayed the faith the Gibeonites had placed in the sacredness of Israel's oath in the name of the Lord. This would have been an even greater evil than the original (and actual) evil of Joshua making the covenant with them without finding out the mind of the Lord. But to refrain from extirpating heresy by force involves no greater evil than the error of those who, in framing the Solemn League and Covenant, believed it their duty to extirpate hereby by force.

A better parallel would be Martin Luther's repudiation and breaking of his monastic oath of celibacy. Luther had (wrongly) taken the vow of celibacy. Later he came to understand that he had no right to take such a vow. He openly repudiated it and married. What Protestant will say that Luther did wrong in this matter? Yet he broke an oath or vow once made in the name of God. Another parallel is the oath or curse taken by forty Jews that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed the apostle Paul (Acts 23:12-15). This was a sinful oath which they should never have taken. They were not able to kill Paul, and presumably they finally broke their oath; it is most improbable that they really starved to death, but had they elected to do so, they would have committed an even greater evil by violating the commandment, "Thou shalt

not kill", for their death by starvation would have been a form of suicide. Needless to say, it was not conscience that moved them, but the present writer feels that they did right in breaking their oath to abstain from food and drink — an oath they never should have taken in the first place.

Possibly the present-day Covenanters may be charged with an element of inconsistency in opposing the extirpation of heresy by force and at the same time claiming to adhere to the Solemn League and Covenant. Possibly it would be more consistent to state frankly that we are committed to the promotion of truth and orthodoxy by persuasion only, and now believe that our forefathers were wrong in pledging themselves to endeavor the "extirpation" of heresy, schism, etc.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

It is a well-known fact that the great body of the Westminster Assembly of (English) divines were of Presbyterian persuasion. But when it comes to the more famous names of the classical Puritans, such as Goodwin, Owen, Charnock, Sib-

bes, Manton, their churchmanship is not so well-known. Can it be maintained that the bulk of the Puritans whose works have come down to us were Presbyterians?

Answer:

The classical Puritans referred to and the members of the Westminster Assembly overlap, for Goodwin, though an Independent, was a member of the Assembly, while Manton, the acknowledged leader of the Presbyterians in London, was one of the Assembly's three scribes. Charnock served with Thomas Watson as a joint pastor of a large Presbyterian congregation. Owen is generally regarded as an Independent, though he was a Presbyterian in his earlier ministry, and even in his later views remained Presbyterian in certain respects. Sibbes was a doctrinal Puritan, witnessing to Calvinism in a period when an open Presbyterian witness was not tolerated. A general answer to the query is difficult in view of the complexity of the issues involved.

—William Young

The Finality of Christ

By J. G. Vos

Luke 11:19, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"

John the Baptist, in prison because of his plain speaking about king Herod's sins, sent two of his disciples to Jesus to ask, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" These questions do not imply that John himself doubted that Jesus was the promised Saviour. Rather John's intention was that his disciples should see and know of Jesus for themselves, and not merely upon John's authority. John's questions imply that some one particular person must come. The Redeemer, the Messiah, was not one of a type, or a member of a class of men, but a unique person who could never be paralleled. There could never be His equal, far less His superior.

The Jews are today still looking for one that shall come. They fail to see that Jesus is the one, and came long ago. Many modern people rank Jesus along with other great men, and do not believe that there ever was or will be any one truly unique Saviour. But Scripture teaches otherwise; there is one Saviour, and only one: He that should come. He is the final and complete answer of God to human need, trouble and sin.

Jesus Christ is the complete fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy and types. Three great strands of prediction run through the warp and woof of the Old Testament. They are the promise of a prophet, the promise of a priest, and the

promise of a king. These strands of prediction gradually converge until they all meet their fulfilment in the one person Jesus Christ. He is the great Prophet, who by His Word and Spirit declares to us the will of God for our salvation. He is the great High Priest who offered Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, and who makes continual intercession for us. He is the perfect King, who subdues us to Himself, rules and defends us, and restrains and conquers all His and our enemies. This Jesus is "he that should come"; no other is to be expected. Christ is the key to a real understanding of the Old Testament.

Christ is the fulfilment of every human need. He performed miracles of healing in the presence of John's disciples, ministering to human bodily and mental welfare. But these miracles speak to us of that higher healing and reconciliation which we need, namely salvation from sin and reconciliation with God. The miracles of healing were unnecessary only because of the presence of sin in the world. They removed some of the effects of sin. Salvation is the miracle that removes sin itself, not all at once, of course, but by the divinely ordained stages of a new birth, justification and glorification. In 1 Corinthians 1:30 we read that Christ Jesus "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." What more could any human being need? Christ is the fulfilment of all human longings for whatever is good and right and holy.

Come to Him in humble repentance and faith;
He will give rest to your soul.

Christ is also the final divider among men. After working these miracles of healing, He said to John's disciples, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me". Obviously there are those who are offended in Christ, those to whom He does not appeal, those who despise Him, who object to this or that in connection with Him. Men shall be divided into those offended in Christ and those not offended in Christ. The greatest question is always "What think ye of Christ?" Today men in general say some complimentary things about a Jesus whom they regard as merely human, and even sinful. But they are deeply offended at the Christ of the Scriptures. The Christ who worked miracles is an offence to modern man. The Christ who is unique, the one who should come, is an offence to modern man, for by implication He denies modern man's most cherished doctrine of evolution. Evolution implies that someday there must, and will, be a greater and better man than

Jesus Christ. It may take millions of years, but evolution implies that eventually Jesus will be superseded, and a greater, better man produced, not by a miracle, but by the working of natural laws and forces. Christ cannot be truly unique to the consistent evolutionist.

Thus men are offended in Christ. He upsets their pet ideas, as well as their sinful lusts and desires. But not all are thus offended. There are others, whom Christ pronounced "blessed", who are not offended in him. These are those taught of the Holy Spirit, born again, called in Scripture "the meek", "the poor in spirit", "they that hunger and thirst after righteousness". These are not offended in Christ. To them, He is unutterably precious. To them, He is the one that should come, beside whom another is unthinkable, not only to the end of time, but through all eternity. May it be that by God's grace we are in this latter class, those not offended in Christ, that it, truly saved Christians.

—The Covenanter Pastor

God's Appointed Day

(Author unknown. Adapted)

Some glorious morn — but when? Ah, who shall
say
The steepest mountain will become a plain,
And the parched land be satisfied with rain.
The gates of brass all broken; iron bars,
Transfigured, form a ladder to the stars.
Rough places plain, and crooked ways all straight,

For him who with a patient heart can wait.
This first creation, shaken, troubled sore,
Shall yield to that which stand for evermore.
There shall be no more curse, nor death, nor pain,
But that which stands unshaken shall remain.
These things shall be on God's appointed day,
When this first heav'n and earth shall pass away.

(Note: Compare Hebrews 11:10; 12:27; Revelation 21:1).

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The money received from subscriptions is never enough to pay the entire cost of publishing and circulating *Blue Banner Faith and Life*. For the balance, we are dependent upon the contributions of readers who believe that the magazine is serving a needed purpose and wish to help it serve that purpose. When funds were urgently needed, friends of the magazine have always provided generously for its continued support.

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The Editor and Manager of this magazine receives no financial remuneration for his services, nor does he desire any. The money goes to pay for printing, postage, office supplies, and similar expenses. The magazine is sent free to a considerable number of missionaries in various fields. If able to help this ministry without neglecting your prior Church and Kingdom obligations, please do what you can.

—J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager

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And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,
(and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only be-
gotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

A Quarterly Publication Devoted to Expounding, Defending and Applying the
System of Doctrine set forth in the Word of God and Summarized in the Standards
of the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanter) Church.

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From the Introduction to "Lays of the Kirk and Covenant"

By Harriet Stuart Menteth

"Till doomsday shall come, they shall never see the Kirk of Scotland and our Covenant burnt to ashes; or, if it should be thrown in the fire, yet it cannot be so burnt or buried as not to have a resurrection". — Samuel Rutherford.

Scotland! hallowed in thy story,
Who would trace thine annals right,
One peculiar page of glory,
Ever brightens on his sight!
Not the honors, far descended,
Of thine ancient hero kings;
Not thy bulwarks, blood defended —
These are but thy meaner things!
True, the pulse exulting flutters;
True, our souls within us burn,
Trumpet names as Freedom utters,
Wallace, Bruce, and Bannockburn!
But a holier joy subdues us,
Tracing, while our heartstrings thrill,
How the Savior deigned to choose us,
In His cause to suffer still!
Honored be the patriot story
Well may Scottish hearts beat high!
Yet a far-excelling glory
Glads the heaven-anointed eye —
Heritage unbought, unpriced,
Rich in the reproach of Christ!

Ah! the eye is sick with seeing;
Ah! the heart is faint with fear.
Clouds athwart the horizon fleeing,
Harbingers of tempest near!
God hath laid to sleep His chosen;
Who the mighty shall withstand?
And the tide of faith seems frozen
In the winter of the land!
For a space it darkens, darkens,
Hope and promise in the tomb!
But the Lord looks down, and hearkens;
Sobs of prayer amid the gloom!
"Nay, my people — not forsaken,
Though afflicted sore thou art.
Of my strength thy hold is taken;
Thy fresh springs are in my heart!
From the deep vault of the prison;
From the lone isle of the sea;
From thy banished ones hath risen
An accepted voice to me!
Chosen in affliction's waters,
Chosen 'neath the oppressor's rod,
I have sealed thy sons and daughters
In a covenant with God!

Pass thou on, a sign and wonder,
As my nation was of yore;
In the secret place of thunder
I have laid thy help in store!
Quit thy hold on earthly favor;
Touch not the accursed thing!
Monarchs must abhor thy savor
While they set at naught thy King!
Part not — halve not thine allegiance,
Till I come to claim mine own;
In the woe of thine obedience
Bear my Cross and guard my Crown,
All its thorns in thy true sight,
Transfigured into beams of light!"

Thus, a witness to the Churches
Scotland's Church hath ever been—
Carnal men, with vain researches,
Musing what the sign may mean!
Like her Master, poor and lowly,
Seeking naught of price below,
All she claims, with freedom holy,
Still about His work to go;
Coveting nor wealth nor station;
Terrible to naught but sin;
Mean in outward estimation,
She is glorious within!
Trace her unmolested going;
Caesar finds observance meet;
Living waters round her flowing,
Oh, how beautiful her feet!
Hope, o'er those broad waters gliding,
Fast pursues the waning night,
And the home of her abiding
Gathers still and radiates light!
Strange! that in her pathway ever
Strifes and oppositions spring;
Nay! she sows beside the river,
And her shout is of a King!
Since from Herod's couch the slumber
Parted at the wise men's word,
Kings and rulers without number
Band themselves against the Lord!
Tolls a death-knell through their riot;
Shakes a terror 'neath their scorn;
And they seek, in vain disquiet,
For the Babe in Bethlehem born!

(Continued on back cover)

BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

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NUMBER 3

The Resurgence of Arminianism

By the Rev. Kenneth A. MacRae, M.A.

(Continued from last issue)

2 — THE HISTORICAL ASPECT

About 70 years ago, as has been seen, Calvinism seemed to be so firmly entrenched in the religious life of Scotland that no serious challenge appeared to be possible, but just about that time certain events took place which profoundly altered the whole situation. Two American evangelists appeared in Britain—Messrs. Moody and Sankey—who succeeded in shaking the whole religious world to its foundations. To what extent they were instrumental in bringing souls into the kingdom of grace is not to be discussed here. The Lord is sovereign in all His ways and can use what instruments He pleases. Numbers given in accounts of the revival are useless, inasmuch as converts, in the modern use of the term, do not necessarily mean saved souls.

What is stressed here, however, is that when these preachers appeared in Scotland they gave impetus to a type of preaching and practice which hitherto had been little known in the land. One would not say that Moody was an Arminian of the pronounced order, but this fact only gave him the larger opportunity to introduce his doctrines into circles which would have repudiated a more positive form of Arminianism. The outcome was a pronounced swing from the Calvinism, now regarded as severe, which had hitherto prevailed in Scotland.

Along with this came the introduction of practices which were themselves expressive of an underlying conception, distinctively Arminian, which would have been utterly inconceivable under a Calvinistic regime. But most hurtful of all was the introduction of hymn-singing on a large scale into the public worship of the Free Church. It was, in fact, almost a death-blow to the Psalm-singing, which hitherto had been almost a universal feature of public worship throughout Scotland.

Dr. John Kennedy, of Dingwall, with his massive mind and keen discernment, perceived all these things and the dangers attendant upon them and sounded loudly the trumpet of warning. But, apart from those Highlanders who had learned to know his value and to esteem his judgment, he was little regarded, unless it were to be roundly abused as one who had little or no sympathy with

the proclamation of a “free” Gospel. After events however, verified his forecast and gave to him the place of the prophet who speaks unheeded to the ears of an unbelieving generation.

The working of the new leaven in the Free Church of Scotland speedily revealed itself. Up till then, whatever measure of approval the new German Higher Criticism had won for itself the response had been practically inaudible. Now, however, with the rise of what Dr. Kennedy called the “Hyper-Evangelistic” party in the Free Church, it became no longer necessary for those who favoured the Higher Criticism to conceal their antipathy to the strict and binding terms of the Confession and Formula of the church under which they exercised their ministry. It is not for a moment contended that this new Evangelistic party had the slightest sympathy with the attitude of the Higher Critics towards the Scriptures, but the two parties found common ground in their antipathy to much in that to which they had sworn their allegiance. And now that it had become fashionable to express dissatisfaction with the old formulas, the Higher Critics felt it safe to emerge from their hiding-places.

To the Arminian party, as we may now call the Evangelistics, the stout, uncompromising Calvinism of the standards of the Church had become intolerable, and, under the leadership of Dr. Rainy, what was known as the Declaratory Act was prepared and duly passed by the General Assembly of 1892 — although not without the strongest possible protest on the part of the conservative elements in the Church. By this Act the terms of the most Calvinistic articles of the Confession of Faith were explained away and made to mean what they did not mean, and what they were never meant to mean. The Act, therefore, was a most unworthy and dishonest measure, aimed, not, as several responsible parties nowadays seek to maintain, at finding vantage ground in the Church for the Higher Criticism — Principal Rainy was no Higher Critic — but at the Calvinistic articles of the Confession, which were so obnoxious to the Arminians. A perusal of the Declaratory Act itself will fully bear this out.

It was the intention of Dr. Rainy and his party, with whom the Higher Critics naturally

allied themselves, to follow up the Declaratory Act with a corresponding adjustment of the Formula of Subscription signed by all ministers and office-bearers of the Church, so as to make the measure binding upon all who might henceforth be ordained or inducted to office in the Church, but taking fright at the unexpected secession of the Revs. Donald Macfarlane, of Raasay, and Donald Macdonald, of Shieldaig, in 1893 — the founders of the Free Presbyterian Church — they proceeded no further until, by the Union of 1900 with the United Presbyterian Church, they succeeded in making their measure operative with the introduction of a Formula which no longer bound ordinands and office-bearers uncompromisingly to the Calvinistic doctrines of the Confession. The new United Free Church, as it was called, was confessedly Arminian in doctrine, and it was upon this issue, together with their Voluntarism, or rejection of the Establishment Principle, that they lost their case by the famous House of Lords' decision in 1904. Higher Criticism had absolutely nothing to do with it. This fact is worth emphasising in view of the fact that efforts are now being made to teach the younger generation of Free Church people that the 1900 struggle was fought on the Higher Criticism, and that the question of Arminianism did not enter into the picture at all. That contention is simply not correct, and it only indicates the extent to which Arminianism is favoured in certain Free Church circles to-day.

The Highlanders split directly over the real issue. Where the people adhered to the old Calvinism of the Confession they remained faithful to the Free Church; where they sympathised with the newer doctrines the United Free Church sprang up. The division was clean. The Free Church was Calvinistic; the United Free Church was Arminian. At that date, so far as the Highlands were concerned, neither church was Modernistic. Such was the bitter fruit of the Moody-Sankey Revival, as against the impetus to Evangelical religion, which has been so largely claimed for it.

A FRESH START

The Free Church now had the opportunity to make an entirely fresh start on the old lines. Arminianism was clean gone from out of her borders, and with it went hymn-singing and the instrumental music which it had been the means of introducing into the services of the Sanctuary. The Declaratory Act, that dishonest and deceitful product of Arminianism, soon followed and was expunged for ever from the records of the Free Church. Despite the crippling enactments of a Parliamentary Commission empowered to deprive the Church of what the law of the land had declared to be hers, the blessing of the Lord rested upon her and she prospered far beyond the wildest dreams of any of her adversaries. One eminent churchman, viewing her weakness

both with respect to ministers and congregations, gave her ten years to live, but it soon became evident that his forecast was dictated, not by prophetic or spiritual insight, but by a wish which was father to the thought. The ten years passed; the Free Church increased in strength; and the divine found himself in the category of the false prophets.

In those early days a warm, earnest spirit prevailed within the church, combined with an intelligent and enthusiastic interest in her witness. Her leaders were men who had suffered for their principles, and they and their people were knit together in a common love for the testimony for which they had so manfully contended.

But, since then, a new generation has arisen and the former warm enthusiasm has died away. Most, to-day, have no deeper attachment to their church than what arises from their having been born in it. Calvinism or Arminianism means nothing to them. They do not understand the meaning of the terms. Nor do they seek to know. Should they be given the opportunity of enlightenment at the close of the ordinary Sabbath evening service, for the most part they simply walk out. They are not interested.

History has a strange way of repeating itself, especially religious history. It has been pointed out by an observer of these matters that spiritual movements seem to spend themselves in a period of about 40 years; and then the former indifference and carelessness return, to prevail until the coming of the next wave. To-day, one has every reason to conclude that history is repeating itself.

Over 50 years have passed since the stirring events of 1900 aroused the country, but these things now are little more than a faint memory, where they are remembered at all. The barren period of indifference and spiritual lethargy has again set in and with it the old Arminian tendency re-appears. True, it may not bear that label, but that there has been a definite drift in the direction of Arminianism is unquestioned. So far as some of the Free Church pulpits are concerned, a robust Calvinism has given place to a colourless presentation of the doctrines of grace, which will neither satisfy a Calvinist nor offend an Arminian. The associations of Keswick and certain other conventions are prized and treasured by many Free Church people and the theology of these gatherings is regarded as above suspicion. To suggest that this theology is largely Arminian and alien to the standards of the Church is the way to arouse their ire, and their attitude seems to be that, if this indeed be so, so much the worse is it for the Free Church.

Concurrently with this, other tendencies are beginning to appear, which go to show even more clearly that the current has again set in in its old direction.

Arminianism in the Old Free Church generated a disregard for the principle of purity of worship, i.e., that nothing must be brought into the public worship of God which has not its warrant in the New Testament Scriptures. To-day, in the circles in which Arminian tendencies evidence themselves, there is revealed an ominous cooling off in attachment to this particular part of the Free Church witness. Purity of worship is still admitted to be an essential part of the constitution of the Church, but nowadays it is seldom preached, and, when it is, by many it is much resented. Most of our younger people, for the very good reason that the position of their church has never been explained to them, do not wish to hear anything about it.

Most ominous of all is the idea prevalent among a certain section of the Free Church ministry that the Formula which they have subscribed binds them to its terms only when they are officiating within the Free Church, and that they are no longer bound by it should they at any time be called upon to officiate in another denomination; in other words, that it does not apply to their ministry as a whole. The meaning of this can only be that they regard the Formula as a declaration of the conditions required of them as ministers of the Free Church, and that so long as they fulfil these conditions in the exercise of their ministry within their church no fault can be found with them. Anything they may do in connection with another denomination, they contend, lies wholly outwith the scope of the Formula.

It does not require much reflection, however, to see that such a conception of the meaning and purpose of the Formula is entirely mistaken. The Formula was never meant to be the Church's declaration of the conditions required by her of her ministers and office-bearers, but the subscriber's declaration of his faith in the Constitution of the Church, as declared in the Formula and his solemn covenant of compliance therewith; and it is only in the light of this unqualified declaration of his faith that he can be admitted. And his faith is declared, not only in the doctrines of the Church's Standards, but also in her worship, government and discipline. These four elements are held as articles of faith without any difference whatsoever as between them, and no person has any right to sign the Formula unless he is firmly convinced that the Free Church position is in its entirety Scriptural. That is what he professes in signing the Formula. Consequently, it is just as heinous for a Free Church minister to break his covenant at one point as at another. The fact that doctrine in itself must needs be the chief thing makes no difference. He is required to assert, maintain and defend the position of the Free Church with respect to doctrine, worship, discipline and government without any difference whatsoever. Therefore, it is just as heinous for him to use hymns and instrumental music in

another denomination as it would be for him to preach heresy.

According to this new view of the meaning of subscription it would be quite possible for a person to say privately to his friends: "I do not altogether believe in the Free Church position, yet I have nothing against it, and, for the sake of entering her ministry, I am quite ready to comply with all the conditions required by her Formula." Under such circumstances of what value is a Formula, so far as securing men for the ministry, who are whole-hearted in their attachment to the Church's testimony is concerned? None whatever.

The signing of the Formula is the culmination in writing of the process of administering and taking the Ordination Vows and is the seal thereof. What is contained in the one is summarised in the other, and in neither the one nor the other is there the slightest hint that the faith and obligations declared apply only to service rendered to the Free Church. There is no limiting clause of any kind.

Further, this view of subscription carries the implication that ministers of the Church are only under the jurisdiction of their Presbytery while in the exercise of their ministry within their own denomination, for it is apparent that the jurisdiction of the Presbytery cannot possibly extend further than the obligations of the Formula — that is to say, that by this view a minister may do anything at all outside his own denomination without having the slightest reason to fear the possibility of the criticism of his Presbytery. This is not only a novel doctrine, but it is a most dangerous one. That the jurisdiction of his Presbytery extends to all phases of a minister's life — public and private — is universally granted; therefore, the obligations of the Formula must go just as far. Ministry and conduct, no matter where, are completely covered by the terms of the Formula, which is signed by every minister of the Free Church.

The fact that such views are abroad, and that the stage has been reached in which, in certain circles, more or less public ventilation is being given to them, is an indication that the tide indeed has turned and that the Free Church is beginning to drift back to the shallows from which she was so mercifully delivered in 1900. It is clear that there is now among many Free Church people, and some ministers, a lack of regard for the testimony of their church, which is apt to develop, unless checked, into a secret dissatisfaction with her constitution and eventually into an open resentment. Thus, history tends to repeat itself, and one cannot but fear that the 1900 battle for Scriptural principles must yet be fought all over again.

Since the foregoing was written the question of the legality of the use of unscriptural forms of

worship by Free Church ministers, when officiating in other churches, has for the second time, been remitted to the judgment of the General Assembly. As on the former occasion the Assembly evaded the issue by departing from it. Thus, the constitution of the Church remains unaffected, but the unwillingness of the Assembly to face the question reveals only too clearly the pull of the tide.

The official organ of the Church, in commenting upon the matter, declares that "sensitive consciences should recognise that it is part of their ordination vows to be submissive to their brethren," now that the General Assembly has so clearly shown its mind, "and that persistence in pressing one's own point of view is not the highest conception of Christian duty"; while the mover of the motion, which was adopted by the Assembly, described those who brought up this issue as "disturbers of the Church." Here we have a perfect example of history repeating itself. This very same counsel was repeatedly given to the protesting minority in the pre-1900 Free Church, and this very same description was applied to them!

Apparently the comment of the Church magazine is based upon the mistaken assumption that questions of right and wrong can be determined by majority vote, which is just another way of asserting the infallibility of the Church!

The historical argument was used at the Assembly, it would appear, with a good deal of emphasis to show that the position of the minority was quite foreign to the practice of the Church both in the Post-Disruption and Post-Union periods, and no doubt many of the younger members were influenced by it; but the worthlessness of the argument would at once have been demonstrated had any of the older members reminded the Assembly that in that same Post-Union period certain Free Church ministers were taken to task by their Presbyteries for having officiated in Established Church congregations and used their forms of worship. (I myself remember five such cases in my early student days—three in the Presbytery of Edinburgh and two in the Presbytery of Glasgow—and there were others).

The idea that some have that doctrine is not involved in the issue is a mistaken one. The Shorter Catechism says: "The Second Commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images or any other way not appointed in His word," and "requireth the receiving, observing and keeping, pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in His Word"; while the Larger Catechism says: "The sins forbidden in the Second Commandment are, all devising, counselling, commanding, using and in anywise approving any religious worship not instituted by God Himself."

If the foregoing then be not one of the doctrines of God's Word, what is it, and wherein does it differ from a doctrine? If it be—and it is—it necessarily follows that to use worship unauthorised by God must be wrong, that is to say, sinful, whether in the Free Church or in any other church. God's law applies equally and with the same authority everywhere. To maintain that that which is sinful within the Free Church is not so in the larger churches, is mere trifling.

It is true that for those who have failed to realise the implications of this particular doctrine there is a measure of excuse, but for those who, after having most solemnly sworn that they would assert, maintain and defend these implications, deliberately and of set purpose break through them there can be no possible excuse.

In 1899, the Rev. Dr. Corkey, of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, in a lecture given at a conference of the Scriptural Worship Union held at Belfast trenchantly criticised the new hymnary, which at that time had been adopted in the Presbyterian Churches both in Scotland and Ireland, and made an amazing revelation of the extent to which this manual had been compiled from Romish and High Church sources, giving detailed proof for every statement made. "Half of the book," Dr. Corkey declared, "is taken from Romish and Episcopal writers, a decided preference being shown for the High Church school. As to the remaining half, fully two-thirds is culled from Lutheran, Arminian, Arian and Socinian sources." (Extracted from the "Christian Banner," 1899).

If these things were true of the hymnary introduced at that time, is there any reason to suppose that the present "Scottish Hymnary" is any sounder? Assuredly no, for the tendency of the age is in the opposite direction.

How then, we may ask, can any man who by his ordination vows has engaged himself to firmly and constantly adhere to "the purity of worship as presently practised in this Church" and to the utmost of his power to assert, maintain and defend the same, go to another church and there use such a manual and another form of worship, without at the same time violating his ordination vows? If he can, then such vows do not make sense and are meaningless, and the sooner they are scrapped the better. If it be simply a case of Free Church people having a preference for the use of the Psalms in their public worship, their ministers can surely meet their desire without having to go under such solemn vows that they will do so. But, if the vows are required on the ground that the Lord hath commanded it so, then we can see every reason for their imposition. To quote the Confession of Faith in its article on the Communion of the Saints as justifying these things — as was done at the Assembly — is worse than trifling.

History indeed repeats itself. One would not need to be greatly surprised should certain brethren one day produce a new Declaratory Act showing the sense in which they take the solemn and weighty articles of the Formula and their Ordination Vows!

CONCLUSION

It is earnestly to be hoped that the purpose of this booklet will not be misunderstood. It does not concern itself with persons or personalities, but with principles, and its purpose is to sound a warning note as to the dangers inherent in the revival of Arminian teachings in Scotland, especially in the Highlands and Islands.

Some people seem to reason thus: "So and So is a good man and his labours have been blessed by the Lord, and therefore his doctrine must be sound." Such reasoning is very superficial. No person who knows anything of the history of religion would for a moment contend that because a man is Arminian in his theology he cannot have the grace of God in his heart, or cannot be acknowledged in his labours to the conversion of souls. The names of Fletcher of Maddeley and John Wesley, remaining indelibly inscribed as they are upon the record of Evangelical history, would at once give the lie to such a contention.

But a good man can mingle the good that he does with harm should his teaching not be wholly sound. The Arminian who may be used of the Lord for the conversion of sinners is used, not because of his preaching of the peculiar doctrines of Arminianism, but because of his preaching the doctrines of grace with which these Arminian tenets are intermingled. The doctrines of Arminianism, apart from the doctrines of grace, cannot be to the salvation or spiritual profit of any soul, whatever harm they may do, for they are not the doctrines of Truth.

In this booklet no attempt has been made to

deal with certain doctrines which nowadays have been adopted pretty generally by Arminians everywhere, in particular what is known as the Keswick doctrine of sanctification, a doctrine which has been adopted *holus bolus* by the Faith Mission. To do so would be to enlarge the scope of this booklet overmuch, and therefore the doctrines of historic Arminianism alone have come in for consideration.

As for my own motive in writing this pamphlet, I have simply wished to make a contribution—however humble—to the continuance of pure doctrine and the testimony of the Scottish Reformation in the Highlands and the Islands of Scotland; and I venture to sound this warning note, in the hope that the Lord in His mercy will arouse many who sleep at ease in Zion to a sense of the dangers by which their citadel is threatened, dangers without and within, and especially to the greatest danger of all, the infiltration of Arminianism — the greatest danger because of its insidious nature and ultimate effects. It has been said by a New England historian, who based his statement upon his study of the religious life of the area in which he was particularly interested, that wherever Arminianism took hold by the second generation it almost invariably produced Unitarianism. The same may be said concerning Scotland, if the latter term be rendered Modernism. The difference is very slight.

Well, may we in this generation take to heart the warning given the church at Philadelphia: "Hold that fast which thou hast that no man take thy crown." May this warning be not given in vain!

The End

Note: In reprinting the foregoing article certain sections, dealing primarily with the activities of the Faith Mission in the Isle of Lewis, Scotland, have been omitted with the author's consent. — Editor.

Sketches of the Covenanters

By J. C. McFeeters

Chapter XLIII

The Covenanters' Bible

The Covenanters dearly loved the Bible. They esteemed it very highly for the sake of God, its Author. They believed in its inspiration, genuineness, infallibility, majesty, and power. The Bible inspired? Yes, the Covenanters had no troublesome thoughts on that question. The Holy Spirit, in their estimation, was the source

of that Book; the contents were all His own. He produced every sentence, formed every clause, chose every word found in the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, and filled all brimful and overflowing with God's own meaning. He did all this through the men who were employed as the inspired writers. The Covenanters believed in the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible.

They discovered also a second inspiration.

The Holy Spirit inspires the devout reader. He opens the heart to receive the Scriptures, and He opens the Scriptures to yield their meaning. Then, and only then, the Bible appears in its true greatness. Then is it the effective voice of God, tender as the sob of a babe, and majestic as thunder; it then is the temple of living truth, filled with the glory of the Lord's world, showing the beauty of holiness, the mystery of the cross, the conquest of death, the horrors of sin, the doom of the lost, the joy of the saved. Oh, what a Book the Bible is to the inspired reader! It becomes transparent. The light of the face of Jesus Christ flashes from the lines and between the lines, through the words and amidst the letters, turning the page into heaven's bright scenery, the chapters into the unveiling of the wonders of redemption. Such was the Book of God to the Covenanters, as they passed through the fires of persecution.

The homeless Covenanters, wandering from place to place, carried the Bible with them. It was their faithful guide and constant companion. When they were hungry, it was their food; when thirsty, it was their drink; when forsaken, it was their friend; when wounded, it was their balm; when pursued, it was their refuge; when condemned, it was their advocate; when executed, it was their welcome into heaven. When they returned to the darksome caves, its promises made the dripping stones shine; when they sought shelter in the mountains, the music of the Psalms cheered their hearts; when their blood bedewed the moss, the loud cry on Calvary sanctified their pain; when they sat on the Bass Rock begirt with waves and swept by storms, the visions, creations, and tumultuous grandeurs of Patmos were reproduced in the spiritual experiences of these illuminated sufferers, by means of the Word of God. To these devout Covenanters, the blessed Book yielded up its wealth, breathed its deepest love, revealed its hidden glory. In their spiritual visions, the desert blossomed at their feet, gardens flourished around them, harvests ripened for their sickle; summer drove back the dreary winter; they verily dwelt in Immanuel's land.

The Covenanters loved the Bible more than their lives. In it they found eternal life, and counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Many instances are on record, showing their willingness to die, rather than abandon, or conceal, the Book of God. One man, M'Roy by name, was shot on the spot, because he was found reading his Bible. It was Sabbath, a sweet summer day. That morning he drove his cows to pasture, carrying the sacred Book with him. The field is a beautiful place for personal devotions. Here the soul can luxuriate in prayer and meditation, holding fellowship with heaven. A solemn stillness had fallen upon

the broad landscape; nothing was heard but the notes of the plover, the bleating of the lambs, and the grazing of the cows. M'Roy sat down on the soft grass, and opened the Book of God. He was then in his element; he delighted in the law of the Lord. The sun poured down its blessings upon the fields, and a light much brighter spread around his soul; the fragrant air fanned his brow, and sweeter aroma from the "mountain of myrrh" refreshed his spirit. His heart was beating fast with the joys that were crowding into his inner life. He was preparing, though he knew it not, for a crisis. Suddenly and rudely the spiritual reverie was interrupted. Captain Lagg, with a company of horsemen, was dashing across that field, when their eyes fell upon the lonely herdsman. They galloped to the spot where he sat in solemn composure.

"What book is that you are reading?" Lagg gruffly asked.

"It is the Bible, Sir," meekly replied M'Roy, looking up into the face of the rough soldier, who held his weapon ready for action. The confession sealed his death.

"Your cows must find another herdsman," sternly returned Lagg, who immediately delivered the fatal shot. The bleeding body struggled a moment on the heath, then the ransomed spirit took its flight to brighter realms.

The Bible won the young, as well as the more matured. It warmed, strengthened, purified, and ennobled the hearts of sons and daughters, affording comfort and arousing heroism equal to that of fathers and mothers. Andrew Hislop, while yet a youth, was overtaken as he hastened to a hiding-place, and was put on trial for his life, while he stood before the soldiers in the field across which he was running. His Bible was found on his person. His mother's home had been demolished by Claverhouse some time previous; she and her children had been compelled to face the future without food or shelter. She had been charged with harboring Covenanters; therefore her residence had been destroyed, her provisions seized, and her children scattered; all were now being hunted for their lives. Claverhouse had found Andrew. He was allowed a short time for prayer. His prayer brought the needed blessing with more than lightning-speed; sufficient grace and strength were immediately given. His face shone with courage; his eyes gleamed with contempt for death and danger; a halo of victory seemed to wreath him; the Holy Spirit filled his soul with joy; his lips took up the Psalmist's inspired challenge, and the solemn music smote the ears of his foes, as he sang—

"The mighty Lord is on my side,
I will not be afraid;
For any thing that man can do
I shall not be dismayed."

The dragoons were unable to endure the glory of that face, or the sweetness of that voice. He was ordered to draw down his "bonnet" over his eyes, and receive the volley. He sternly refused, lifting it higher on his dauntless brow, and affirming that he could look the musketeers in the face, while they delivered the murderous fire. Then holding out his Bible, he haled them to the Judgment-seat, where they would be judged by that Book.

"Shoot," cried Claverhouse. Not a gun was discharged. The men were overawed by the sweet innocency and intrepid spirit of the youthful Covenanter.

"Shoot that bonnie young man!" exclaimed the officer, who had charge of the men appointed to do the bloody work. "I'll fight Clavers and a' his men first." Three others were found sufficiently hardened to do the cruel deed. The young hero fell, and expired. As the horsemen rode away, the stricken mother hastened to the spot. The young heart had ceased to beat; the eyes opened no more upon her kindly face. Sadly she gathered up the oozing brains, for which he had brought a clean napkin, knowing too well what had occurred; she then prepared the body for burial.

The Covenanters endeavored to keep the Bible ever close at hand. It was the open book in the house, the desk-book in the shop, the pocket-book in the field, the guide-book on the road. When they had a breathing spell at their work, they inhaled its fragrance, fed upon its manna, drank from its wells of salvation, plucked the ripe fruit of its orchards. A glance at its

sacred pages, now and then through the day, supplied strength, wisdom, comfort, and courage so much needed. But this pious habit imperiled life. Arthur Inglis one day, while resting his team at the plow, sat down on the furrow, with his open Bible. He was suddenly sighted by the wary dragoons, who were scouting the country. They spurred their steeds, and were quickly drawn up around their victim. The fact that he was reading the Bible was sufficient to convince them that he was worthy to die. Neither judge nor jury was necessary for conviction. He received the deadly volley and fell, expiring in the furrow where he sat.

The Bible, how we should prize it! Our fathers, when they opened the Book of God, knew not but ere they closed it their blood would stain the page where the eyes were feasting; yet they relished it more than their necessary food. How will our delight in the Word of God compare with theirs?

Points for the Class

1. How did the Covenanters esteem the Bible?
2. What kind of inspiration did they ascribe to the Bible?
3. What second inspiration was needed to understand it?
4. What was the Bible to these sufferers?
5. Describe their devotion to the Word of God; the experience of McRoy; Andrew Hislop; Arthur Inglis.
6. How ought we to esteem the Bible?

Women and the Ministry: Some Guidance from St. Paul

By the Rev. C. Stewart Petrie, B.A., B. D.

(Continued from last issue)

The Danish scholar, Professor Johs. Peder- sen, has summed up this aspect of the creation stories. "In both accounts man and woman are indissolubly bound together, but the closeness of the connection is differently expressed." In the first narrative, "singular and plural are used indifferently about the same being. Man is a whole consisting of two parts, the man and the woman. Nothing is said of the relation between them, except that they are indispensable to each other, and not till they are united do they together form a whole human being." In the second narrative, "Yahweh first created man, i.e., the man. The

man is himself man, but he lacks something that he may be so wholly." The needed help is given in woman. "She is taken out of him, and thus she must be there, in order that he may be man wholly. She is a part of him." "Thus the shade of difference between the two accounts is that, according to the former, the man and the woman together make man, while according to the latter the man is man proper, though the woman is necessary in order that he may be man wholly."³

These aspects of the Genesis narratives have been stressed because of their importance for the

2. *The Book of Genesis* (Westminster Commentaries, Methuen & Co., London), 12th edn., reprinted 1954, pp. 42-43.
3. *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, I-II (Oxford Univ. Press, London), reprinted 1946, pp. 61-62.

understanding of Paul. From them there emerge three relevant points. First, in the New Testament understanding of the creation stories, these stories are treated as a whole, and Paul does not anticipate modern source theories. Our Lord's use, too, is an instance of this treatment of them as a whole: "From the beginning of the creation, male and female made he them. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh: so that they are no more twain, but one flesh" (Mark 10:6-8; Matthew 19:4-6). Here words from Genesis I and 2 are brought together regardless of any modern recognition of different sources. Consequently, in seeking to interpret Paul's use of Genesis, it is quite misleading to separate what he has, like his Master, kept together. It is to the Genesis passages as a whole that Paul turns.⁴

The second point is that, in Pederson's phrase, "man and woman are indissolubly bound together." This truth runs through the narratives. "Male and female created he them." "It is not good for the man to be alone." "They shall be one flesh." When to these significant assertions is added the charge of Genesis 1:28, "Be fruitful, and multiply," it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the divine purpose was to be fulfilled by the union of the two sexes in marriage. For man to be alone, and no less for woman, in God's plan, "is not good." This receives support from two of the ten commandments, either of which, in our own day, we ignore at our peril. Paul himself reminds us that "the first commandment with promise" is that which says, "Honour thy father and mother" (Ephesians 6:2)—particular honour, that is, not to one's elders in any general sense, but specifically to parents, father and mother. The seventh commandment more directly concerns the preservation of the sanctity of marriage. Again, these both have our Lord's full endorsement. (See Matthew 15:4-6, Mark 7:10-13, Luke 2:51; Matthew 19:6, Mark 10:9.)

So, when Paul turns to Genesis for support, he is thinking of the normal man and woman who are indissolubly bound together in fulfilment of the Creator's expressed purpose. It is this which makes the choice in 1 Corinthians II between "man and woman" and "husband and wife" finally irrelevant. Marriage is the norm.

What of those who do not attain fulfilment in marriage? Jesus recognized that there were some who accepted celibacy "for the kingdom of heaven's sake" (Matthew 19:12), but neither he, nor Paul after him, recommended this form of self-renunciation as the ideal. It is the exception, not the rule. In 1 Corinthians 7, where Paul treats of the matter, he is not giving a general

dissertation on marriage; he is seeking to meet particular difficulties in what are not normal circumstances. He frankly admits that he has "no commandment of the Lord" (v. 25) to offer the unmarried. The most he can offer is an opinion which, he makes clear, is qualified as "good for the present distress" (v. 27), because "the time is short" (v. 29).

The third point is that, while indicating that man and woman are complementary to each other, the Genesis passages at the same time set woman in subordination to man. On this subordinate relationship Paul's teaching hinges, not only in 1 Corinthians, but also in Ephesians 5:22ff. and 1 Timothy 2:11ff. It is reasonable to assume a similar basis for Colossians 3:18f. (Compare 1 Timothy 3:4, 12; Titus 2:4-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7.)

This vexed question of "subjection", or rather, "subordination" goes to the heart of the matter. Understanding is not promoted but hindered by the persistent suggestion, mistaken or wilful, that "subordination" implies inferiority; and it is to be deplored that encouragement of an "inferiority complex" is allowed to confuse the issue. Is it possible to lay the persistent bogey of woman's alleged "inferiority," a notion to which neither Jesus nor Paul subscribes? The bogey has arisen chiefly through distortion of the Genesis narratives or non-acceptance of their true implications and then through the consequent reluctance to admit the validity of Paul's teaching.

The verb that he uses is *hypotassesthai* and the noun is *hypotage*. The terms are used of the woman, who is to "subordinate" herself or be in "subordination." They are not used of the man as if he is to "subordinate" the woman. Our word "subordination," which is a literal, Latinized rendering, preserves the basic idea, that of "ranking under." The fact is frequently emphasized but it seems so difficult of acceptance that, at the risk of repeating the obvious, it must be reiterated: this "subordination" does not mean "inferiority." There may be variation in the "ranking," but there is no derogation of the person. Paul in no wise revokes his assurance that "in Christ" all have the same filial standing before God. "There is no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." The declared spiritual status of woman is unassailable. Yet Paul does not, for he cannot, banish the divinely ordained characteristics that mark the differences of sex. "Male and female created he them." In this life at any rate, not even for those who are "in Christ" can any amount of verbal agility or wishful thinking eradicate or reverse the God-given sex distinctions. And, commensurate with a parity of persons, goes the subordination of woman to man by divine decree.

4. Separation of the Genesis stories, with emphasis on the "contradictions," and the "exegesis" that follows, detract from the value of Miss M. E. Thrall's study, *The Ordination of Women to the Priesthood* (S.C.M. Press, London, 1958), in face of her persuasive style.

That subordination does not mean inferiority is brought out by Paul's frequent reminder that Christian relationships recognize mutual rights and obligations of the sexes. The interdependence of man and woman is particularly stressed for those who are "in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:11). Even though woman was originally taken from man, every man subsequently has been born of woman; but all things, including man and woman and their relationships, "are of God" (v. 12). Moreover, if wives are called upon to subordinate themselves to their husbands, husbands are no less enjoined to love their wives (Ephesians 5:22-23, Colossians 3:18-19, and compare also 1 Peter 3:7).

Paul is not propounding theories of his own devising. What he writes is based on neither sentiment nor masculine prejudice. He is aiming to expound the divine purpose to Christian readers. He shows how the inter-relationships of men and women, their complementary personalities, their mutual obligations and duties, must accord with and strive to fulfil their natural, that is to say their God-given, endowments, which includes woman's subordination to man.

The contemporary plea for the acceptance of women into the ministry of the Church. Whatever guise it may take, is ultimately bound up with the modern "emancipation" of woman and the general intolerance of restraint. The factors involved are many and complex in this movement for unfettered "freedom." Much good has come of it, but not all is gain. There is much that is mistaken, and a great deal that is wrong. "He that goeth onward," we need to be reminded, "and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God" (2 John 9). Not all "advancement" is genuine progress.

In woman's desire to assert her complete equality with man, more is being lost than feminine graces. The arrival in society of the "career woman," so often strenuously trying, by aping the male, to mollify a festering grievance that she was burdened at birth with the wrong sex; the popular acceptance by society of the working

wife and mother who is impelled to augment the family income by force of dread economic pressures or blatantly in pursuit of luxurious living; the equally accepted parental absenteeism that inevitably victimizes children and encourages delinquency; the prevailing sexual license and the ready turning to divorce, which are bringing marriage into contempt — these are among the disquieting manifestations that are associated with the "modern" woman's repudiation of those privileges and responsibilities that are uniquely feminine. Man, who is aiding and abetting her in the desire to deplore or spurn her sex, may co-operatively don an apron or manipulate the washing machine, but nature utterly debars him from taking her place as wife and mother.

St. Paul would undoubtedly endorse to-day some wise words that were uttered thirty years ago. "The world wants desperately, not female priests and bishops, but Christian wives and mothers. When the home is, as S. Chrysostom calls it, 'a little church,' there is a firm foundation laid on which can be built the fabric of a female ministry in society, various enough to give scope to the richest individual gifts, and wide enough to satisfy the keenest individual zeal. The only equality of the sexes which the Church can rightly make the basis of its practical system recognizes differences of natural function and accepts the principle of subordination in common service. Sex is a factor of such importance that any attempt to ignore it in the sphere of ecclesiastical order must defeat itself. Only by frankly admitting difference can genuine equality be secured. Subordination is the very principle of ordered society, and it has its first expression and ultimate sanction in the Home."⁵

These words have even more relevance to-day. "Modern" is a specious term, wondrous in its propaganda value. It is required of us, however, that we do not yield to the clamant urgings of any popular "modern" majority, but that we do the will of God.

The End

The King's Messengers

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

In the chapters preceding our attention has been directed to Jesus' activities in the earlier stages of his public life. We have seen him on tour of the north country with headquarters in Capernaum. Now and then he took time out for a visit to the capital.

As is only to be expected, there is definite

indication of informal testimony to him on the part of all converts and disciples. We may well surmise that this sort of promotional activity was going on more or less continually.

The Master is also found to be engaged in special training of a chosen few preparatory to the act of sending them out. They were soon to

5. H. H. Henson: "The Ordination of Women," Presidential Address to the Durham Diocesan Conference, March 24th, 1928, reprinted in *Bishoprick Papers* (Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 10.

be assigned a special mission and formally commissioned and sent forth. As part of their education for such service they had already received the mountain discourse and probably also the parables.

The twelve had been especially selected and set apart to the apostleship. Significant for the next event in their lives was the name that was given to them; that is, apostle, which means "one sent." Their appointment to the apostleship was significant for them not only for the time but also for the remainder of their lives, and also for them in Christ and his Church to the end of time and indeed to all eternity.

For the apostles were to be the supreme office-bearers in the Church. They were to be the official witnesses of the life and death, the resurrection and ascension. Together with the Lord himself as the foundation and chief cornerstone, they were to be foundation stones in the stately edifice of Christ and his Church.

At this particular point in the story the mission of the twelve was a limited extension service. By their agency Jesus would enlarge and extend his work and hasten the completion of his own evangelism, gather the elect and advance the formation of his kingdom.

The task of his preaching and healing he had so far reserved to himself as his own responsibility. But now others, namely the twelve, were to be included in this. And so one day he called them together and gave them power to represent him. He commissioned them, gave them instructions and sent them forth. They were delegated to go and speak and do service for him. This mission of the twelve is recorded in Matthew 10, Mark 6:7-13, and Luke 9:1-6. Compassion for the needy multitudes was apparently the principal motive and preparation in the prayer life of the twelve is clearly indicated (Mt. 9:36-38).

Its exact position in the public life of Christ is not too easy to determine. In Matthew and Luke it follows the raising of Jairus' daughter and the promulgation by the Pharisees of their blasphemy. In Mark it follows the record of Jesus' second visit to "his own country", that is to Nazareth and its environs. In Mark and Luke it precedes the record of how Herod, his hands stained with the blood of John the Baptist, was affected by the sensational reports of the day concerning Jesus.

One of the questions concerning its place in the story has to do with its position in relation to the great day of the parables. Matthew appears to put it before that day; Mark and Luke

at some time after. We have chosen to follow the order as indicated in the latter, though it is doubtful if anyone can afford to be too sure. *1

In any case it is evident that it came at a time when both the popularity of the Lord and the opposition to him were on the increase. While clearly an expression of Christ's compassion for the poor and needy it was also one of several measures which were taken to hasten the work in view of the fast-growing opposition. The mission was set in motion partly in consideration of the opposition as it had already developed and partly as Jesus clearly foresaw that it would. It is apparent from the nature of the instructions given that he was thinking in terms of both the present and the future rejection. By far the greater portion of the instructions given the disciples has to do with their behaviour in this situation.

They were to go forth two by two. In Matthew's gospel their names are given in sets of two, which seems to indicate how they were paired.

Certain restrictions were placed upon them as they went. They were commanded not to go into the way of the Gentiles, nor enter into any of the cities of the Samaritans but rather to go to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." This restriction followed from that laid upon the Lord himself as to the area to be covered by him in his earthly ministry. Furthermore they were to look to the field itself for their temporal support, from those whose response was favorable to their visitation and were recipients of the benefit.

Their visitation was to be an errand of mercy; and in case it was not well received, of judgment. No complicated program of action was involved. They were to proclaim the kingdom in the simplest terms and exercise the Saviour's own powers of healing and deliverance. They were to go preaching and saying "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Of their mission as carried out it is said that they went out and preached that men should repent.

It goes without saying that they were abundantly endowed with power for all they were required to do. Having freely received, they were to freely give. Their ministry wherever well received was to be exercised without let or stint. And again it is said that "they departed and went through the towns preaching the gospel and healing everywhere" (Lk. 9:6).

We can imagine what kind of experience they had wherever welcomed; in any home where they were hospitably received and where they were instructed to remain until they moved on. They were to accept whatever hospitality

* (1) - This divergence in the accounts is probably explained by Matthew's use of the topical method as compared with others who as a rule adhere more closely to the chronology. Of all of the writers it may be said that their aim is not biography but character-depiction. So understood, the Gospels, taken together, comprise a fourfold partrairure.

the home afforded and commune with their hosts in the things of God.

In the natural course they would tell how they had found the Lord, or rather how he had found them, and relate their thrilling experience in relation to him. They would tell of his wonderful preaching and wonder-working. They would report the teaching given and how men and women everywhere were being converted and gathered in. They would cite instances of how the whole way of life and outlook upon life was being changed.

As they conversed many would respond to the call of the Lord and there would be joy in heaven and among the angels of God over other sinners as they also repented and believed. All such would find the Lord Jesus himself present both in and with his messengers, receiving the humble and contrite to himself and into his kingdom. Broken hearts would be mended, captives freed; the blind would receive sight, the ears of the deaf would be unstopped and the tongues of the dumb sing. The lame would walk again and run and leap for very joy. Unclean spirits would be exorcised and those in bondage to them rejoice in their release.

On the other hand they would meet with many a rebuff. Jesus clearly perceived and fully understood how the tide of public opinion was beginning to turn. Thus the greater part of what he had to say pertained to their conduct in relation to the enemy. "Behold," he says, "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

Wolves are beasts of prey and the sheep have little or no protection of their own against them. But a snake is crafty and knows how to play dead and then ever so slowly glide into the nearest cover. The dove, of course, is ever the symbol of utter inoffensiveness and peace. And so; if many are wolves and much more to be feared even than the animal kind, whether with or without sheep's clothing; and others are sheep; the latter, at least, are more intelligent than their animal counterparts and can emulate the serpent and the dove. So much at least, God helping them, the sheep of Christ are able and are well advised to do.

This combination of metaphors constitutes a striking introduction to the main body of the discourse (Mt. 10:16-39). The disciples, though warned of dangers and hardships in the way, were absolutely assured of the Father's loving care and presence with them and of the rewards pending both for themselves and all with whom they came in contact. The Master magnified their mission and pronounced his blessing on their friends and God's judgment on their enemies.

We note that Jesus in making them one with

him in the work also made himself one with them. We further read that he himself "departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities" (Mt. 11:1).

The next we hear of this first collective evangelistic mission is the record of the return of the twelve with their glowing report (Mt. 6:30; Lk. 9:10 and see Mt. 11:25-30). Everything turned out exactly as they had been advised and it would be a decided understatement to say that they returned in high spirits. They had come through safely and all their needs had been supplied. In particular they had been thrilled with the sense of the power with which they had been endued and in which they had ministered to many and had served the Lord. Having gathered themselves together to him again they "told him all things both what they had done and what they had taught."

Their task had not been easy and they were weary and Jesus proposed that they "go apart into a desert place and rest awhile." This however was not to be. They departed into a desert place by ship privately," but, "the people saw them departing and many knew him and ran afoot out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him" (Mk. 6:32-34).

The only other group commission of the kind, of which we are told as having taken place in the days of Jesus earthly ministry, was the mission of the seventy (the mission, Lk. 10:1-12; the return Lk. 10:17-24). This, Luke, and Luke alone, records.

It involved a much greater number of disciples and came much later. These seventy also were sent forth two by two. They were of the rank and file of the disciples but were identified with their Lord in their mission even as the apostles had been in theirs. Jesus sent them out to go before him "whither he himself would come," and said, "he that heareth you heareth me and he that despiseth you despiseth me and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Lk. 10:1 and 16).

This mission came after the great events of Jesus' mid-career and after he had begun to face up to the place of his death (Lk. 9:51.)

The situation had undergone a great change for now the Lord was definitely on his way to his death. Here again, as in the case of the twelve, the disciples are advised of the greatness of the harvest, the scarcity of labourers and of the need of prayer that many workers might be raised up and sent forth (compare Mt. 9:35-38 with Luke 10:2 and see Jo. 4:35-38).

Once again we read of the joyous return of the laborers, relating how even the devils were subject unto them in Jesus' name. On this occasion we read of the Lord's own exultation in

the good report. Doubtless the return was prophetic of what the outcome of such services would ever be. "He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:6). Master and servant could rejoice together in the success of the mission but the supreme cause of rejoicing for the disciples always and everywhere is in the fact that their names are "written in heaven," gloriously inscribed in "the Lamb's book of life."

It should not be overlooked that in addition to these collective missions there were also a number of individual missions which were set in motion by the Lord. We read for example in Lk. 9:59-60 of one who wished to serve and who was commissioned to "go and preach the kingdom of God."

Another case of the kind was that of the Gadarene demoniac, so long and grievously beset, but gloriously delivered. The Saviour's parting word was that he should return to his own house and friends and "tell how great things God had done for him" (Mk. 5:18-20; Lk. 8:38,39). Others are known to have applied for the same duty. And we may well surmise that there were others of the kind, perhaps many, that were sent out singly on missions of their own.

We remember also that all of the prophets witnessed to Christ (Acts 10:43). The last and greatest of them was John the Baptist, of whom it is said that he "came for a witness" (Jo. 1:7). If there were ever a case of single-handed witness-bearing it was that of John. And there were others. Andrew told Peter; John, James; and Philip, Nathanael. And we recall the woman of Samaria who left her water-pot and went her way and said, "Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

In all of these and all other instances we note the inner compulsion which moved them to such witnessing. They acted under orders, it is true; but also always from the heart. That very fact in itself is the great witness and constitutes the very essence of all true witness-bearing.

It is the most natural thing in the world for the true believer to testify to the Saviour and to his own experience in relation to him. It would be utterly contrary to our new nature in Christ not to want to speak for him. It would be a sign of something seriously lacking in our profession not to do so. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Our missions and evangelism, as has been said, "is at the very heart of our religion. Without it there is no Christianity." *(2)

But over and above the lessons to be derived from these missions is "the great commission." "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," etc. (Mt. 28:19f) and "ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:18).

According to the terms so given, none is exempted. The commission applies not only to the church as a whole but also to each and every member in it. It was upon more than the eleven that the Spirit came. "The number of the names were about an hundred and twenty." "They were **all** filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 1:13-15 and 2:1-4).

They "began to speak" for Christ. And so also, always, must all they that are his. Whether at home or abroad, in person or by proxy, we are to "go" and "teach." All believers are called to be the King's messengers, ambassadors of the gospel of peace. A universal obligation rests upon all to witness and confess and testify for Christ.

However it is not to be supposed that our witness-bearing is to be exercised without restriction or restraint of any kind. As a matter of fact the believer's testimony is ever subject to certain specified rules and regulations. Principles have been laid down—applicable not only for the time but for all time. The "layman" is never to take to himself any office or office-work which has not been committed to him. And while it is true that the disciple is not to hide his light under a bushel but raise it on a candlestick so as to give its light to all that are in the house; on the other hand, he is strictly enjoined not to give that which is holy unto the dogs or cast his pearls before swine. By plain implication there is a demand upon the gospel messenger for the exercise of that great virtue of self-control in all his witnessing.

The Lord Jesus himself was subject to strict restriction all through the formative years of life. And the time came in his public life when the propagation of the gospel had to be severely repressed. There was, of course, a delay of final action in the revelation of God in Christ, the fulness of which awaited the time of the great events which were to consummate his earthly life and work.

In addition, however, there was a radical conflict of interpretation during the life and time of Christ, with regard to the kind of King the Messiah was to be and the kind of kingdom he would inaugurate. As between Jesus and the Jews there was a state of "absolute contrariety" of view in respect to the fundamental ideas involved. Even between him and the disciples, for the duration of his public life, there was a partial conflict of view.

*(2) - Victor Buksbaden in *Christianity Today*, Dec. 6, 1958.

More detailed attention to this is reserved for another chapter. For the present we simply note, for one thing, the restricted area of service or field of operations, which was imposed, first upon Jesus himself and secondarily by him upon his followers. This applied, of course, only for the duration of his days among us in the flesh. The situation was that the Jews, as God's chosen people of old, had a right to preferential treatment in the public presentation of the Word.

Another restriction which had to be laid down for the time was that which arose out of the situation relative to opposition and conflict. There came a time for temporary suppression of the good news of the kingdom and of withdrawal from the scene. A time came when Jesus, as it were, forsook the people and nation that had evidently forsaken him; and devoted himself almost exclusively to his own, to those who truly believed and loved and served and followed him.

The result was the imposition of silence upon them for the time, as also upon many who were special beneficiaries of his ministry. This restriction however was only for the time in which the revelation of God in Christ was still in the making; when, for the time, the opposition threatened to crush the movement before the crucial work could be accomplished.

When this time passed there was no longer any need for such limitation. The believers were both enjoined and emboldened to speak for Christ regardless of all cost of consequences to themselves. When that time came they had no choice but to confess and so to "show forth the praises of him who had called them out of darkness into his marvelous light."

There is indeed no set form, no fixed and settled way of witness-bearing. It comes down in the last analysis to the individual, to each in his own way. I will be according to each one's own faith and understanding, his own personal knowledge and experience, notwithstanding all weakness and unworthiness. Peter will tell of the Lord Jesus of his own experience and observation and Paul of his. Each will testify of the Saviour-Lord in his own situation whatever it may be in which he is placed. We are to witness for Christ irrespective of all possible mistakes and shortcomings, both by word and by life.

If a transfer of church connection is involved, "Better lose my church than lose my Christ," as one has said.*(3)

"Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill;
God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is forever." *(4)

The Puritan Principle of Worship

By the Rev. William Young, B. Litt., Th.D.

(Continued from preceding issue)

Thomas Manton, in his exposition on James 5:13 (Manton on **James**, 2nd Ed. London, 1653), observes that singing of Psalms is a duty of the Gospel. Although Manton does not forbid the singing of other songs besides Scripture-Psalms, he has no other grounds to adduce for this besides the testimony of Tertullian's **Apology** C. 29 (Postquam manuum et lumina, ut quisque de Scripturis vel proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in medium Deo canere). Nevertheless, Manton proceeds to argue that Scriptural Psalms may be sung and beyond this that they are fittest to be sung. (pp. 572 ff.).

"1. That they may be sung, may be proved by reason; the Word limiteth not, and therefore we have not reason to make any restraint. They are part of the Word of God, full of matter that tendeth to instruction, comfort, and the praise of God, which are the ends of singing; and therefore, unless we will bring a disparagement upon the Scriptures, we cannot deny them a

part in our spiritual mirth. Besides, thus hath it been practiced by Christ himself, by the Apostles, the servants of the Lord in all ages: and there is no Reason, why, in these dregs of Time, we should obtrude Novel Restraints upon the People of God. That Christ himself sang Scripture-Psalms, may be probably collected out of Matt. 26:30 Hymnesantes, **When they had sung an Hymn** etc. which Hymn, that it was one or more of David's Psalms, may be proved by these Reasons to those that do not wrangle, rather than scruple. 1. By the custom of the Jews; they were wont to end the Paschal Supper with Solemn Psalms or Hymns: they sang six Psalms in the night of the Passover, when the Lamb was eaten; the Psalms were 113 etc. to the 119 which were called by the Jews the **Great Hallelujah**, as **Lucas Brugensis**, **Scaliger**, **Buxtorf** and others skilled in their customs, do inform us; and 'tis more than probable, that Christ followed their Custom herein, because in all other things he observed their usual Passover

* (3) - Testimony of the late Miss Alma Herdman; Morrisonville, Ill.

* (4) - "Luther's hymn."

Rites. 2. From the Word itself, **they sang an Hymn**. Now what shall we understand by this, but such an Hymn as was usual in that age? . . . Now the Psalms or Hymns then in use were the Psalms of **David**. 3. The Evangelists specified no new Hymn made for this purpose, who are wont to mention matters of far less moment or concernment. **Grotius** indeed is singular, and thinketh that the seventeenth of **John** was the Hymn; but that's a solemn Prayer, not in Meeter or measured words, hath not the stile of other Hymns and Songs; and those words were spoken by Jesus alone, the Disciples could not so properly joyn in them: **These words spake Jesus, and lift up his eyes**, etc. John 17:1.

"That Hymn which **Paul** and **Silas** sang, **Acts 26:25**, was probably also a Scriptural Hymn; such were used in that age: Certainly it must be such an Hymn as both were acquainted with, or else how could they sing it together? If the practice of the Apostles may be interpreted by their Instructions, the case will be clear: In **Col. 3:16** and **Eph. 5:19** Paul biddeth us speak to one another, psalmois kai hymnois kai odais pneumatikais, in **Psalms**, and **hymns**, and **spiritual songs**. Now these words (which are the known division of David's Psalms, and exactly answering to the Hebrew words, **Shurim**, **Te-hillim** and **Mizmorim**, by which his Psalms are distinguished and entituled) being so precisely used by the Apostle in both places, do plainly point us to the Book of Psalms.

"2. Scripture-Psalms not only may be sung, but are fittest to be used in the Church, as being endited by an infallible and unerring spirit, and are of a more diffusive and unlimited concernment, then the private dictates of any particular person or spirit, in the Church. 'Tis impossible any should be of such a large heart as the penmen of the Word, to whom God vouchsafed such a publique, high, and infallible conduct; and therefore their excellent composures and addresses to God being recorded and to the use of the Church for ever, it seemeth a wonderful arrogance and presumption in any to pretend to make better, or that their private and rash effusions will be more edifying. Certainly if we consult with our own experience, we will have little cause to grow weary of **David's** Psalms, those that pretend to the gift of **Psalmody** venting such wilde, raw, and indigested stuff, belching out revenge and passion, and mingling their private quarrels and interests with the publike worship of God. But suppose men of known holiness and ability should be called to this task, and the matter propounded to be sung be good and holy; yet certainly then men are like to suffer loss in their reverence and affection, it being impossible that they should have such absolute assurance and high esteem of persons ordinarily gifted, as of those infallibly assisted; Therefore upon the whole matter I should pronounce, That so much

as an infallible gift doth excel a common gift, so much do Scriptural Psalms excel those that are of a private composure."

Manton answers a variety of scruples, the last of which concerns "the present Translation of the Book of Psalms, the Meeter being so low and flat, and coming so far short of Davids original." He gives a sane reply: "I confess this is a defect that needeth publique Redress and Reformation: But 'tis good to make use of present means, though weak, when we have no better; as the Martyrs did of the First Translations of the Bible, which in many places were faulty and defective. At least 'tis far more safe to sing the Psalms as now translated, than to joyn in the raw, passionate, and revengeful eructations of our modern Psalmists. Besides for those that conscientiously and modestly scruple this the Lord hath provided some help by the more excellent Translations of **Sands**, **Rous**, **Manton** and others. Thus I have shewed how many ways the Devil seeketh to divert men from this comfortable Ordinance." (Manton on **James** pp. 576 f.)

John Calvin, in the preface to "La Forme des Prieres et Chantz ecclesiastiques." (1542), had also recommended the singing of Psalms on the grounds of their being from God. Divine authorization and divine inspiration do not appear to be distinguished by Calvin in the following striking statement: "Or qu'est-il doncq question de faire? C'est d'avoir chansons non sealement honnestes, mais aussi saintes: lesquelles nous soyent comme esquillons pour nous inciter a prier et louer Dieu, a mediter ses oeuvres, afin de l'aymer, craindre, honorer et glorifier. Or ce que dit S. Augustin est vray, que nul ne peut chanter choses dignes de Dieu, sinon qu'il ait recu d'icelui (Aug. in Psal. 34 sermo 1, 1 MSL 34,323): parquoy quand nous aurons bien circuy par tout pour chercher ca et la, nous ne trouverons meilleures chansous ne plus propres pour ce faire, que les Pseaumes de David: lesquels le saint Esprit luy a dictz et faitz. Et pourtant, quand nous les chantons, nous sommes certains que Dieu nous met en la bouche les parolles, comme si luy-mesmes chantoit en nous pour exalter sa gloire. Parquoy Chrysostome exhorte tant hommes que femmes et petis enfans, de saccustomer a les chanter, afin que cela soit comme une meditation pour s' associer a la compagnie des Agnes (Chrysost In Psal. 41:1, 2 tom 5, 156 sqq). "(Calvin, Opera Selecta, ed. P. Barth, D. Scheuner, Vol. II, p. 17).

The following is a rough translation of Calvin's text:

"But what then ought to be done? Let us have songs that are not only decent, but also holy. These will incite us to pray and praise God, to meditate on his works, in order to love, fear, honour and glorify him. But what Augustine says is true, that no one can sing things worthy of God, unless he has received them from

Himself (Aug. on Psalm 34, sermon 1): Therefore, after we have made a thorough search in all regions, we shall not find better nor more proper songs to do this than the Psalms of David, which the Holy Spirit has dictated to him and produced. And moreover, when we sing them we are certain that God puts words in our mouth, as if he himself were singing in us to exalt his glory. Hence Chrysostom exhorts man, women, and little children alike to become accustomed to sing them, in order that their practice might be as a meditation to associate themselves with the company of the angels."

The importance of the regulative principle of Reformed Worship is eloquently proclaimed by John Owen in his work on Communion with God. The third thing in which the saints' chastity unto Christ consists is "in his institutions or matter and, manner of his worship," "Christ marrying his Church to himself, taking it to that relation, still expresseth the main of their chaste and choice affections to him, to lie in their keeping his institutions and his worship according to his appointment. . . On this account those believers who really attend to Communion with Jesus Christ, do labour to keep their hearts chaste to him in his ordinances, institutions and worship, and that two ways.

"1. They will receive nothing, practise nothing, own nothing in his worship but what is of his appointment. They know that from the foundation of the world, he never did allow, nor ever will, that in anything the will of the creatures should be the measure of his honour, or the principle of his worship, either as to matter or to manner . . . Believers know what entertainment all will-worship finds with God. Who hath required those things at your hands? And in vain do you worship me, teaching for doctrines the traditions of men' is the best it meets with. I shall take leave to say what is upon my heart,

and what (the Lord assisting) I shall willingly endeavor to make good against all the world; namely, that that principle that the Church hath power to institute and appoint any thing or ceremony belonging to the worship of God, either as to matter or manner, beyond the orderly observance of such circumstances as necessarily attend such ordinances as Christ himself hath instituted, lies at the bottom of all the horrible superstition and idolatry, of all the confusion, blood, persecution, and wars that have for so long a season spread themselves over the face of the Christian world; and that it is the design of a great part of the Revelation to make a discovery of this truth . . . This, then, they who hold communion with Christ are careful of; they will admit of nothing, practise nothing in the worship of God, private or public, but what they have his warrant for; unless it comes in his name, with Thus saith the Lord Jesus, they will not hear an angel from heaven. They know the apostles themselves were to teach the saints only what Christ commanded them. (Matt. XXVIII, 20.)

"2. They readily embrace, receive, and practise everything that the Lord Christ hath appointed. They inquire diligently into his mind and will that they may know it. They go to him for directions, and beg of him to lead them in any way they have not known. The 119th Psalm may be a pattern for this. How doth the good, holy soul breathe after instruction in the ways and ordinances, the statutes and judgments of God? That I say they are tender in. Whatever is of Christ, they willingly submit unto, and accept of, and give up themselves to the constant practice hereof. Whatever comes on any other account they refuse." (Owen, *On Communion*, London Ed. 1859, pp. 158 ff).

(To be continued)

Religious Terms Defined

A few definitions of important religious terms will be given in this department in each issue of **Blue Banner Faith and Life**. The aim will be conciseness without the sacrifice of accuracy. Where possible the Westminster Shorter Catechism will be quoted.

SALVATION. This term is used in the general sense of preservation or deliverance from any kind of trouble or danger (as I Sam. 19:5); but more particularly, it is used to describe that work of God, through the mediation of Christ and the application of the Holy Spirit, by which His people are delivered from sin, wrath and hell, and brought into union and communion with Himself.

SANCTIFICATION. "Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are re-

newed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness" (S.C. 35).

SANHEDRIN (also spelled Sanhedrim). The highest Jewish governmental assembly in the time when Jesus Christ was on earth. In the King James Version the word "council" is used.

SATAN. Literally, "adversary." Satan is that spiritual being who is the chief adversary of God and His people. He is called in Scripture Apollyon (Destroyer), the devil (slanderer), the

prince of this world, the father of lies, the old serpent, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, the god of this world. Scripture teaches that Satan is real, personal, intelligent, desperately wicked, utterly contrary to God, and of great but strictly limited power.

SAVIOUR. One who saves. In the general sense a saviour is anyone who saves from any evil or danger (I Kings 13:5; Neh. 9:27). In the general sense, God is called "the Saviour of all men" (I Tim. 4:10). Specifically, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world (I John 4:14). The New Testament, as well as the Old, often speaks of God as our Saviour. Of course God is our Saviour **from sin and wrath** only through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

SCEPTIC. One whose religious attitude is that of doubt rather than that of faith; in particular, one who doubts the existence of God, the truth of the Bible, the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, etc.

SCHISM. An unjustifiable division in the Visible Church. (In every case of denominational division, at least one party is guilty of the sin of schism. The guilt does not necessarily rest upon the minority or separating party; it may rest upon the party separated from, which by defection from the truth may have made the separation necessary. (See **R. P. Testimony**, XXI. 5).)

SCORNER. "One who treats any person or

thing with contempt" (Buck's **Theological Dictionary**). A common form of religious scorning is the contemptuous rejection of some doctrine or principle which the scorner does not understand, and will not take the trouble to study. Those who say that, no matter what the Bible teaches, they will not believe in the doctrine of predestination, are religious scorners.

SELF-EXAMINATION. The Christian duty of calling ourselves strictly to account, in the light of God's Word, for our attitudes, thoughts, actions and neglects. It is a Scriptural duty (2 Cor. 13:5), and to be specially exercised in connection with the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:28).

SEPTUAGINT. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, made in Egypt about 285-150 B. C. It is called the "Septuagint" from the Latin word for "seventy" because of a tradition that the work of translation was done by 70 scholars (more precisely, 72, but 70 was preferred as a round number). This version of the Old Testament is often designated by the abbreviation **LXX**.

SIMONY. The sin of obtaining, or attempting to obtain, any church office by bribery or other corrupt practices. The name "simony" is derived from Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8:9-24), who attempted to purchase the gift of the Holy Spirit with money. Simony is a violation of the Second Commandment; see **Westminster Larger Catechism**, 109.

Some Noteworthy Quotations

"We approve not of the intemperance of those who do everything tumultuously, and would rather burst through every restraint at once than proceed step by step. But neither are those to be listened to who, while they take the lead in a thousand forms of impiety, pretend that they act thus to avoid giving offence to their neighbor, as if in the meantime they did not train the consciences of their neighbors to evil, especially when they always stick in the same mire without any hope of escape. When a neighbor is to be instructed, whether by doctrine or by example, then smooth-tongued men say that he is to be fed with milk, while they are instilling into him the worst and most pernicious opinions . . . But granting that such dissimulation may be used for a time, how long are they to make their pupils drink that kind of milk? If they never grow up so as to be able to bear at least some gentle food, it is certain that they have never been reared on milk."

—John Calvin

"From peace that is bought at the expense of truth the good Lord deliver us!"

—J. C. Ryle

"Unconverted souls seldom take delight in the ordinances of Christ. They see no beauty in Jesus, they see no form nor comeliness in Him, they hide their faces from Him. Why should you wonder, then, that they take no delight in praying to Him continually, in praising Him daily, in calling Him blessed? Why should you wonder that the preaching of the cross is foolishness to them, that His tabernacles are not amiable in their eyes, that they forsake the assembling of themselves together? They never knew the Saviour, they never loved Him; how, then, should they love the memorials which He has left behind him?"

—Robert Murray McCheyne

"The days were in this land when men had much zeal for Christ. They thought themselves happy to be zealous for God's name; and now we have the same opportunity that our fathers had, who put all in hazard for the doctrine, worship, discipline, and form of government of the house of God. They put themselves into the state of the quarrel to get the Gospel in its purity transmitted to posterity in succeeding generations. But, Oh, how few men will now quit anything for

Christ! Will ye not do so much as quit these things? I tell you that ere long you and these things shall be for ever parted asunder."

—Richard Cameron

"A true repentance, being not only a turning from sin, but a turning unto God, supposes the soul to be enlightened to understand something of the way in which God can alone be acceptably approached, through a Mediator. No soul ever comes to God, unless it has some apprehension of His mercy IN CHRIST. The exercise of faith in Christ is included in a genuine repentance."

—Archibald Alexander

"Men are considered in Holy Scripture, as in bondage, under the slavery of sin, and subject to the tyranny of Satan. From this state of thralldom, they can be delivered only by an almighty Redeemer. But POWER alone is not adequate to the work of redemption. A PRICE — a ransom sufficient to satisfy divine justice must be paid. Silver and gold, and all earthly treasures, avail nothing in the redemption of the soul. Blood must be shed, and life sacrificed . . . The blood shed, and the life given, must be divine. But how can this be? The eternal Son of God offers Himself to be the Redeemer, and to pay the price required . . . 'Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.' He was named JESUS because He should save His people from their sins."

—Archibald Alexander

"Do these things. See sin to be the worst of evils, and depart from it. See Christ to be the best of goods, and choose Him, and cleave to Him. See the world passing away, and set not thy heart upon it. See the ways of God to be the best ways, and His people the best people; and walk in those ways, and with those people. See heaven and hell before you, and conduct accordingly. Love the Word of God; make it your guide, your food."

—Philip Henry

"God reserves three things to Himself: the revenge of injuries, Rom. 12:19; the glory of deeds, Isa. 42:8; and the knowledge of secrets, Deut. 29:29."

—Philip Henry

"There is a wicked man that goes blinded, and a wicked man that goes with his eyes open, to hell; there is a wicked man that cannot see, and a wicked man that will not see, the danger he is in; but hell-fire will open the eyes of both."

—John Bunyan

"'The whole family in heaven and earth.' The difference betwixt us and them is, not that we are really two, but one body in Christ, in divers places. True, we are below stairs, and they above; they in their holiday, and we in our working day clothes; they in harbor, but we in the storm; they at rest, but we in the wilderness; they singing, as crowned with joy, we crying, as crowned with thorns. But we are all of one house, and are all the children of one Father."

—John Bunyan

"It is a great dishonor to God to trust Him no further than we see Him. You trust the ground with your corn, and can expect a crop out of the dry clods, though you do not see how it grows, nor which way it thrives in order to the harvest. It is a great folly to distrust the Lord, because the mercies we expect do not presently grow up and flower in our sight and apprehension."

—Thomas Manton

"It is a usual observation, many parents go to hell in getting an estate for their children, and their children go to hell afterward in spending that estate."

—Thomas Manton

"Religion, in all its manifestations, waits, like all other human functioning, on the operation of ideas; here too the line of action is from perception, through emotion, to volition. And nothing can be more certain than that if the theology of the Bible is discarded, the religion of the Bible is discarded with it. We shall certainly have religion: we cannot avoid that: man is a religious animal. But our religion will not be the religion of the Bible unless — among other elements of it — our religious conceptions, that is, our theology, be the religious conceptions, that is to say, the theology of the Bible."

—B. B. Warfield

Foundation Truths of the Christian Faith

Note: The questions and answers at the beginning of each lesson are from **The Larger Catechism** of the Westminster Assembly.

LESSON 1

Q. 1. What is the chief and highest end of man?

A. Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him for ever.

Scripture References:

Revelation 4:11 (All things created for God's pleasure). Romans 11:36 (All things exist for God). 1 Corinthians 10:31 (It is our duty to glorify

God in all we do). Psalm 73:24-28 (God teaches us how to glorify him, and that we shall enjoy enjoy him in glory). John 17:21-24 (Our supreme destiny is the enjoyment of God in glory).

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the word "end" in this question?

It means the purpose for which something exists.

2. Could a consistent evolutionist agree with the Catechism's answer to Question 1?

No. A consistent evolutionist could not agree that man's chief and highest end is to glorify and enjoy God, for he must hold that the human race has evolved from a brute ancestry by a process which originated in blind chance. Therefore he must hold that the human race cannot exist for any purpose outside of itself. There are "theistic evolutionists" who believe that evolution was God's method of creation, but they are not consistent, for **creation** concerns the origin of things, while **evolution** starts by assuming that things already exist and seeks to show their development to other forms. The **consistent** evolutionist cannot believe in creation by the sheer power of God, and therefore he cannot believe that the human race exists not for itself but **for God**.

3. What is wrong with the following statement, "Man's chief and highest end is to seek happiness"?

This statement makes the purpose of human life something **within man himself**. This cannot be reconciled with the Scripture teaching that all things exist for God because they were created by God for his own glory. To say that man's chief end is to seek happiness is contrary to belief in the God of the Bible. Of course man's real happiness results from his recognizing and seeking his **true** end, namely to glorify and enjoy God his Creator.

4. What is wrong with the following statement: "Man's chief and highest end is to seek the greatest good of the greatest number"?

Q. 2. How doth it appear that there is a God?

A. The very light of nature in man, and the works of God, declare plainly that there is a God; but his word and Spirit only do sufficiently and effectually reveal him unto men for their salvation.

Scripture References:

Romans 1:19, 20 (God revealed by the light of nature and by his works). Romans 2:14-16 (The law of God revealed in the human heart). Psalm 19:1-3 (God revealed by the heavens). Acts 17:28 (Human life totally dependent on God). 1 Corinthians 2:9, 10 (God's natural revelation inade-

This statement involves the same error as the one just discussed, for it makes the purpose of human life something **within man himself**. The difference is that the present statement makes the happiness or welfare **of the human race in general** the purpose of human life, whereas the former statement made the happiness **of the individual** the purpose of human life. Both are contrary to the Bible teaching concerning God the Creator and End of all things. Both are essentially the same as the pagan idea that "Man is the measure of all things". Because modern life is largely dominated by this false idea, it is essentially pagan rather than Christian. Even some churches have absorbed this pagan viewpoint and talk about God being "a democratic God".

5. Why does the Catechism place glorifying God before enjoying God?

Because the most important element in the purpose of human life is **glorifying** God, while **enjoying** God is strictly subordinate to glorifying God. In our religious life, we should always place the chief emphasis on glorifying God. The person who does this will truly enjoy God, both here and hereafter. But the person who thinks of enjoying God apart from glorifying God is in danger of supposing that **God exists for man** instead of man for God. To stress enjoying God more than glorifying God will result in a falsely mystical or emotional type of religion.

6. Why can the human race, or any member of it, never attain true happiness apart from glorifying God?

Because true happiness depends on our consciously aiming to serve the purpose for which we were created, namely to glorify God and enjoy him. Consciously to serve the purpose for which God created him is **man's glory**, and apart from a conscious consecration of himself to that purpose, there can be no real, deep and satisfying happiness. As Augustine said in his **Confessions**, "Thou hast created us for Thyself, O God, and our heart is restless until it finds repose in Thee".

LESSON 2

quate; not equal to his special revelation by his Spirit). 2 Timothy 3:15-17 (Holy Scripture a sufficient revelation for salvation). Isaiah 59:21 (God's word and Spirit given to his covenant people, unlike his natural revelation which is given to all mankind).

Questions:

1. What is meant by "the light of nature in man"?

This means the natural revelation of God in the human heart and mind. This "light of nature" is common to all mankind. The heathen who have never received God's special revelation,

the Bible, have a certain knowledge of God by nature, and a certain consciousness of the moral law in their own hearts (Romans 2:14-16). To believe in God is natural to mankind; only "the fool" says in his heart that there is no God.

2. What is meant by "the works of God"?

This expression means the revelation of God in nature **outside of human nature**. It includes the whole realm of nature, great and small. The starry heavens as observed by the largest telescope, and the tiniest particles of matter that can be photographed by the electron microscope, all disclose the God who is their Creator and Ruler. The works of God also include all living creatures, and all God's works in the course of human history. All bear witness to the invisible God who created, preserves and controls them all.

3. What message do the light of nature and the works of God bring to mankind?

The light of nature and the works of God bring to mankind a message concerning the existence of God, his eternal power and deity (Romans 1:19, 20), his glory (Psalm 19:1), and his moral law (Romans 2:14-16). This natural revelation of God and of his will is sufficient to leave men without excuse for their sins (Romans 1:20, 21).

4. Why is this message of the light of nature and the works of God inadequate for mankind's spiritual needs?

This natural revelation of God and of his will is insufficient for mankind's spiritual needs, in his present fallen and sinful condition, for two reasons. (1) When mankind fell into sin, his spiritual need changed. He now needs more than he did when he was created. **Man now needs salvation from sin by divine grace through a Mediator.** But the light of nature and the works of God have nothing to say about salvation from sin. They reveal no gospel suited to the sinner's need. (2) **Man's fall into sin changed his capacity to receive and understand even the message which the light of nature and the works of God do bring to him.** Man's heart and mind became darkened by sin (Romans 1:21, 22). The result of this was that the natural revelation of God was misinterpreted and corrupted into idolatry (Romans 1:23). This lapse into false religion in turn resulted in terrible moral corruption and degradation (Romans 1:24-32). But in spite of all this, the natural revelation of God and of his will still

leaves man without excuse, because their changed need and their present inability to understand that natural revelation are **their own fault**. Mankind is responsible not only for falling into sin, but also for all the **consequences** of falling into sin.

5. What fuller revelation of God and of his will do we have?

Besides the natural revelation of God, we have the **supernatural** revelation of God, which exists today only in the form of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. This supernatural revelation of God is sometimes called his **special** revelation. It is called **supernatural** because it was given to man not through the operation of the laws of nature, but by the miraculous working of God the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21).

6. What are the principal differences between God's natural revelation and his revelation in the form of Holy Scripture?

(a) The former is given to all men without exception; the latter is limited to those whom the Bible reaches.

(b) The former is sufficient to leave men without excuse; the latter is sufficient for salvation.

(c) God's revelation in the form of Holy Scripture is clearer and more definite than his natural revelation.

(d) God's revelation in the form of Holy Scripture imparts many truths about God and his will which cannot be known from his natural revelation.

7. In order that God's revelation in the form of Holy Scripture may make us wise unto salvation, what is needed besides the Bible itself?

For Holy Scripture to make a person wise unto salvation there is required, besides the Bible itself, **a true faith** (2 Timothy 3:15, Hebrews 4:2). This true faith is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8; Acts 16:14), being wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Holy Spirit of God (Ephesians 1:17-19). Thus besides the Bible itself is required the **illumination of the mind by the Holy Spirit**, so that the sinner can understand and appropriate the truth unto his salvation. The Holy Spirit, in his illuminating work, does not reveal any truth in addition to what is revealed in the Bible, but only enables the sinner to see and believe the truth already revealed in the Bible.

LESSON 3

Q. 3. What is the word of God?

A. The holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, the only rule of faith and obedience.

Scripture References:

2 Timothy 3:16 (All Scripture is divinely in-

spired). 2 Peter 1:19-21 (The Scriptures not of human origin, but the product of the Holy Spirit). Ephesians 2:20 (The apostles — New Testament — and prophets — Old Testament — form the foundation of the Christian Church). Revelation 22:18, 19 (Scripture, being of divine origin, character and authority, may not be added to or sub-

tracted from). Isaiah 8:20 (Scripture the standard of faith and obedience). Luke 16:29-31 (No new revelation could supersede Scripture). Galatians 1:8, 9 (Anything contrary to Scripture to be rejected, no matter how appealing it may be). 2 Timothy 3:15-17 (Scripture a complete and perfect rule of faith and life).

Questions:

1. Why is it proper that the Scriptures be called "holy"?

Because they are the revelation of a holy God; because they set forth holy teaching; and because when accepted with true faith they lead to a holy life.

2. In what sense is it true that the Scriptures are the word of God?

The Scriptures are the word of God in the plain, literal sense of the word "are". They are the word of God in **written form**, without any other limitations whatever. That is to say, the Bible itself, as a book, is the word of God, and the actual written words of the book are the very words of God.

3. In what sense is it true that the Bible "contains" the word of God?

The Bible "contains" the word of God in the sense that the word of God **forms the contents** of the Bible, just as it is proper to say that the Bible contains two Testaments, or that the Bible contains sixty-six books.

4. In what senses is it not true that the Bible "contains" the word of God?

(a) It is **not** true that the Bible "contains" the word of God in the sense that the word of God forms **only a part** of the contents of the Bible, the rest being merely the words of men.

(b) It is **not** true that the Bible "contains" the word of God in the sense that there is a distinction between the actual written words of the Bible, on the one hand, and the word of God "contained" in them, on the other hand. This distinction, which has been popularized by the Swiss theologian Karl Barth and his followers, cannot be reconciled with the statements of the Bible itself, nor with the doctrine concerning Scripture which is set forth in the Westminster standards. If the written words of the Bible are not themselves actually the word of God, then the Bible cannot be infallible.

5. If the Scriptures in their entirety are the word of God, how can we explain the fact that they contain the words of Satan and of wicked men?

The words of Satan and of wicked men are incorporated into the word of God as quotations, in order that we may learn the lessons that God

wants us to learn. The statement "There is no God" is a human falsehood, but the statement "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 53:1) is a divine truth. The words "There is no God" are the words of the fool, but the complete sentence, including the words of the fool as a **quotation**, is the word of God. "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life", was the devil's lie; but the complete sentence, "And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life", is the word of God, a divinely inspired and infallible record of what Satan said. When we affirm that the Bible in its entirety is the word of God, this does not mean that any verse or portion of the Bible may be taken out of its context and interpreted as if it stood alone.

6. For what two things are the Scriptures our rule?

The Scriptures are our rule for **faith and obedience**.

7. Why are the Scriptures our only rule of faith and obedience?

The Scriptures are our **only** rule of faith and obedience because as the written word of God they are unique and infallible, and therefore no other rule of faith and obedience may be placed alongside of them. This principle of course does not rule out such subordinate standards as the Larger Catechism itself, which present not another rule in addition to Scripture, but merely a systematic summary of what Scripture teaches. The Larger Catechism, for example, is a legitimate rule of faith and obedience **only because, and only so far as it is faithful to the teachings of the Scriptures**. It possesses no inherent authority of its own.

8. What is wrong with saying that conscience is our guide for faith and conduct?

The human conscience cannot tell a person what to believe nor how to live. It cannot tell a person what is right and what is wrong. The conscience can only tell a person whether or not he is acting according to what he already believes to be right. If a savage believes it is right to practice cannibalism, his conscience will not reprove him for eating human flesh. If a person somehow believes it is wrong to consult a physician, take medicine or wear eye glasses, his conscience will reprove him when he does these things. The conscience can only indicate whether a person's conduct is in accordance with his beliefs; it cannot tell him whether his beliefs are true or not. Therefore the conscience cannot be the rule for faith and life.

9. If we add some other rule along with the Bible, what effect will this have on the authority of the Bible for our faith and life?

The inevitable result will be that the Bible will take a second place, and something else will become our real authority for faith and life. It is not possible to have two **supreme** authorities in any field. Nor is it possible to have two **equal** authorities without making one of them the standard for interpreting the other.

10. What large church makes tradition a rule of faith and conduct along with Scripture?

The Roman Catholic Church. The effect, of course, is to make void the word of God by the tradition of the church. For the Bible is interpreted in accordance with the tradition, not the tradition in accordance with the Bible.

11. How do the followers of Mary Baker Eddy violate the principle that the Scriptures are our only rule of faith and life?

By placing Mrs. Eddy's book, "Science and Health with the Key to the Scriptures", alongside the Bible as an authority, with the inevitable result that Mrs. Eddy's book is their real authority and the Bible is nullified. "Christian Science" cannot stand with the Bible alone as its guide book; it has to have Mrs. Eddy's writings, which are utterly contrary to the Bible, to prop it up.

12. How do the Friends or Quakers violate the principle that the Scriptures are our only rule of faith and life?

By their emphasis on the mystical "inner light" as their guide for faith and life. There are various sects of Quakers; not all are alike. But historically the "Friends" movement has emphasized the "inner light" and has tended to subordinate the Bible to the "inner light."

13. Is the New Testament more fully or more truly the word of God than the Old Testament?

No. The New Testament itself shows that our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles regarded the Old Testament as the word of God in the fullest and strictest sense, and taught this high view of the Old Testament consistently.

14. Are the words of Christ, which in some Bibles are printed in red ink, more truly the word of God than the other parts of the Bible?

No. The whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is the word of Christ. The Old Testament is Christ's word through Moses and the prophets; the New Testament is Christ's word through the apostles and evangelists; included in the New Testament is the record of Christ's sayings during his earthly ministry; but these sayings, although spoken by God **more directly** than most of the other parts of the Bible, nevertheless are not **more truly** the word of God than the other parts of the Scriptures. See 2 Samuel 23:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Revelation 1:1, 22:16.

15. If we think of our Christian belief as a building, what part of the building would the answer to Question 3 of the Larger Catechism be?

The foundation, on which all the rest must stand. Sometimes objection has been made to this statement on the ground that the Bible represents Christ as the only legitimate foundation. This objection is without weight, as it seeks to employ a metaphor — the idea of a foundation — without analyzing its meaning. Christ is the foundation of our reconciliation with God, by his blood and righteousness. Christ is the foundation of the Church, by his finished work of redemption and his present exaltation in glory. But an acknowledgement that the Scriptures are the word of God and the only rule of faith and obedience must be the foundation of any legitimate formulation of Christian doctrine.

LESSON 4

Q. 4. How doth it appear that the Scriptures are the word of God?

A. The scriptures manifest themselves to be the word of God, by their majesty and purity; by the consent of all the parts, and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God; by their light and power to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation; but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very word of God.

Scripture References:

The majesty of the Scriptures: Hosea 8:12. 1 Corinthians 2:6, 7, 13. Psalm 119:18, 129.

The purity of the Scriptures: Psalm 12:6. Psalm 119:140.

The consent of all the parts of the Scriptures: Acts 10:43. Acts 26:22.

The scope of the Scriptures as a whole: Romans 3:19, 27.

The power of the Scriptures to convert sinners and edify saints: Acts 18:28. Hebrews 4:12. James 1:18. Psalm 19:7-9. Romans 15:4. Acts 20:32. John 20:31.

The witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart: John 16:13,14. I John 2:20, 27.

Questions:

1. What is meant by the "majesty" of the Scriptures?

The "majesty" of the Scriptures means their **lofty** or **wonderful** character, which lifts them far above all human writings. In the Scriptures are indeed found things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, but which God has revealed by his Spirit, who searches all things, even the deep things of God. (1 Corinthians 2:9, 10).

2. What is the position of the Bible among the books of the world?

The position of the Bible among the books of the world is altogether unique. It has been translated into more languages than any other book; more copies have been circulated than of any other book. It is recognized as the world's greatest book from the literary point of view. But the Bible is unique especially with respect to its teachings. Among the sacred books of the religions of the world there is none that can compare with the Bible in inherent loftiness or majesty.

3. What is meant by the "purity" of the Scriptures?

The "purity" of the Scriptures means their character as the true word of God, wholly free from all impurities of error and foreign matter.

4. Why can other books not equal the Bible in purity?

Because the Bible is the only book whose very words are the product of supernatural inspiration of God, and therefore it is the only book which is **infallible** and wholly free of errors.

5. Why do we believe that the Scriptures are entirely free from errors?

We believe that the Scriptures are entirely free from errors, not because we find no apparent errors in the Bible, for it cannot be denied that a few **apparent** errors have been pointed out in the Bible, but **because the Bible itself claims to be free from errors**. Our belief about the Scriptures must not be an inference from facts of our own experience, but a formulation of the teachings of the Scriptures themselves about themselves. If we find some apparent errors in the Bible, that is a matter of **our own experience as finders**. But if we observe that the Bible represents itself as being free from errors, that is an observation concerning the **teachings of the Bible**. We must accept the Bible's teaching **about itself** just as we accept the Bible's teaching about creation, providence, salvation, heaven, hell and other matters. The fact is that the Bible teaches that the Bible is inerrant. Even though we may have some unsolved problems concerning apparent errors in the Bible, still these problems do not justify setting aside the Bible's teaching about itself, unless it can be proved that the Bible **really** contains errors, and that they exist in the genuine text of the Hebrew or Greek original. If that could be proved, the trustworthiness of the Bible as a teacher of truth **on all subjects** would thereby be destroyed. If we are to trust the Bible in what it says about God and man, sin and salvation, we must also trust the Bible in what it says about its own infallibility.

6. What is meant by "the consent of all the parts" of the Scriptures?

By "the consent of all the parts" of the Scriptures is meant: (a) that there are no real contradictions in the Bible; (b) that all the parts of the Bible form a unity, an organism, a harmonious whole, not merely a collection of separate writings with diverse ideas and viewpoints. This beautiful harmony of the various parts of the Bible is an evidence that back of all the **human writers** there was a **divine Author**, the Spirit of God, controlling them all so that a harmonious whole would be produced.

7. How many books are there in the Bible? By how many human writers were these books written? How many centuries did this work of writing require?

There are sixty-six books in the Bible. These books were written by about forty different writers. The work of writing required about fourteen centuries, from Moses to the apostle John.

8. How can the absence of contradictions in the Bible be explained?

The absence of contradictions in the Bible cannot be explained on the theory that the Bible is merely a collection of human writings. Forty men writing a collection of sixty-six books over a period of 1400 years could not possibly avoid a vast multitude of contradictions. The absence of contradictions in the Bible can be explained only by the fact that all the human writers were supernaturally controlled by God the Holy Spirit, so that the product is truly the word of God, and therefore wholly free from errors and contradictions.

9. What is the "scope" of the Bible as a whole?

The scope of the Bible as a whole is **to give all glory to God**. In this the Bible is contrary to the spirit of paganism, ancient and modern, which is to give all glory to man.

10. Why must a book which gives all glory to God be genuine?

It must be genuine, that is, it must be what it claims to be, the word of God, because no one but God could have had a motive for writing it. Wicked men would not write a book which condemns wickedness and gives all glory to a holy, sin-hating God. Good men could not write a book on their own initiative and represent it falsely as the word of God, for if they did that they would be deceivers, and therefore not good men. For the same reasons neither devils nor holy angels could have written it. Therefore God is the only Person who could be the real Author of the Bible.

11. What fruits or results of the Bible show that it is the word of God?

Where the Bible is known and believed, wickedness and crime are curbed, human life and property are secure, education is widespread, institutions of mercy for the care of the sick, unfortunate and insane are established, and civil liberty is honored and safeguarded.

12. What is the condition of human society in places where the Bible is entirely or practically unknown?

"The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty" (Psalm 74:20). Where the Bible is unknown or almost unknown human life is cheap and insecure; dishonesty is almost universal; men live in bondage to superstitions and fears; moral corruption and degradation abound.

13. In addition to the evidences that have been mentioned, what is needed to give us full conviction, or certainty, that the Bible is God's word?

In addition to the evidences that have been discussed, the almighty work of God the Holy Spirit in our hearts is needed to give us full conviction that the Bible is the word of God. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). The evidences that have already been discussed are valid in themselves, and may lead to a **conviction of probability** that the Bible is the word of God. But this work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the word in the heart results in **full conviction or certainty** that the Bible is the word of God.

14. Why do many highly educated and in-

telligent people refuse to believe that the Bible is God's word?

1 Corinthians 2:14, quoted above, provides the answer to this question. These highly educated unbelievers lack the testimony of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. They are what Paul called "natural" men, that is, **not born again**. Being spiritually blind, of course they cannot see the light.

15. Why are intelligence and education not enough to enable a person to believe with certainty that the Bible is the word of God?

Because in the sinful human heart there is strong prejudice against God and the truth of God. The ordinary evidences are sufficient to convince a neutral, unprejudiced inquirer that the Bible is the word of God. But the fact is that there are no neutral, unprejudiced inquirers. The whole human race has fallen into sin; the human heart has been darkened; the "natural" man is gripped by a tremendous prejudice against accepting the Bible as God's word. Apart from the special work of the Holy Spirit in men's hearts, there would not be a single true Christian believer in the world. There are of course unconverted people who readily assent to the statement that the Bible is God's word, by mere custom or tradition rather than by personal **conviction**. Such people are not really **convinced** that the Bible is God's word; they merely have a hearsay or second-hand faith which reflects the true spiritual faith of other persons.

LESSON 5

Q. 5. What do the scriptures principally teach?

A. The scriptures principally teach, what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man. (2 Timothy 1:13).

Questions:

1. What are the two principal parts of the teaching of the Bible?

The two principal parts of the Bible's teaching are (1) a message of truth to be believed, and (2) a message of duty to be obeyed.

2. Why is belief mentioned before duty?

Belief is mentioned before duty because in the Christian life as in the natural world, the root must come before the fruit. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he". Belief is the root and determiner of life. Therefore the truth to be believed must be set forth before the duties to be performed can be considered.

3. What is wrong with the present-day popular slogan: "Christianity is not a doctrine but a life"?

This saying is one of the subtle half-truths of our day. It would be correct to say: "Christianity is not only a doctrine but also a life". It

is not a question of "either . . . or" but of "both . . . and". When anyone says that Christianity is not a doctrine but a life, he is setting **doctrine** and **life** in opposition to each other. This is a very perverse tendency and is thoroughly characteristic of the anti-doctrinal prejudice of our day. Of course according to the Bible Christianity is **both** a system of doctrine and a life. Moreover the doctrine and the life are organically related, and the life cannot exist and grow apart from the doctrine. After all, roots are important things.

4. Which is more important in the Christian life, belief or conduct? Or should we say that both are equally important?

Which is the more important part of a building, the foundation or the roof? No doubt each is equally important for its own proper purpose. Which is more important for an automobile, a motor or four wheels? No doubt each is equally important for its own proper purpose. Our Lord said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Matthew 22:37, 38). Since to love the Lord our God **with all the mind** is required in the first and great commandment, we may say with confidence that nothing is more important than belief of the truth. Of equal importance in its own

sphere is **adorning** the truth by a godly and consistent life.

We have now studied the first five questions of the Catechism, which constitute **The Foundation**, dealing with the purpose of human life, the existence of God, and the word of God. Having

completed this introductory section, we now come to the first of the two major divisions of the material contained in the Larger Catechism, namely, **WHAT MAN OUGHT TO BELIEVE CONCERNING GOD**. Questions 6 to 90 deal with this subject, which we shall now proceed to study.

LESSON 6

Q. 6. What do the scriptures make known of God?

A. The scriptures make known what God is, the persons in the Godhead, his decrees, and the execution of his decrees.

Scripture References:

What God is: Hebrews 11:6. John 4:24.

The persons in the Godhead: 1 John 5:7. 2 Corinthians 13:14.

God's decrees: Acts 15:14, 15. Acts 15:18.

The execution of God's decrees: Acts 4:27, 28.

Questions:

1. What are the four parts into which we may divide what the Bible reveals about God?

(1) The **being** of God, or what God is; (2) The persons in the Godhead, or what the Bible reveals about the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; (3) God's decrees, or the plans God made in eternity before the universe existed; (4) The execution of God's decrees, or the carrying out of his plans by creation and providence.

2. How could we divide this information about God into two parts?

(1) Information about God himself; (2) Information about God's works.

3. Why does the Bible nowhere present an argument to prove that God exists?

The Bible does mention the fact that God has revealed himself in the world of nature and in the human heart, and that this **natural** revelation of God witnesses to his existence (Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:20). But apart from such references to the revelation of God in nature, the Bible does not attempt to prove the existence of God. Nowhere does the Bible present a formal argument to prove God's existence. Instead, the Bible starts out in its very first verse by **assuming** the existence of God, and going on to tell about his na-

ture, character and works. Because of the revelation of God in the world of nature and in the human heart, it is natural for mankind to believe in the existence of God. By starting out by **assuming** that God exists, the Bible really presents the greatest argument of all for the existence of God. For this assumption of God's existence is the key that unlocks the countless mysteries of nature and of human life. Suppose we make the contrary assumption, that **God does not exist** — immediately the universe, human life, our own souls, all are buried in unfathomable darkness and mystery. The person who is not willing to start by assuming that God exists has the responsibility of showing that his theory of no God yields a better and more credible explanation of the universe and of human life than that given in the Bible. Of course the atheist and the agnostic are not able to do this. When we follow the Bible and start out by assuming the existence of God as the Bible does, then every fact in the universe becomes an argument for God's existence. For there is not a single fact anywhere that can be better explained by denying God's existence than by assuming God's existence.

4. What does the Bible have to say about the character of atheists?

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 53:1). The person who denies God's existence is a foolish person because he insists on denying the greatest of all facts. We should understand that in the Bible the term "fool" involves the idea of moral perversity as well as that of intellectual weakness. Suppose a person who had lived all his life in the United States were to deny the existence of the U. S. Government, and to claim that he owes no obligation to the government, since he denies its existence. It is obvious that such a person would not only be regarded as lacking common sense but also as incapable of being a good citizen of his country. Yet even more absurd is the attitude of the atheist who owes his very life to God and yet denies that God exists and disclaims all responsibility to God.

LESSON 7

Q. 7. What is God?

A. God is a Spirit, in and of himself infinite in being, glory, blessedness, and perfection: all-sufficient, eternal, unchangeable, incomprehens-

ible, everywhere present, almighty, knowing all things, most wise, most holy, most just, most merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.

Scripture References:

God is a Spirit: John 4:24.
 God is infinite: Exodus 3:14. Job 11:7-9.
 God's glory: Acts 7:2.
 God's blessedness: 1 Tim. 6:15.
 God's perfection: Matthew 5:48.
 God's sufficiency: Genesis 17:1.
 God is unchangeable: Malachi 3:6. James 1:17.
 God is eternal: Psalm 90:1-2.
 God is incomprehensible: 1 Kings 8:27.
 God is everywhere: Psalm 139:7-10.
 God is almighty: Revelation 4:8.
 God knows all things: Hebrews 4:13. Psalm 139:1-4. Psalm 147:5.
 God's wisdom: Romans 16:27.
 God's holiness: Isaiah 6:3. Rev. 15:4.
 God's justice: Deuteronomy 32:4.
 God is merciful, etc.: Exodus 34:6.

Questions:**1. What is meant by saying that "God is a Spirit"?**

This means that God is a being who has no material body.

2. Why should we say "God is a Spirit" instead of saying "God is Spirit" as the Christian Scientists do?

Two reasons may be given: (1) God is not the only spirit that exists; he is one of a class of beings called "spirits", which includes also the angels and the evil spirits; so we say "God is a Spirit" just as we say "Topeka is a city", implying that it is not the only city in the world, but a member of the class of cities. (2) Because God is a Person we say "God is a Spirit" instead of saying "God is Spirit", for the latter way of speaking seems to imply disbelief in God's individuality and therefore also disbelief in his personality.

3. What false religion, known in the United States, teaches that God has a material body?

Mormonism, or the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints".

4. Why is idolatry, or worship of God by images, always wrong and sinful in itself?

Since idolatry is plainly forbidden in the Ten

Commandments, there can be no doubt as to its sinfulness. The reason back of the Second Commandment is doubtless the truth that God is pure Spirit, and because God is a pure Spirit, no material object or picture can avoid giving a false idea of God.

5. What is the meaning of the word "infinite"?

Literally, it means **without limits, or boundless**; and therefore it means **that which cannot be measured**.

6. In what four respects is God declared to be infinite?

In his being, glory, blessedness, perfection. (Being means **existence**).

7. Why does the idea of God being infinite baffle our minds?

Because we are finite beings, and the finite cannot comprehend the infinite. We cannot know all the truth about God, nor can we fully know any single part or item of the truth about God.

8. If our minds could comprehend God, and understand how he can be infinite, what would this mean?

It would mean that we ourselves would be infinite, too, and equal with God.

9. Why do our minds instinctively raise the question, "Who made God"?

Because we are **created beings** and therefore we naturally tend to assume that all other beings must have been created, too. But of course a God who had been **made** would not really be God at all, but only a creature, and we would have to think of another God who created him.

10. What do we mean by saying that God is eternal?

We mean, first, that God never had a beginning; secondly, that God will never have an end; and thirdly, that God is above distinctions of time: past, present and future are all equally present to God; to him one day is as 1,000 years, and 1,000 years as one day.

(To be continued in the next lesson)

LESSON 8

(Continued from Lesson 7, on Question 7, "What is God?")

11. How can we illustrate the idea that God is above distinctions of time?

This idea may be illustrated by a circle. The circle has a center and a circumference. The center is equally distant from every point on the circumference. But the points on the circumference are not equally distant from each other. If we think of the circumference of the circle as representing **the ages of the world's history**,

and of the center of the circle as representing **God's position in relation to the ages of history**, this may help us to realize that all the ages of history — past, present and future — are equally present to God.

12. What is meant by saying that God is incomprehensible?

The Catechism uses this word in the sense of

1 Kings 8:27, "Heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee," meaning that the whole created universe cannot "comprehend" or **contain** God; although the Bible speaks of God as the one who "fillet all in all", and although God is everywhere in the created universe, still God is so great that the whole universe cannot "contain" him — there is more beyond.

13. If God is unchangeable, why does the Bible speak of God "repenting" or changing his mind, as for example in the case of the city of Nineveh (Jonah 3:10)?

God himself never changes; God's creatures change, and the result of this is that the **relation** between them and God changes. In the case of Nineveh, for example, God did not really change his mind. It was the people of Nineveh who really changed; they turned from their wicked way. God did not change his mind, for the whole series of events, including Jonah's preaching and the people of Nineveh turning from their wickedness, and God "repenting of the evil that he had said he would do", was all a part of God's original plan. In other words, even before Jonah arrived at Nineveh, God planned and intended to "change his mind" following the Ninevites' change of their conduct. But when God "changes" his mind **according to plan**, it is clear that he does not really change **his mind** at all, but only changes his dealings with his creatures.

14. If God is almighty, as the Catechism says, then is there anything that God cannot do?

The Bible tells us some things that even God cannot do. For one thing, we are told that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). Also, we are told that God cannot deny himself (2 Timothy 2:13). We may sum up these teachings by saying that **God cannot deny his own nature** — he cannot deny his **moral** nature by telling a lie or doing anything unrighteous; and he cannot deny his **rational** nature by doing anything that contradicts itself. For example, God cannot create a square circle, or make two plus two equal five. Apart from things which would be contrary to his own nature, there is absolutely nothing that God cannot do.

15. What is the importance of the truth that God knows all things?

Apart from this truth, the prophecies of the Bible would be impossible. Only because God knows all things could events be foretold, hundreds and thousands of years before they occur. Also there is the practical lesson that nothing can be concealed from God, since he sees and knows all things. And because God knows all things, we can be sure that all the wickedness of men will be dealt with in the Day of Judgment.

16. What is the meaning of the statement that God is "most holy"?

This means (1) that God is high above all created beings; (2) that God is infinitely removed from all sin and cannot have fellowship with sinful beings unless an atonement has been made for their sin.

17. What is meant by saying that God is "most just"?

This means that it is God's nature, or character, to deal with all his rational creatures acting according to their standing in relation to God's moral law.

18. What is the difference in meaning between "merciful" and "gracious"?

The term "grace" means any undeserved favor extended by God to any of his creatures, regardless of whether they are sinful or not. But the term "mercy" means undeserved favor extended to **sinful** creatures, to those who are not only undeserving, but also **ill-deserving**. Thus, for example, it was an act of **grace** on God's part to enter into the Covenant of Works with Adam, since God was not obliged to do it, even though Adam had not yet sinned. God owed him nothing. But when God established the Covenant of Grace, this was a much greater act of grace than God's act of establishing the Covenant of Works, because the Covenant of Grace meant extending God's favor to **sinful** creatures; and therefore the Covenant of Grace shows both the **grace** and the **mercy** of God. We may say that God's **mercy** is his grace extended to sinful creatures.

19. What is meant by saying that God is "long-suffering"? What illustrations of this can be given from the Bible?

When we affirm that God is "long-suffering" we mean that God in his mercy often waits long before visiting judgment upon sin, giving the sinner time to repent. The Bible is full of examples of God's long-suffering character. Revelation 2:21 may be cited. Also Genesis 15:16. The student will be able easily to think of other examples.

20. What is the meaning of God's goodness?

"Goodness" is a more general term than "grace" or "mercy". God's **goodness** which is sometimes called "benevolence", is that attribute of God which leads him to provide for the general welfare of all his creatures except those who have been judicially condemned on account of sin. God's goodness, therefore, includes not only angels and men, but also the animal creation. God's goodness is exemplified not only by the Plan of Salvation, but also by God's works of creation and providence in general. For instance, the fact that millions of tons of coal exist underground, available for the use of mankind, making human life possible in cold climates,

shows the **goodness** of God. For a Bible example of God's goodness to animals see Jonah 4:11 and Genesis 9:9, 10, 16.

21. What is meant by God's attribute of truth?

God's **truth** is an attribute which affects his **knowledge, wisdom, justice** and **goodness**. (1) God's knowledge of all things is perfectly and wholly true and exact. (2) God's **wisdom** is

true because it is wholly unbiased by prejudice or passion. (3) God's **justice** and **goodness** are true because they are perfectly true to his own nature or character. Scripture expresses God's attribute of **truth** by saying: "He abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." More particularly, God is **true** in all His **revelation** to the human race, including the entire Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and God is **reliable** in fulfilling all his promises and covenants.

LESSON 9

Q. 8. Are there more Gods than one?

A. There is but one only, the living and true God.

Scripture References:

The unity of God set forth in the Old Testament: Deut. 6:4.

There is only one true God and all others are false: 1 Cor. 8:4-6.

The true God is Creator and Ruler over all: Jer. 10:10-12.

Questions:

1. What do we call the system of religion which believes in only one God?

Monotheism.

2. What is the opposite of Monotheism?

Polytheism, or belief in many gods.

3. What idea of development of religion is commonly held by evolutionists?

That religion developed gradually, starting with animism, or belief in spirits, later reaching the stage of polytheism, or belief in many Gods, and finally attaining the highest stage, that of monotheism, or belief in only one God.

4. What should we think of this evolutionary theory of religion?

In the first place, it is plainly contrary to the Bible, which represents mankind at the creation as worshipping only one God, and later through the fall and subsequent sinful corruption of the human heart coming to believe in many gods. See Romans 1:21-23. Secondly, the evolutionary theory of religion is contrary to the known facts of the history of religions. Not only the Bible, but ordinary history, proves that monotheism came first and that it later degenerated into polytheism. In China, for example, the oldest known form of religion was monotheism, which was the religion of the Chinese thousands of years ago; whereas today

the Chinese are extreme polytheists, worshipping innumerable gods and spirits.

5. Which of the Ten Commandments forbids the sin of polytheism?

The first Commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Ex. 20:3).

6. What is the difference between polytheism and idolatry?

Polytheism is belief in many gods; idolatry is the worship of **any** god, true or false, by means of images or pictures. The heathen with their many gods are polytheists; they are also idolaters, for they worship by means of images and pictures. This may take the crude form of actually worshipping the image or picture itself, or the more rational form of worshipping the god or spirit **by means of** the image or picture; that is, using the idol as an "aid to worship." Those who worship the **true** God by means of pictures or images are idolaters but not polytheists. The Roman Catholic Church draws a subtle distinction between the worship which is due to God alone, and the honor which is given to Mary and the saints. Unquestionably there are multitudes of Roman Catholics who cannot grasp such a distinction, and who give what amounts to divine honor to Mary and the saints, and who are therefore **practically** polytheists as well as idolaters.

7. What grievous sin involving compromise of Monotheism was committed by Christian Churches in Japan and Japanese-occupied Asia prior to or during World War II?

Under heavy pressure from a totalitarian government, these Churches compromised by condoning and practicing polytheism by according divine honor to the Sun Goddess and the Japanese Emperor. In some cases this went so far as putting miniature Shinto shrines in Christian church buildings and bowing toward them just before the beginning of the public worship of God. Since the end of the war, some have publicly repented of their involvement in such practices, but others have not done so.

LESSON 10

Q. 9. How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A. There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one true, eternal God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; although distinguished by their personal properties.

Scripture References:

Names of three divine persons mentioned together: Matt. 28:19. 2 Cor. 13:14.

The Father declared to be God: 1 Cor. 8:6.

The Son declared to be God: John 10:30. John 1:1. 1 John 5:20 (last part):

The Holy Spirit declared to be God: Acts 5:3,4.

Though there are three persons yet there is only one God: 1 Cor. 8:4. Exodus 20:3.

The divine persons the same in substance: Matthew 11:27. Hebrews 1:3.

The divine persons differ in their personal properties: John 1:18; 15:26.

Questions:

1. Why is the doctrine of the Trinity a stumbling block to many people?

Because it is a mystery which human reason cannot explain.

2. What system of belief denies the doctrine of the Trinity?

Unitarianism, which teaches that there is only one person in the Godhead, the Father, and therefore that the Son and the Holy Spirit are not divine persons.

3. Is the doctrine of the Trinity contrary to reason?

No. It is not contrary to reason but, it is above human reason.

4. Does the doctrine of the Trinity contradict itself?

No. There is no contradiction involved, although opponents of the doctrine never weary of calling it "contradictory." The doctrine teaches that God is ONE in one sense, and THREE in a different sense. He is ONE in substance and

THREE in persons. While we may freely admit that this is a mystery which baffles the human mind, still it does not involve a contradiction. It would be contradictory if we were to affirm that God is both one and three in the SAME sense, that is, if we were to say that there is only one person in the Godhead and at the same time there are three persons in the Godhead. This would be an absurdity, but no Christian creed sets forth any such a view of the matter.

5. What are some of the illustrations that have been proposed to help people to understand the doctrine of the Trinity?

The same chemical substance having the various forms of water, ice and steam; the relations between fire, light and heat; and many similar comparisons.

6. Why are all these illustrations without value for explaining the Trinity?

Because the Trinity is a divine mystery, has no parallels in the natural realm, and has not been revealed in nature, but only in Scripture. Besides, all the illustrations suggested make use of physical distinctions which in the nature of the case cannot represent relations between persons. Moreover, the same substance is water at one time, ice at another time, and steam at still another time, not water, ice and steam all at the same time; whereas the three persons in the Godhead are the same God, yet distinct persons at one and the same time.

7. What phrase in the answer to Question 9 is very important as a test of real belief in the doctrine of the Trinity?

The phrase "the same in substance". Many people today say that they believe in "the divinity of Christ," for example, but they are not willing to say that Christ is the same in substance with God the Father.

8. What is the practical importance of the doctrine of the Trinity?

This is far from being a mere technical theory or abstract doctrine. Christianity stands or falls with the doctrine of the Trinity. The Bible represents the Plan of Salvation as a compact or covenant between the persons of the Trinity. Where the doctrine of the Trinity is abandoned, the whole Bible teaching about the Plan of Salvation must go with it.

LESSON 11

Q. 10. What are the personal properties of the three persons in the Godhead.

A. It is proper to the Father to beget the Son, and to the Son to be begotten of the

Father, and to the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and the Son from all eternity.

Scripture References:

The Father begets the Son: Hebrews 1:5, 6, 8.

The Son is begotten by the Father: John 1:14, 18; 3:16.

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and from the Son: John 15:26. Galatians 4:6.

These personal properties existed from all eternity: John 17:5, 24.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the word "begets" in speaking of the Trinity?

This word is the nearest there is in human language to set forth the relation between God the Father and God the Son.

2. How can it be shown from Hebrews 1:5-8 that the Son is not a created being, but was eternally begotten by the Father?

The words "this day" in verse 5 do not imply that before that the Son did not exist; rather "this day" is the day of eternity, as shown by verse 8, which calls the Son "God" and states that his throne is "for ever and ever." If the Son had ever had a beginning, he would not be called "God".

3. In speaking of the three persons in the Godhead, why do we always name the Father first, the Son second, and the Holy Spirit third?

Because the Bible speaks of the Father sending and operating through the Son and the Holy Spirit; also the Bible speaks of the Son as sending and working through the Holy Spirit. In the Bible this order is never reversed; the Bible never speaks of the Son working through the Father, nor of the Holy Spirit sending or working through the Son.

4. What should be our attitude toward these truths of the Trinity?

We should accept them with a reverent attitude, realizing that they are divine mysteries far beyond our power to explain or comprehend.

Q. 11. How doth it appear that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father?

A. The scriptures manifest that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father, ascribing unto them such names, attributes, works, and worship, as are proper to God only.

Scripture References:

Divine names ascribed to the Son: Isaiah 6:3-8 compared with John 12:41.

Divine names ascribed to the Holy Spirit: Isaiah 6:8 with Acts 28:25.

Divine names ascribed to the Son: 1 John 5:20.

Divine names ascribed to the Holy Spirit: Acts 5:3,4.

Divine attributes ascribed to the Son: John 1:1. Isaiah 9:6. John 2:24,25.

Divine attributes ascribed to the Holy Spirit: 1 Corinthians 2:10-11.

Divine works ascribed to the Son: John 1:3. Colossians 1:16.

Divine works ascribed to the Holy Spirit: Genesis 1:2.

Divine worship ascribed to the Son and to the Holy Spirit: Matthew 28:19. 2 Corinthians 13:14.

Questions:

1. According to the Bible, how many Gods are there?

Only one. This is the consistent teaching of the entire Bible.

2. How many distinct persons does the Bible speak of as divine?

Three, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

3. What is the only conclusion that can logically be drawn from these facts?

The only conclusion that can logically be drawn from the Biblical data is the conclusion that there is only one God, who exists in three distinct persons, each of which is truly God and equal with the other two.

LESSON 12

Q. 12. What are the decrees of God?

A. God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will, whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, especially concerning angels and men.

Scripture References:

Ephesians 1:11 (God, who works all things

according to the counsel of his own will, predestinates men according to his own purpose).

Romans 11:33 (God's plans and purposes cannot be explained or discovered by men).

Romans 9:14, 15, 18 (God's decrees do not make God the author of sin; God's decrees are according to the counsel of his own will; God's decrees are free from constraint from any source outside of himself).

Ephesians 1:4 (God's decrees, including those concerning the eternal destiny of men, were made in eternity, before the creation of the world).

Romans 9:22,23 (God has predestinated some men to wrath and others to glory).

Psalm 33:11 (God's plans and purposes are unchangeable).

Questions:

1. What great truth is set forth in the answer to Question 12?

The truth that God has an inclusive and exact plan for the universe which he has created.

2. According to the Bible, when was God's plan made?

In eternity, or before the creation of the world.

3. What three adjectives are used to describe the character of God's decrees?

Wise, free and holy.

4. What is meant by affirming that God's decrees are "wise"?

This means that God's decrees are in perfect harmony with his own perfect wisdom, which directs the use of the right means to attain right ends.

5. What is meant by affirming that God's decrees are "free"?

This means that God's decrees are not constrained or influenced by anything outside of God's own nature.

6. What is meant by affirming that God's decrees are "holy"?

This means that God's decrees are in perfect harmony with his own perfect holiness, and therefore are utterly free from sin.

7. Should we regard God's decrees as arbitrary decisions, like the heathen ideas of "fate" or "luck"?

No. God's decrees are not "arbitrary", for they were framed according to the counsel of his will. Back of God's decrees is the mind and heart of the infinite, personal God; therefore they are totally unlike "fate" or "luck".

8. What is the aim or purpose of God's decrees?

The aim or purpose of God's decrees is the manifestation of his own glory.

9. Is it selfish or wrong for God to seek his own glory above all else?

No, for God is the Author of all things, and all things exist for his glory. It would be selfish and sinful for human beings to seek their own glory above all else; but since God is the highest being, and there is no being higher than God, it is proper that God should seek his own glory.

10. What is the nature of God's decrees?

God's decrees are unchangeable; they cannot be changed; therefore they are certain to be fulfilled. Psalm 33:11.

11. What do God's decrees include?

God's decrees are all-inclusive; they include everything that ever happens.

12. Prove from the Bible that God's decrees include what are commonly called accidental or "chance" happenings.

Proverbs 16:33. Jonah 1:7. Acts 1:24, 26. 1 Kings 22:26, 34. Mark 14:30.

13. Prove from the Bible that God's decrees include even the sinful acts of men.

Genesis 45:5,8; 50:20. 1 Samuel 2:25. Acts 2:23. In affirming, as the Bible plainly teaches, that God's decrees include even the sinful acts of men, we must carefully guard against two errors: (1) God's decree does not make God the author of sin, nor render him responsible for sin; (2) The fact of God's foreordination does not cancel man's responsibility for his own sins. The Bible teaches both God's foreordination and man's responsibility. Therefore we should believe and affirm both, although we frankly recognize that we cannot fully harmonize the two. If we give up belief in either God's foreordination or man's responsibility, we immediately become involved in gross errors which contradict the Bible teaching at many points. It is better and wiser to accept what the Bible teaches in simple faith, and confess "a holy ignorance" concerning secret mysteries which have not been revealed, such as the solution of the problem of divine foreordination and human responsibility.

14. What is the difference between foreordination and predestination?

Foreordination is a term for all God's decrees concerning anything whatever that comes to pass in the created universe; **predestination** concerns God's decrees concerning the eternal destiny of angels and men.

15. Why do many people object to the doctrine of God's decrees?

Most objections to this doctrine are based, not on Scripture, but on human reasoning or philosophy. It is common for those who oppose the doctrine to set up an absurd caricature

of it and then demolish it with a great show of indignation. In dealing with a question of this kind no argument that does not take up, thoroughly and in detail, the various Scripture passages on which the doctrine is based, can be of any weight against the doctrine of God's decrees.

Human opinions, reasonings and philosophy are of no weight whatever against the statements of God's Word. Some objections urged against predestination, or the doctrine of election, will be considered in the next lesson.

LESSON 13

Q. 13. What hath God especially decreed concerning angels and men?

A. God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, hath elected some angels to glory, and in Christ, hath chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof: and also, according to his sovereign power, and the unsearchable counsel of his own will (whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favor as he pleaseth), hath passed by and foreordained the rest to dishonor and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice.

Scripture References:

Angels elected to eternal glory: 1 Timothy 5:21.

Men chosen in Christ to eternal life: Ephesians 1:4-6. 2 Thess. 2:13, 14.

The rest of mankind passed by: Romans 9:17, 18, 21, 22. Matthew 11:25, 26. 2 Timothy 2:20. Jude 4. 1 Peter 2:8.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the word "immutable"?

It means **unchangeable**.

2. What is the first reason why God elected some of the angels to glory?

"Out of his mere love".

3. Why is the word "mere" included in this statement?

Because God was under no **obligation** to elect any of the angels to glory.

4. What is the second reason why God elected some of the angels to glory?

To manifest the praise of his glorious grace.

5. What is the difference between God's election of angels to glory and his election of men to eternal life?

In the case of men, God elected them "in Christ"; that is, to be redeemed from sin through the atonement of Jesus Christ, and to be clothed with Christ's righteousness. But in the case of the angels, salvation had nothing to do with it.

God simply elected them to glory and then prevented them from ever falling into sin.

6. Besides electing men to eternal life, what else has God elected them to?

He has also elected them to "the means thereof; those whom he has chosen for eternal life, he has also chosen to receive the means of obtaining eternal life. That is, if God has foreordained that a certain person shall receive eternal life, then he has also foreordained that that person shall hear the Gospel, repent of sin, believe in Jesus Christ, etc., so as to make sure of that person's receiving eternal life without fail.

7. What is meant by speaking of God's sovereign power"?

This expression refers to the truth that God is supreme; there is no authority or law higher than God to which God himself is responsible. No one has the right to say to God, "What doest thou?"

8. In the case of those whom God has "passed by," what is the reason for his passing them by and not choosing them to eternal life?

The Bible represents this act of "passing by" as grounded in God's **sovereignty**, that is, it is not based on the character or works or life of the persons involved, but proceeds from God's own supreme authority. This does not mean that God has no reasons for "passing by" those whom he has passed by; it only means that the reasons are God's secret counsel, not revealed to us, and not based on human character, works or conduct. See Romans 9:13, 15, 20, 21.

9. In the case of those whom God has sovereignly "passed by," what is the reason for also ordaining them to dishonor and wrath?

The reason for ordaining them to dishonor and wrath is **their own sin**. Note the words "to be for their sin inflicted." Therefore God's foreordaining some men to **eternal punishment** is not based on the pure sovereignty of God (as is his act of "passing by" these same persons), but proceeds from God's attribute of perfect justice. They are punished because as sinners they **deserve** to be punished, not because God has passed them by. In hell the wicked will recognize that they are suffering a deserved punishment and that God has dealt with them strictly according to justice.

10. Suppose some person says, "If I am predestinated to receive eternal life, then I will receive it no matter whether I believe in Christ or not. So I need not bother to be a "Christian". How should we answer such a person?

The objection raised is based on a misunderstanding of the doctrine of election. God does not elect persons to eternal life apart from the means thereof. When a particular person is elected to eternal life, it is also foreordained that that person shall believe in Christ as his Saviour.

11. Suppose some person says: "If God from all eternity has ordained me to dishonor and wrath for my sins, then it is no use for me to believe in Christ, for I cannot be saved no matter how good a Christian I might become. There is no use for me to believe in Christ." How should we answer such an objection?

It is no use for us to try to pry into the secret Counsel of God and find out by a *shortout* whether we are among the select or not. The secret things belong to God, and the things that are revealed are for us to know. If a person is really dead in earnest about wanting to believe in Christ and be saved, that is a good sign that God has chosen that person to eternal life. The only way we can find out about God's decrees is by actually coming to Christ and receiving, in due course, the assurance of our own salvation. Then, and only then, can we say with confidence that we know ourselves to be of the elect.

12. What special difficulty is involved in this doctrine of election?

The difficulty is, How can God's decree of election be harmonized with human free agency? If God has foreordained all that comes to pass,

including the eternal destiny of all human beings, how can we ourselves be free agents and how can we be responsible for what we do? We cannot solve this problem, for it is a mystery. We can only affirm that the Bible plainly teaches **both** God's sovereign foreordination and human freedom and responsibility. To reject either of these Bible truths is to reject the clear teaching of the word of God and to become involved in even greater theological difficulties.

13. How should we answer the objection that "Is it not fair for God to elect one person to eternal life, while he passes by another"?

This objection is based on the assumption that God is under an obligation to treat all men with equal favor, and to do for **all** whatever he does for **any**. The Bible answer to this objection is found in Romans 9:20,21. The objection really involves a denial of the sovereignty of God, for it assumes that God is responsible to the human race for his decisions, or else that there is some higher law or power to which God is responsible and by which he must be judged. The truth is (1) God is sovereign and is responsible to no one but himself for his actions; (2) God is under no obligation to elect **anyone** to eternal life; it would be perfectly just for him to leave all mankind to perish in their sins; (3) If God elects some to eternal life, he is under no obligation to elect all; for his electing of **some** is a matter of **grace**, and therefore cannot be claimed as a right by any that are "passed by." It is quite true that the Bible represents God as dealing with men **unequally**, that is, giving to some what he withholds from others; but this is not "unfair" because there is no injustice involved. No one has any basis for a claim that God has treated him unjustly.

Reviews of Religious Books

The favorable reviewing of a book here is not to be understood as necessarily implying an endorsement of everything contained in it. Within the editorial policy of Blue Banner Faith and Life each reviewer is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in his reviews. Please purchase books from your book dealer or direct from the publishers; do not send orders for books to the manager of this magazine.

CORRECTIONS

Please note the following corrections of errors which occurred in the April-June 1960 issue:

On page 100, in the last sentence of the review of HISTORIC PROTESTANTISM AND PREDESTINATION, by Harry Buis, the word "American" is a misprint for "Arminian." The sentence should read: "This book would be an appropriate gift for an Arminian Christian who is sincerely open to new light from God's Word."

On page 92, column 1, paragraph 2, the first sentence should have the word "not" added, so as to read: "The foregoing must not be taken to mean that there are never to be any exceptions to such rules."

On page 112, column 1, paragraph 4, "21 foreign missions" should read "21 foreign missionaries."

The Editor regrets the occurrence of these errors and suggests that readers make the appropriate corrections in their copies of the April-June issue. — J. G. Vos

JOHN CALVIN, CONTEMPORARY PROPHET, edited by Jacob T. Hoogstra. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1959, pp. 257. \$4.50.

This book is neither biography nor history in the usual sense, but it is a symposium, contributed by fifteen Reformed scholars on aspects of Calvin's character and influence. Dr. S. Bruce Willson and Professor Paul Woolley assisted in the planning of this book, which was prepared in connection with the 450th anniversary of Calvin's birth and the 400th anniversary of his final edition of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

One of the chapters which will surprise some concerning Calvin is entitled "The Tolerance of Our Prophet." Adverse critical views have been spread in biased histories of Calvin until the true man has become a mere caricature. Even while exiled from Geneva, Calvin willingly took up his pen to answer the Roman Church for the city which had expelled him. Calvin's intolerance was not in reference to himself or his treatment, but when the truth of God was at stake, it was an entirely different matter. No man could turn the truth of God aside without Calvin's rebuke. When Melancthon became too willing to compromise truth for unity, Calvin rebuked him thus, "You extend the distinction of non-essential too far."

The chapter on "Calvin and Ecumenicity" is timely. A letter from Cranmer to Calvin is quoted, "... as nothing tends more injurious to separation of the Churches than heresies and disputes respecting the doctrines of religion, so nothing tends more effectually to unite the Churches of God and more powerfully to defend the fold of Christ, than the pure teaching of the Gospel and harmony of doctrine." In response to this Calvin answered regarding his view of the unity of the Church brought about by purity of doctrine, "I would not grudge to cross even ten seas if need were, on account of it" (pp. 151, 152).

The closing chapter on "Calvin and the Political Order" will be of particular interest to Covenanters. W. Standford Reid writes "to Calvin the covenant instituted by God between Himself and the magistrates and people of a state is the most basic political institution." "... even if they do not recognize it, rulers and people exist as a state, by virtue of their mutual covenant obligation in the sight of God" (p. 249). "While Calvin is anxious to preserve the church from political interference, he is at the same time equally convinced that the church should not intrude into the state's particular area of authority. Christ being both head of the church and king of kings, the spheres of both are subject to Him directly."

Your appreciation and understanding of Calvin will be enlarged by acquaintance with this book.

— Reid W. Stewart

FOR WHOM DID CHRIST DIE, by R. B. Kuiper. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 104. \$2.00.

Dr. Kuiper's book is a refreshing monograph which he styles "A Study of the Divine Design of the Atonement." It is a timely book since so much of the Protestant church holds erroneous views on the design of Christ's death. This book treats unscriptural views of the atonement under the headings Unrestricted Universalism, Arminian Universalism, and Barthian Universalism. After a brief historical review of each type of unscriptural universalism, Dr. Kuiper considers these views in the light of Scripture and deals with the passages that are often quoted in defense of their position by those holding erroneous views.

The Barthian view, though heralded by some as a return toward orthodoxy, is inconsistent. Barth grants God His sovereignty, but he also holds that the rejected men are those whom God has elected, but who have turned away from Him. The Divine decision can be annulled by the human decision. If this does not impinge upon God's sovereignty, words have no meaning.

The Scriptural view of the atonement is divided into two sections, Scriptural Particularism (God's purpose by the atonement to save only the elect and consequently all the elect) and Scriptural Universalism (benefits extended to all men, though not salvation, by Christ's death) which deals with the indirect benefits of the atonement such as common grace.

This book can be understood by the laymen. It is well written, being clear and concise, a boon to laymen readers of theological treatises.

— Reid W. Stewart

BIBLE FACTS WITH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, by Lura B. Lawrence. W. A. Wilde Co., Natick, Mass. 1959, pp 97, paper cover. \$1.00

Bible Facts was prepared to "stimulate a greater interest in searching the scriptures." The questions are not for "babes in the faith," but they require a good degree of Bible knowledge to answer them. Even high school students will find them difficult, but they should know the answers to a large percentage of them. A number of the sections of questions are topical in content, i.e., "Meet the Simons of the New Testament," or "Judges of Israel." An outline of the life of Christ and Paul's three missionary journeys as well as his trip to Rome covering 7½ pages is given in the center of the book. The questions fill 39 pages and the answers 35 with the additional help of scriptural references given with almost every answer.

— Reid W. Stewart

THE WAY OF LIFE, by Charles Hodge. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England. 1959. pp. 238. 7s, 6d.

This book should be in the hands of young Christians because Charles Hodge has combined what we too infrequently find together, a sound faith and a living faith. He writes with the warmth of one who has tasted and seen that the Lord is good, and yet has not had his vision clouded in the smoke of mysticism. The book begins with the Scripture as the Word of God, setting forth the evidence of the Divine origin of the Bible. Three chapters are spent on sin, its prevalence, its nature, and its knowledge. The chapters on justification, faith, and repentance are replete with quotations from Scripture. The last two chapters are "The Profession of Religion" and "Holy Living." Our religion is not to be ostentatious; yet, a public profession is necessary. Dr. Hodge emphasizes that profession is only the beginning; we are but feeble Christians then and must advance gradually to maturity in the faith. The work is sound, readable, and edifying.

— Reid W. Stewart

BETWEEN GOD AND SATAN by Helmut Thielicke, Translated by The Rev. C. C. Barber. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 1958, pp. 77. \$2.00.

Professor Thielicke wrote this study on the Temptation of Jesus out of the soul-testing experiences of the tyrannical period before and after World War II. He wrote it to strengthen the followers of Jesus in their resistance to tyranny.

His thought is that the hour of temptation is the most critical and terrible hour, and that Jesus, as He met Satan in the wilderness, met that hour and by His faithfulness in obeying and resting upon God's Word gained a sweeping victory. And not only in and for Himself, but for us also, for, in his temptation our destiny also is at stake. "Jesus who is fighting here is not only the mirror of the divine heart (Martin Luther), but also of the human heart. A mirror of our nakedness and vulnerability and our poverty and imprisoned state." "How can temptation be the determining factor, - the most deadly peril in our lives? For temptation is a deadly peril. Whatever possible interpretation is there of the petition, 'Lead us not into temptation'? To be in temptation means to be constantly in the situation of wanting to be untrue to God. It means being constantly on the point of freeing ourselves from God. It means being constantly in doubt of God." Jesus overcame temptation by being true to God, submission to God and not doubting God.

Since Jesus "was tempted in all points like as we are and yet without sin," He can succor us who are tempted. This is a most heartening book for us who are tempted. In the words of the author in his epilogue, "we have a double consolation. Because Jesus Christ is our brother, we are not alone in our temptation. He suffers it with us, down to the lowest depths which Satan has conceived. And because He is the Lord, who stands in the purity of heaven beyond all sin, we

can pray Him to keep us from temptation. We are certain of his love to all eternity. Christ not only marches on our right against death and devil; but He upholds us, too, from His height, because He is the Lord. The knowledge that we are sheltered by His power gives us that peace which the world cannot give or take away from us". . . "Lord and brother, King and comrade, our ruler and the sharer of our suffering; that is the sublime wonder of the saving power of Jesus."

It is a book which if one reads he will want to read again and again. Its reading fortifies one's faith in the God of all Grace and makes one thankful for the grace that sent His Son to suffer in temptation that we might live. It is a stimulating work for the ministry of the Gospel and many others will find it most profitable reading. To obtain the fullest benefit of the author's message it is really necessary to read it with the Word near at hand. There are some 222 citations of Scripture in the book, of which only a small minority are quoted verbatim.

— Robert Park

THE IMPUTATION OF ADAM'S SIN, by John Murray. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan 1959, pp. 95. \$2.00.

The importance of the subject of this book is not measured by its size. Robert Haldane wrote: "The spirit of speculation and of novelty which is now abroad, loudly calls upon Christians to give earnest heed to the truths inculcated in the Epistle to the Romans." This was true in 1835, and it is true today!

This book is a careful exegesis of Romans 5:12-19. Dr. Murray states that it is in this passage that all the lines of Paul's thinking converge, and thus this passage, in a sense, is the center of the book of Romans.

Murray discusses Jonathan Edwards' view of imputed sin. He sides with Warfield in his opinion that Edwards believed fully in IMMEDIATE imputation (the doctrine that our guilt is directly imputed to us from Adam) rather than MEDIANTE imputation (the doctrine that our guilt is mediated through the corrupt nature which we inherited from Adam). Murray makes a strong case for immediate imputation and distinguishes from the definition given it by Charles Hodge.

He takes issue with Hodge's polemic in which Hodge states that mankind is obligated to satisfy divine justice for Adam's sin, and that this is the essential meaning of immediate imputation, rather than that mankind all actually SINNED in Adam.

Dr. Murray's probing and searching insight into the vitally important doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin is a real contribution to Reformed theological thinking. His book will bear careful and thoughtful reading.

— Raymond P. Joseph

LECTURES ON REVIVALS, by William B. Sprague. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78B Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England. 1959. pp. 452. 15 Shillings.

This book was first published in 1832. The author was a minister in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The print is large, and easy to read. The last 165 of the 452 pages are devoted to the printing of correspondence of leading ministers and educators writing to Dr. Sprague on the subject of revival.

Altogether this is a valuable book on revival in the church of Jesus Christ. The chapters cover such themes as The Nature of a Revival, Obstacles to Revivals, Divine Agency in Revivals, General Means of Producing and Promoting Revivals, Treatment due to Awakened Sinners, Evils to be Avoided in connection with Revivals, etc. Sprague lists as obstacles to revivals, 1. Misunderstanding of Revivals, 2. Spirit of worldiness, 3. The want of a sense of personal responsibility, 4. Toleration of gross offences in the church, 5. Absence of a spirit of love among professors, 6. Errors of doctrine.

The author shows a keen insight into the practical application of Reformed doctrines to revivals. He warns against those who attribute too much to the agency of the Spirit, "They do this who speak of revivals, as if God only was at work in them, and man a mere passive recipient of impressions. They do this who do not exert themselves to the utmost to co-operate with God, on the ground that a revival is a mere matter of sovereignty, and that God is able to carry forward his own work independently of means" (p. 111). Yet he ends this part with the admonishment, "put forth every effort you can to bring souls to Jesus, but remember after all, and remember for your rich encouragement, the doctrine of sovereign grace."

The reprint of this book at a time when the sense of need of revival seems to have ebbed low in some Reformed circles performs a definite service. Revival is a legitimate Scriptural term. Reading this volume will not only give practical advice on dealing with inquirers, but will also give a balanced and Biblically oriented outlook on the whole subject of revival. It is highly recommended.

—Raymond P. Joseph

THE YOUNG MINISTER (a novel), by Peter Boulding. W. A. Wilde Company, Natick, Mass. 1959, pp. 244. \$2.50.

The story has a New England setting (not far from Boston) and it is written in a "diary" style. Peter Goulding graduated with high honors from his theological school and received a call to Foxburg, a rather large and prosperous church. But his pastorate had been anything but successful. After 2 years in Foxburg he resigned.

The story catalogues a few incidents and efforts at the small town of Knotty Ash. He accepted this call to "prove" his calling. If such proof was not forthcoming he would leave the ministry.

As the story opens it is January and the trees are bare. But as the story develops we find the foliage developing and his calling becomes more certain in his mind.

We see him develop in his pastoral relationships (which he was lacking at Foxburg) and becoming more mature in his dealings with the parishioners and members of the community. He strives to love each soul and be sensitive to their problems.

Many incidents are recorded and developed—from the conflict with the chronic "reformer" to a murder mystery and an ill fated attachment with an attractive young lady who was a friend and visitor of one of the parishioners.

One often questions if he would handle the problems in the same way. But hindsight is better developed in people than foresight.

—Charles S. Sterrett

THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY TO THE OLDER UNMARRIED, by M. D. Hugen. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 122. \$2.00.

As the title suggests, this is an attempt to call the church to its responsibility in meeting the special needs of the older unmarried. This term is used to describe those unmarried men and women who are 30 years of age or older. "Therefore, thirty was chosen as a mean, not as an absolute boundary." p. 18.

The author calls attention to the fact that society is responsible for the attitude toward the unmarried. Society has looked upon the unmarried, particularly the woman, as one who has been frustrated in the quest for happiness. The popular writings of the various decades have advanced and perpetuated this thinking. The man when he is married "gives up his freedom," while the woman "makes a fine catch."

The author then shows how that society has set up a certain standard of conduct and that the unmarried have conformed to this pattern. The man has been given a liberty of promiscuity which has been denied to the woman, but even this attitude is changing today.

He then explores the Biblical teaching and how the problem is to be met. Marriage is not an end in itself, and "satisfaction" is not the end of marriage—which is the popular concept today.

The solution of the unmarried is two fold:
(1) The unmarried person (whether by choice

or by fate) must realize his position and come to the realization that he has been called to serve God in that capacity. It is not necessarily a fixed situation, but one that may change. But as long as he is single, he is to serve God in that capacity.

(2) The church has a ministry to these people which must cause them to feel the Oneness of the Church. The problem of loneliness must be met. He has even gone so far as to suggest a "marriage bureau" run by the church—**for believers.**

The author has done considerable research for this book and there are copious foot-notes. A bibliography is included so that those interested may seek the source.

The book is not for popular reading but it is very informative to those who are interested in meeting this problem. The church does have an area to work which has been neglected in the past years.

—Charles S. Sterrett

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM, by George Eldon Ladd. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 143. \$2.75.

The author is professor of Biblical Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary and has presented nine interesting lectures on the "Kingdom of God."

In the first lecture he defines a kingdom as "the authority to rule, the sovereignty of the king." "When the word (kingdom) refers to God's Kingdom it always refers to His reign, His rule, His sovereignty, and not to the realm in which it is exercised." Thus the Kingdom of God is defined as "His Kingship, His rule, His authority."

Proceeding from this he examines the Kingdom from various positions: The Kingdom is Tomorrow; The Kingdom is Today; Mystery of the Kingdom; The Life of the Kingdom; the Righteousness of the Kingdom; The Demands of the Kingdom; The Kingdom, Israel, and the Church; When will the Kingdom Come.

The lectures are presented from the Pre-Millennial point of view. The author holds to two resurrections; the church to be taken from the world at the first resurrection; the church of the New Testament is a new institution, etc. Although the author holds the Pre-Millennial concept, he has a charitable attitude for those who do not agree with his particular interpretation.

Although one may not agree with the author's

particular interpretation, yet he will find many quotable quotes and strong presentations of scriptural truths to apply to our Christian life and witness.

"Nominalism is the curse of modern western Christianity." "Denial of self does not mean that I am to deny myself things. It means to deny myself, not to deny things to myself . . . Self-denial is self-centered; denial of self is Christ centered."

This is an interesting and informative series on the Kingdom of God as written from a Pre-Millennial point of view.

—Charles S. Sterrett

EVOLUTION AND CHRISTIAN THOUGHT TODAY, a symposium edited by Russell L. Mixter, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 240. \$4.50.

This book is an attempt to evaluate constructively evolution as it is taught today, in the light of the teaching of God's Word. It takes a large stride forward in accomplishing the purpose as stated by Mixter (Wheaton College.) He states the purpose as, "To establish the exact import of the theory of evolution; to weigh the claims made by its proponents in the light of contemporary research; to re-examine the scriptural data relevant to the questions of origin and organic development.

In answering the question, "Can a Christian believe in evolution?" the reader soon discovers that there is no simple yes or no answer. "What kind of evolution?" and "Evolution of what?" are two questions which must be answered first before an intelligent Biblical answer can be given to the first question. Carl F. H. Henry (**Christianity Today**) writing the final chapter on "Theology and Evolution" suggests some qualifications for the kind of evolution in which a creationist can believe. He says, "If by the evolutionary fact is meant that the universe is billions of years old, and that millions of years were required for the development of all the various species of plant and animal life, and that the antiquity of the human race is somewhat greater than the brief span of six thousand years assigned by scientists and theologians alike a few centuries ago, then warfare between science and Christianity is at an end."

The point at which creationists (a term describing those who hold to the presupposition that God created at least the major divisions of life supernaturally) and evolutionists must part company is well defined by Buswell (Wheaton) as at the point of "quantum evolution," which is the explaining of the appearance of new **ORDERS** by naturalistic processes alone. He says, "(the implication of the creationist position

as opposed to the evolutionist is) . . . that God created the orders, and natural selection took it from there."

Attitude Toward Genesis Account

Buswell says, "There are no data as such that conflict with the Genesis account of creation as interpreted in the context of the author's language and culture." Mrs. Barber (former Park Ranger Naturalist, Grand Canyon, Arizona) who writes the chapter on "The Fossil Record" says, "The record does not even mention sea plants nor invertebrate animals. These striking omissions definitely indicate that Genesis 1 was not intended to be a comprehensive survey but only a suggestive outline." And, "on all of these points there is no lack of harmony between the fossil record and sacred revelation." Concerning the distribution of animals, Anderson (University of Minnesota, writing on "The Distribution of Animals" says, "Unfortunately some writers have stated that the concept of creation necessarily means that all forms of life are now in the location where they were originally created. No such restriction can be read into the Biblical account. The story of the flood suggests a re-dispersal of animals." Buswell, writing the chapter on "A Creationist Interpretation of Prehistoric Man" says, ". . . the creationist may accept the evidence for the age of prehistoric man and his culture. He need have no quarrel with an antiquity of hundreds of thousands of years; there is nothing in the Bible to indicate how long ago man was created." Buswell is careful to make the point that the Biblical statements concerning the human race's origin from one created man, Adam, are entirely consistent with this acceptance.

Attitude Towards "Fixity of Species"

"It is easy to see that fixity of species is an unsatisfactory explanation of the fossil record on many counts" (Barber). And, concerning the Genesis statement "after his kind" she writes, "we have emphasized that this cannot refer to species as we regard them. Therefore it must describe some other sort of genetic boundary or law" Bullock (U. of New Hampshire) says, "With the concept that natural selection can and does make changes in populations which result in the formation of sub species and perhaps even species there can be little disagreement." However, he points out that "speciation (development of new species) is not a substitute for creation but rather one phase of God's activities as the ruler of the universe," and, as he says, it is part of God's work of providence in preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions. "As such, then, speciation sheds little light on the mechanics of creation, although it is possible that God the Creator may have used it, in part, during the 'six days' in much

the same manner as the car repairmen uses some of the same tools as the original manufacturers." Again, "Speciation demonstrates some orderly change or 'evolution.' It does not, however, disprove the prime role of God either in a unique creative process 'in the beginning' or in His providential control since that time. It most certainly does not do any violence to the simple but eloquent account of Moses in the first chapter of Genesis." Anderson says, "Unfortunately many writers . . . have insisted that belief in creation necessarily includes belief in the 'fixity of species.' Such an insistence is not a fair interpretation of the Bible record and has caused much confusion from both the scientific and religious point of view."

A particularly interesting chapter is written on "The Origin of Life" by Hearn & Hendry who say, ". . . reputable scientists DO have faith that life arose from inanimate matter through a series of physico-chemical processes no different from those we can observe today. If Christians cannot accept this, at least as a legitimate hypothesis, there will inevitably be conflict at this point." The writers do an admirable job of showing how this fits into the Biblical concept of an absolutely Sovereign all-wise Creator Who made man in his own image for his own glory.

Quotes from other writers will help to give the tone of the volume. Knobloch (Michigan State) writing on "Hybridization" says, "Conservative Christians can believe in the divine creation of the major groups of organisms and still be modern enough to believe in the natural laws of change." Robertson and Sinclair say, "Present day evidence (for evolution) will permit one to take a creationist position." Of course, when they are speaking of present day evidence for evolution, they are speaking of observable **FACTS**, and not unwarranted and sweeping evolutionary **THEORIES** which are supposedly based on facts and are so widely taught today as facts.

Whether we agree with every statement or not (this reviewer disagrees with the statement of one writer who says that the early chapters of Genesis are to be interpreted allegorically and not literally, p. 48) this book is thought provoking. The various authors are obviously authorities in their respective fields, and, with the exception mentioned above, give evidence at the same time of accepting the Genesis record as literally true.

Reading this book would strengthen Christian university students who are facing atheistic philosophies in their science and philosophy classes. It would equally profit the Christian laity and clergy.

—Raymond P. Joseph

Blue Banner Question Box

Readers are invited to submit Biblical, doctrinal and practical questions for answer in this department. Names of correspondents will not be published, but anonymous communications will be disregarded.

Question:

Please explain the last Passover and the Last Supper. The Gospel accounts would suggest that both were observed by men only (Jesus and the twelve apostles). But Scripture indicates that the Passover was a family feast, and Covenanters observe the Last Supper as a family sacrament—men, women and children. How can these facts be reconciled with each other?

Answer:

While the regular and ordinary observance of the Passover, as set forth in Exodus chapter 12, was on a family basis, this does not imply that the Passover might not, with divine approval, possess certain aspects involving both the Church and the State. Thus we are told in 2 Chron. 30:1-12 that Hezekiah, king of Judah, took the initiative in restoring the observance of the Passover and in making proper preparations, on a nation-wide scale, for this matter. From verses 13-22 of the same chapter it is evident that both the priests and the Levites—church officers—had a prominent part in the ceremonies connected with the Passover. Later we read that “Josiah kept a Passover unto the Lord in Jerusalem” (2 Chron. 35:1).

Our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles observed the last Passover that God approved of, and immediately afterwards they observed the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper for the first time in the history of God’s covenant people. This was the transition point between the Old Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace and the New Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace. Jesus and the apostles formed the nucleus of the New Testament Church. This last observance of the Passover and first observance of the Lord’s Supper was unique in the history of redemption. It marked a historic transition and set a pattern for the future.

The fact that no women or children were present was incidental. It was involved, inevitably, in the fact that Jesus and the apostles were all men. This in no way implies that it is wrong for women to partake of the Lord’s Supper, or children either, if they have properly and publicly confessed their faith in and obedience to the Lord. The fact that only men were present was incidental, as was the time (Thursday evening) and the place (an upper room in Jerusalem).

It is not quite correct to say that the Lord’s Supper is a family sacrament. It is a sacrament of the New Testament form of the Visible Church, rightly participated in by Christian believers who have publicly professed their faith in and obedience to Christ and who are living orderly in accordance with their public vows and profession. The fact that all the members of a family may partake of the Lord’s Supper does not make it “a family sacrament.” It would be entirely improper to observe it in a private home with only the family present. It is a sacrament of the Visible Church and to be observed by the church congregation.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

What is the teaching of the Bible on the subject of Gambling? I am specially concerned about the “free gifts” given by supermarkets to holders of tickets with “lucky numbers”, and the practice of signing up for a “free gift.”

Answer:

Gambling in its many forms is a prevalent, and apparently an increasing, evil of our time. The desire to get something for nothing is itself a manifestation of covetous greed which is unworthy of a Christian, who should always be ready to give a comparable value in return for what he seeks. The mania of getting something free through lotteries, raffles, chance tickets, etc., is becoming a national disease in America. Someone has called it “jackpotitis.” When one person because of possession of a “lucky number” wins something of value, many persons have contributed to paying for this “gift” without getting any adequate value in return. The fact that the losers have agreed to the system does not make it right. Someone had said that gambling stands in the same relation to stealing that duelling does to murder. When something is wrong in itself, agreement between parties does not make it right.

Looking at the matter from another angle, all gambling is irreverent because it is based upon trifling with the divine providence. “The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord” (Prov. 16:33). There is really no such thing as chance. What men call “chance” is simply that element in God’s providence which is not humanly controllable or predictable. If dice are thrown on a table, which faces are up does not depend on “chance”; it was foreordained by God before the world was

created. Not "chance" but God determines the winner of every raffle or lottery. In all cases, which number is to be "lucky" was decided by God in the counsels of eternity. Gambling is therefore a violation of the Third Commandment: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Ex. 20:7). God's providence is part of God's "name" — that by which God reveals Himself. When we make it the basis of a lottery or raffle we are taking His name in vain.

People today excuse gambling, first, on the ground that everybody does it, therefore it cannot be wrong. Of course, it is not true that "everybody" does it. There are those who conscientiously oppose it and witness against it, though they may be in the minority. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (Ex. 23:2) is a clear teaching of God's Word. The fact that gambling is common does not prove that it is right—it only proves that human hearts are sinful.

Another excuse given for gambling is that some influential churches promote it. Before me as I write is the Bulletin of St. Julia's Roman Catholic Church, 638 Roslyn Avenue, Erie, Pennsylvania, dated August 2, 1959. This Bulletin contains the following exhortation:

"In helping the Church and its need, we too, are working for a remembrance in our Christian Heritage. Of course, to be convinced in believing that Faith without Good Works is dead, we must have Faith. I heard a priest say one time:

'Now if you cannot give to the Church for God's sake—if God is not the reason for your giving, for your sacrifice, don't give at all. God must be the reason.' So, now let us get ready for the Chicken and Ham Dinner. Sell or buy your chances on the Trip to Bermuda. Try to find it in your heart to give us a hand at the Dinner, Bingo, and the other Big Attractions that will be in the Big Tent back of the Church. And if you have planned to be away on your vacation at that time, why not make up for your absence by taking additional Chance books?"

It is to be feared that the above is not an isolated case. This deplorable fact is that there are churches that sanction and promote gambling schemes and justify them on the ground that they are for the cause of religion. Actually, rather than this religious angle justifying gambling, it makes it, in our judgment, even worse. We think it a worse sin to gamble for the cause of religion than simply to gamble. It indicates that the person has not merely a covetous, greedy heart but that he believes that God can be honored and His cause promoted by indulging in practices aimed at satisfying that covetous desire.

For a further study of this subject the reader is referred to the article entitled *The Sinfulness of Raffles and "Chances,"* in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, Volume 5 No. 4 (October-December 1950), pages 154-155; also the *Blue Banner Question Box* in Vol. 11 No. 1 (January-March 1956), page 46.

—J. G. Vos

By the Waters of Babylon

By Christina G. Rossetti

By the waters of Babylon
We sit down and weep,
Far from the pleasant land
Where our fathers sleep:
Far from the Holy Place
From which the glory is gone:
We sit in dust and weep
By the waters of Babylon.

By the waters of Babylon
The willow-trees grow rank:
We hang our harps thereon
Silent upon the bank.
Before us days are dark,
And dark the days that are gone:
We grope in the very dark
By the waters of Babylon.

By the waters of Babylon
We thirst for Jordan yet,
We pine for Jerusalem
Whereon our hearts are set:
Our priests defiled and slain,
Our princes ashamed and gone,
Oh how should we forget
By the waters of Babylon?

By the waters of Babylon
Though the wicked grind the just,
Our seed shall yet strike root
And shall shoot up from the dust:
The captive shall lead captive,
The slave rise up and begone,
And thou too shalt sit in dust,
O daughter of Babylon.

(Continued from inside front cover)

Hating still, in deadliest measure,
 Who that rising sceptre own,
 Marring all their pomp and pleasure
 With the shadow of a throne!
 True, they kneel with feigned behaviour,
 Myrrh and frankincense will bring;
 Priest and Prophet own the Savior,
 But — they crucify the King!
 Wouldst thou hail an earthly Master,
 Then the world would love its own!
 Grasp thy banner-truth the faster,
 See that no man take thy crown!
 Hope thou not, then, earth's alliance;
 Take thy stand beside the Cross;
 Fear, lest by unblest compliance,
 Thou transmute thy gold to dross!
 Steadfast in thy meek endurance,
 Prophecy in sackcloth on —
 Hast thou not the pledged assurance,
 Kings one day shall kiss the Son?
 Oft thy foes may triumph o'er thee;
 Tread thy carcass in the street;
 Sing aloud the hate they bore thee —
 Thou shalt stand upon thy feet!

Life through all thy veins returning,
 In the sight of those who doomed —
 And the Bush, for ever burning,
 Never — never — be consumed!
 Now unto the hill-tops get thee
 Whence the sunrise we descry;
 Nightly on thy watch tower set thee,
 For His coming draweth nigh!
 Tell the nations of the glory
 Through the blackness we discern;
 Sound a trumpet with the story
 Of the King who shall return!
 Call to Judah in her blindness;
 Bid benighted Israel hear;
 Drop the word of truth and kindness
 On the heathen's palsied ear!
 Trim thy lamp, the night-hours cheering;
 Wash thy robes from every stain;
 Watch, to hail the glad appearing
 Of the Bridegroom and His train!
 Haste! thy coming Lord to greet!
 Cast thy crown before His feet!
 Only, may His quest for thee
 Find thee — what He made thee — Free!

Our Present Financial Status

In the April-June 1960 issue it was stated that about \$900.00 would be needed to complete publication for 1960 without a deficit. It was stated that about \$100.00 of this could be expected from subscribers and clubs which had not yet paid for 1960. For the balance we would be dependent on contributions.

We wish to acknowledge, with hearty thanks, the following contributions which have been received since April 1: No. 778, \$50.00; No. 779, \$5.00; No. 780, .50; No. 781, \$8.50; No. 782, \$10.00; No. 783, \$10.00; No. 784, \$25.00; No. 785, \$13.75; No. 786, \$10.00; No. 787, \$10.00; No. 788, \$1.14; No. 789, \$5.00; No. 790, \$25.00; No. 791, \$50.00; No. 792, \$38.50; No. 793, \$5.00; No. 794, \$25.00; No. 795, \$50.00. Total \$302.39. We have also received since April 1 for subscriptions, \$19.65;

for back issues, \$2.50; for refunds \$2.00. Total, with the contributions, \$326.54.

The Board of Publication has made us a grant of \$200.00. This means that about \$375 is still needed from contributions if we are to complete publication for 1960 without a deficit. As Blue Banner Faith and Life carries no advertising, we cannot expect to finance it entirely from subscriptions. The present announcement should not be construed as an appeal to those who responded to our plea of three months ago to contribute again. But if you did not respond to that appeal, please try to help the ministry of Blue Banner Faith and Life, if you can do so without neglecting your prior Church and Kingdom obligations.

—J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager
 3408 Seventh Avenue, Beaver Falls, Penn., U.S.A.



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NUMBER 4

**They who have been inwardly taught by the Spirit
feel an entire acquiescence in the Scripture.**

John Calvin

A Quarterly Publication Devoted to Expounding, Defending and Applying the System of Doctrine set forth in the Word of God and Summarized in the Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanter) Church.

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From Covenant Times

By Hugh C. Wilson

Awake, my harp! Ring out thy notes, ring out thy richest strain,
O'er those who boldly dared for love of God's cause to be slain;
Tell thou each Christian of today, who by the wayside faints,
Of times when Scotland's plaid was dyed with life-blood of the saints;
When everywhere, by hill and glen, within the stricken land,
Who held the Bible, also held their life within their hand;
When righteous men were hunted down like wild beasts of the field—
Brave men, who in the cause of truth would rather die than yield.

Lo! deep from wild sequestered glen, amidst the Sabbath calm,
Arises through the early mists to Heav'n the morning Psalm;
Then on the sward, when knees are pressed and every heart aware,
Their hearts rise with the speaker's voice, up to the throne in prayer.
The aged pastor reads the word from God's own sacred page—
Perhaps, where David sought the Lord to quell the heathen's rage;
Again a Psalm they sweetly chant, then kneeling down to pray:
"Oh! help us, Lord, to do thy will—protect us through this day."

With Bible placed upon a rock, he then expounds the word:
But, hark! like wind among the trees, a murmuring is heard,
As when far out the sailor hears across his trackless path
The tempest breathe o'er ocean vast a telegram of wrath.
An awful stillness intervenes, then borne along they hear,
Much louder now, like troubled winds, the murmur coming near.
Each heart stands still, the cheeks are blanched, the speaker's voice is dumb;
Their sentry calls from off the height, "The king's dragoons—they come!"

"Be calm, be calm, my children dear, and on the Lord rely;
He ever ready is to save the needy when they cry;
Mysterious unto us His ways, but, blessed be His name,
We yet may wear a robe of light—our foes a crown of shame.
Adown the glen now while ye may, seek safety all in flight,
But draw your blades, ye trusty few, who yet may have to fight:
The aged and the feeble first; haste! for they hurry near;
The women and the children next; ye strong men, guard the rear."

The holy man, when left alone, sank down behind a rock.
"Heed, heed not me, O Lord!" he cried, "but spare, oh spare Thy flock!
Thy hand lies heavy on the land, oh left Thy chastening rod,
If 'tis Thy holy will to hear my humble prayer, O God!
And bless wherever met this day, in cave or lonely glen,
Thy chosen few, and teach them, Lord, to bear themselves like men;
And help Thy humble servant now, and hear his earnest cry;
If in his en'my's hand he fall, oh give him strength to die!"

The captain came. "Now, hoary scamp, to flames thy Bible fling,
And on your knees go down and swear allegiance to the King."
"To heaven's high King alone; but not to false King James, or thou,
While life-blood warms this aged frame, these knees will ever bow."
"Form round, and ready then, my lads, his blood be on his head.
King James or death?" "Heaven's King alone! I have already said."
Flash! went the guns, down sank the saint, thrust by the tyrant's rod,
With horrid oath into his ears, before Thy throne, O God!

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THE HEBREW SANCTUARY

A Study in Typology

By the Rev. Wallace B. Nicholson, M.A., B.D., M. Th.

Note: We are happy to present this scholarly and edifying study of the Old Testament Tabernacle in **Blue Banner Faith and Life** in serial form. **The Hebrew Sanctuary: A Study in Typology**, by the Rev. Wallace B. Nicholson, was published in 1951 in book form by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan, U.S.A. Copyright 1951 by Baker Book House. The book has been out of print for some time, but it is hoped that it will soon be available in book form again. The material is presented in serial form in this magazine by special permission of the author and of Baker Book House, the publisher and copyright owner. This study is commended to our readers as true to the Bible as the infallible Word of God, deeply conversant with the riches of Biblical truth, and free from extravagant and fanciful interpretations.—Editor.

PREFACE

The Hebrew Sanctuary has been a theme for allegorical and typical interpretation since the days of Philo, Josephus, and the Rabbis. For various reasons the study of this subject has been generally outmoded, but it is a theme which is in every sense worthy of the earnest study of the Christian.

The treatment of the Sanctuary in the following pages has been undertaken from the viewpoint that the symbols of the Mosaic Sanctuary contain the fundamental doctrines of Christianity as the golden casket in the most holy place treasured up the Law, which is holy, and just, and good, and contains as its quintessence the terms of the new Covenant as well as the old. (Cf. Matt. 22:37-40).

The Tabernacle is a comprehensive representation of the union of God with man, which had its fulfillment in Him Who tabernacled with man, and Who, "by a greater and more perfect tabernacle" in Whom dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily, obtained eternal redemption for the Church of God.

The theological world is indebted to Fairbairn, Atwater, Oehler, and many others, for their labours in this department of Biblical In-

terpretation. Fairbairn especially, by his massive scholarship and spiritual acumen, established the science of Typology on a solid foundation on which others may build in the days to come.

While the following pages do not pretend to provide a treatise on the Hebrew Sanctuary, an attempt has been made to give a condensed survey of the views held on this subject both ancient and modern with the main principles which should be followed in our treatment of the Tabernacle. Condensed examples of the main idea contained in its interpretation are then added, all in the hope that students and private Christians may be led to give a renewed study to the Fountain-head of God's Covenant with His Redeemed Church.

Technical phraseology has been spared as much as possible, and Hebrew and Greek terminology has been omitted for the convenience of the general reader.

—Wallace B. Nicholson

I. INTRODUCTION

After the emancipation of the Hebrews from the bondage of Egypt they crossed the Red Sea and proceeded to Sinai; and before any formal and detailed institution of worship was set up Jehovah entered into a covenant with them, setting forth the fundamental conditions which were to establish their covenant relation with Him.

"Now therefore if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel!" (Exod. 19:5-6).

Moses then set before them the commands of Jehovah to which all the people agreed.

"All the words which Jehovah has said will we do" (Exod. 19:8).

This compact was later followed by a ceremony which cemented the union of God with His people. An altar having been set up "under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel," Moses took the blood of the sacrifices offered up, and sprinkled the altar and the book of the law previously written by Moses with one half of the blood, and the people with the other half (Exod. 24:6-8) (Heb. 9:19). Israel having thus been brought formally into covenant with Jehovah, through the shedding of blood which sealed and signified their union with Him and their holiness and dedication to His service, were instructed through Moses to build a sanctuary where He might dwell among them. The Hebrews eagerly responded to this proposal and soon contributed suitable materials for the construction of this edifice.

A number of skilled workers were then chosen, who were occupied for the greater part of a year in this employment. Upon the completion of their work the Lord manifested His pleasure in the offerings and labours of the children of Israel by filling the tabernacle with a manifestation of His glory.

"Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle and Moses was not able to enter the tent of the congregation because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exod. 40:34, 35).

II. GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE SANCTUARY

The Sanctuary having been erected and placed in the midst of the camp of Israel, we are now prepared to survey the tabernacle with its court and enclosure.

Surrounding this building was a rectangular court one hundred cubits¹ long by fifty cubits wide. This court, or fence, was formed of pillars of wood, five cubits high and five cubits apart, and connected together by hangings of white linen. The narrow ends of the court faced east and west. In the middle of the east side was an entrance twenty cubits wide by five cubits high, formed of four pillars which were joined together by curtains wrought in various colours. The tabernacle itself appears to have stood near the western end with its entrance facing the east, and a large area would therefore be left in front of the building for the performance of religious rites. In this open space an altar was erected, made of wood and plated with brass, or rather bronze, five cubits square and three cubits in height. On this altar, which is usually called "The altar of burnt offering" the various sacrifices were offered. Be-

tween the altar and the entrance to the sanctuary stood a brazen vessel containing water for the lustrations of the priests. This laver, the size or shape of which is not specified, was contributed by devout women whose zeal led them to give up their metal mirrors for this purpose.

The tabernacle proper was thirty cubits long, ten cubits broad, and ten cubits in height. The frame consisted of boards of wood overlaid with gold standing on end and fitted into ground sockets. These boards were clasped together by transverse rods and rings. Over the frame and covering the roof and outside walls were four sets of coverings composed respectively, of fine twined linen of various colours², goat-skins, rams' skins dyed red, and badger skins. All the parts of the tabernacle were so constructed as to render it a comparatively easy matter to move it from place to place.

The Sanctuary itself was divided into two unequal parts. The outer room usually called 'the holy place' was twenty cubits long, ten cubits wide and ten cubits high. This apartment was enclosed at its outer end by curtains wrought in various colours and attached to five pillars. The holy place contained three sacred vessels which were used by the priests in the performance of their services. At the west end of the holy place and facing the curtains, which separated it from the inner room, stood an altar one cubit square, and two cubits high, made of wood and overlaid with gold. Night and morning the officiating priest burnt a fragrant perfume called 'incense' upon it. On the south side of the holy place was a chandelier supporting seven lamps. It was made of solid gold but no record is given of its dimensions. The lamps were supplied with wicks and fed with pure olive oil. On the other side of the apartment, opposite the chandelier, stood a table of wood overlaid with gold, two cubits long, one cubit square, and one and a half cubits high. On it were constantly kept twelve loaves of unleavened bread, which were renewed every Sabbath.

The inner apartment, or 'the holy of holies,' was a perfect cube of ten cubits, and was separated from the larger apartment by a veil of multi-coloured cloth interwoven with cherubic figures. The principal article in this room was 'the Ark,' a chest of wood overlaid with gold within and without, two and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high. The lid of the ark, called 'the Mercy Seat' was made of pure gold surmounted by two cherubim, one at each end of the Mercy Seat. Inside the ark were deposited the two tablets of stone on which were written the ten commandments, which were proclaimed at Sinai. Besides these

1. The measure of a cubit is supposed to be 18 to 21 inches.

2. According to some authorities these curtains were draped on the inside walls as befitting a tent. Others aver that the curtains were hung outside.

there were later deposits in the most holy place, a golden pot containing manna,³ Aaron's rod, ⁴ and the entire book of the law.⁵ The tabernacle referred to in Exodus 33:7 was a temporary sanctuary, which had been removed outside the camp on account of the idolatry of the children of Israel. During the preparation of the tabernacle this other tent was used by Moses, and the new structure when completed stood in the very center of the camp.

III. HISTORY OF THE SANCTUARY

It seems that the delay at Sinai for the greater part of a year was to give time for the construction of the sanctuary and the institution of its services, since shortly after its completion the order was given to proceed on the journey to Canaan. Upon the arrival at Kadesh, which appears to have been the bridge-head for the invasion, plans were made to enter into the Land of Promise. But, owing to their unbelief the children of Israel were sentenced to die in the wilderness and the invasion was postponed until after the fortieth year of their wanderings. During this period we have no certain knowledge of the location of the Tabernacle though we assume it was carried about during the wanderings.

Gilgal was the first station where the Tabernacle was pitched after the crossing of the Jordan, and though no record is given that the Tabernacle itself was carried across we take it from the reference in Joshua 18:1 that this was done. The Tabernacle remained here for several years and was afterwards transferred to Shiloh where it remained for about three centuries. It was here the Ark was captured by the Philistines. On its recovery it was placed at Kirjath-jearim. It was brought from here by King David and placed in Jerusalem, where a tent was prepared for it and where it remained until it was placed in Solomon's temple. The Tabernacle itself appeared to have been removed from Shiloh to Nob, the city of the priests and from thence to Gibeon and finally it was transported to the Temple along with the Ark. Nothing further is certainly known as to what happened to the sanctuary and the Ark, but we do know that neither was set up in the second Temple. Josh. 4:19; 5:10; 18:1; 19:51; I Sam. 2:22; 4:4; 7:2; 21:6; II Sam. 6:2, 10, 17; I Kings 8:4, 6.

IV. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

In order to narrow our conception of real scriptural types we should take into account the distinction between Types, Symbols, and Allegory. All three are to be found in scripture and are used to teach spiritual truths. In symbolism

a material fact is set forth in order to teach some spiritual truth. In typology a material fact is also used to represent spiritual truths, but the representation belongs to the future. In allegory, verity of history is not required to give point to the spiritual truths taught.

A type according to Muenscher "properly signifies the preordained representative relation which certain persons, events and institutions of the Old Testament bear to corresponding persons and institutions in the New." According to Professor Davidson,

"a type is a fact that teaches a moral truth and predicts some actual realization of that truth:"⁶

Terry says that,

"In the technical and theological sense a type is a figure or adumbration of that which is to come. It is a person, institution, office, action or event, by means of which some truth of the Gospel was divinely foreshadowed under the Old Testament dispensation. Whatever was thus prefigured is called the anti-type."⁷

Fairbairn states,

"understanding the word **type**, then, in the theological sense, that is, conceiving its strictly proper and distinctive sphere to be in the relations of the old and the new, or the earlier to the later, in God's dispensations, there are two things which by general consent, are held to enter into the constitution of a type. It is held first, that in the character, action or institution which is denominated the type, there must be a resemblance in form or spirit to what answers to it under the Gospel; and secondly, that it must not be any character, action or institution occurring in Old Testament scripture, but such only as had their ordination of God, and were designed by Him to foreshadow and prepare for the better things of the Gospel. For, as Bishop Marsh has justly remarked, 'to constitute one thing the type of another, something more is wanted than mere resemblance. The former must not only resemble the latter. It must have been so designed in its original institutions. The type as well as the anti-type must have been preordained as constituent parts of the same general scheme of Divine Providence. It is this **previous design** and this preordained connection (together,

3. Exod. 16:33, 34.

4. Num. 17:10, 11.

5. Deut. 31:26.

6. A. B. Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 1912, Page 229.

7. M. S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 1890, Page 246.

of course, with the resemblance) which constitute the relation between the type and antitype.'"⁸

A type resembles the antitype, is inferior to it, and prefigures it. The high priest of the Hebrew Sanctuary was divinely appointed to represent Christ: there is here resemblance, inferiority, prefigurement and divine appointment. The discovery of Old Testament types proceeds upon certain principles of scriptural interpretation, and our information as to the nature and scope of typology is to be drawn from the use of scriptural types such as are referred to by Christ and His apostles. We do not however limit the types to those expressly mentioned since these are a few examples out of the many which have been introduced in connection with the themes referred to, and which provide guidance in the finding of others. The types which are expressly mentioned are called 'innate' types, while others not expressly referred to but considered so by interpreters, are called 'inferred' types. Examples of the principal types of the Old Testament are the following: typical persons, such as Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Joseph; typical offices, such as Melchizedec, Moses, the High Priests; typical institutions, as the Sabbath, the Passover, the Covenants; typical events, as the Exodus, the passage through the Red Sea, the giving of Manna; typical places as Egypt, the Wilderness, Canaan. Many rules have been given to assist in the correct interpretation of types. The following will be found useful: The type must have some historical basis in scripture; it must bear a notable resemblance to the antitype; **it must bear competent evidence that it was divinely appointed as a type**; it must be a type, be susceptible of only one meaning; if typical it must not be of a sinful nature.⁹ Nothing in scripture can be considered a proper type which does not possess these characteristics. The type must be sharply distinguished from allegory and the exposition of allegorical scripture should not be confused with the allegorical exposition of scripture. According to the latter, plain and historical passages of the Old Testament are used in order to educe from them some profound meaning or to foster senses on them which they were never intended to bear. For example, Clement of Alexandria¹⁰ gives us a specimen of allegorical exposition of Scripture which is repeatedly used by the Christian Fathers:

"and the covering and the veil were variegated with blue, and purple, and scarlet, and linen, and so it was suggested that the nature of the elements contained the revelation of God. For purple is from water, linen from the earth, blue being

dark is like the air, and scarlet is like fire. . . . In the midst of the covering and veil where the priests were allowed to enter, was situated the altar of incense, the symbol of the earth placed in the middle of the universe; . . . Now the high priest's robe is the symbol of the world of sense. The seven planets are represented by the five stones and the two carbuncles, for Saturn and the Moon. The former is southern, and moist and earthly and heavenly." etc.

Clement allegorizes further on Isaac, who is type of joy, while he interprets Rebecca to mean endurance. His allegorizing of some of the incidents in the life of Isaac and Rebecca are not only improper by irreverent.¹¹ On the other hand, the exposition of allegorical scripture is supported by divine authority. Isaiah, chapter five, verses one to seven, is a true allegory which no one would understand in a literal sense. References are made to a vineyard which is later explained to mean the house of Israel. A number of chapters and passages must be interpreted in this way, such as Ps. 45; Ps. 80; The Song of Solomon; Eccl. 11:3-7; Ezek. 13:10-15; Matt. 7:26, 27; John 15:1; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; Eph. 6:11-17; The Song of Solomon has been discredited by some, partly because of its allegorical nature which has not been properly understood. We shall however come across many other passages in the Bible, some of which appear trivial, absurd or esoteric, unless they are treated allegorically. The word 'allegory' as used in Galatians 4:26, is properly a figure of speech, and an examination of the context will evince that Paul made no attempt to 'allegorize' the Old Testament; he simply set forth the relation between types and their antitypes.

Fairbairn says that,

"an allegory is a narrative, either expressly feigned for the purpose, or if describing facts which really took place, describing them only for the purpose of representing certain higher truths or principles than the narrative in its literal aspect, whether real or fictitious, could possibly have taught. The ostensible representation, therefore, if not invented, is at least used, simply as a cover for the higher sense, which may refer to things ever so remote from those immediately described, if only the corresponding relations are preserved. So that allegorical interpretations of Scripture properly comprehend the two following cases, and these only: 1. When the scriptural representation is actually held to have no foundation in fact, to be a mere myth or fabulous

8. Marsh's Lectures, page 371; Fairbairn, Typology, Vol. 1, page 8.

9. To maintain that the supplanting of Esau by Jacob is typical of Christ supplanting the devil is a violation of this principle.

10. Clement of Alexandria A. D. 153-217. The Stromata, Book 5, Chap. 6; The Instructor, Book 1, Chap. 5.

11. This canon is not meant to exclude prophetic types, etc.

description, invented for the sole purpose of exhibiting the mysteries of divine truth; or, 2. When the representation, even if wearing the appearance of a real transaction, is considered incapable as it stands of yielding any adequate or satisfactory sense, and is consequently employed, **precisely as if it had been fabulous**, to convey some meaning of a quite diverse and higher kind. Typical interpretations of Scripture differ from allegorical ones of the first or fabulous kind, in that they indispensably require the reality of the facts or circumstances stated in the original narrative, and they differ also from the other, in requiring, besides this, that the same truth or principle be embodied alike in the type and the antitype. **The typical is not properly a different or higher sense but a different or higher application of the same sense.**" 12

The practice of allegorizing as distinct from the correct typological exposition of Scripture has been used with great freedom by theological writers. It tends to ignore or discredit historical truths, which can mean almost anything according to the genius of the interpreter. This mode of exposition must be distinguished from legitimate comparisons and illustrations from Scripture for the purpose of edification.

Symbols differ from proper types in having no relation to time though a symbol may look backwards or forwards according to the context. Symbols are usually designed to represent an office, character, or quality and may also possess the character of types, as some of the institutions referred to in the services of the sanctuary. Incense in the service of the tabernacle as the symbol of prayer,

had reference to the then present as well as the future. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are symbols of the sanctifying grace of the Spirit, and the atoning virtue of Christ's Sacrifice; but these ordinances are not proper types. Examples of symbols are the rainbow (Gen. 9:13-16); the almond tree (Jer. 1:11); the two baskets of figs (Jer. 24:11); the vision of dry bones (Ezek. 37:1-14); and the basket of summer fruit (Amos 8:1). It is not always easy to distinguish between allegory, type, and symbol; and the whole subject demands a good measure of discriminatory judgment and spiritual discernment, with a competent knowledge of Biblical hermeneutics.

There are one or two objections that may be raised in considering the relation between the type and the antitype. Christ was the first and pattern antitype and the Mosaic ritual was appointed to shadow this forth; and in this sense the antitype must exist before the type as the substance must exist to produce the shadow. A difference has been made between the Scriptural and theological interpretation of types. In theological language the unreal similitude is the type and the antitype is the reality; but according to the Epistle to the Hebrews the Christian realities are the models after which the Old Testament figures were fashioned. On the other hand, the Scripture itself calls Adam the type and not the antitype of Christ (Rom. 5:14). It should be noted however that the word 'antitype' as used in the New Testament (Heb. 9:24; I Peter 3:21) has the more general meaning 'image' or 'likeness'. Hence the relation between the type and the antitype as used in theology is equivalent to that used in Scripture itself and no difficulty need exist if these explanations are understood.

(To be continued)

Sketches of the Covenanters

By J. C. McFeeters

Chapter XLIV

The Scottish Seer. — A. D. 1685.

Alexander Peden was a burning and a shining light in the dark night of Scotland's persecution. His career in the ministry of the Gospel glowed with mysterious splendor. His natural powers flashed with supernatural glints, or rather, with excessive spiritual light, by the indwelling Holy Spirit. God, through persecution, made many mighty men.

Peden was born in 1626, when King Charles was trying hard to stamp out Presbyterianism. He was twelve years old, when the Covenant renewed at Greyfriars' Church thrilled the kingdom. He was twenty-four when Charles II took

the throne, and wrought havoc with the Reformation. When thirty-six, he was driven from his church at Glenluce by the wrath of the king. When forty-eight, he was banished to the Bass Rock, where he rested, like an eagle on its aerie, his soul betimes soaring above all clouds, and calmly viewing the ransomed in presence of the eternal Throne. At sixty, he gave death a royal welcome, uttering predictions, bestowing blessings, and giving signs, like one of the prophets of old. Thus his singular life fell into periods of twelves, each arising above the other, like mountain upon mountain, in ruggedness and majesty, until his noble spirit took its flight from the scenes of earth.

A great distress befell him on the day appointed for his licensure. A serious charge was preferred against him, affecting his moral character. His licensure, therefore, was deferred. Greatly humiliated, he withdrew to a solitary place, and spent twenty-four hours in prayer. He was all night alone with the Angel of the Covenant, and wrestled till he got the blessing. A prayer lasting twenty-four hours, poured forth from the heart, will work wonders. He has not told us how he sat by the murmuring waters, pouring out his complaint; nor how that day was to him like night, and the night like outer darkness; nor how he mingled his sighs with the moaning of the winds, and his tears with the drops of the night; but he has told how that the Lord answered him. Returning to the house he said, "Give me meat and drink, for I have gotten what I was seeking; I will be vindicated." His innocence was soon made clear by the criminal making a public confession of guilt.

Peden was called to the church of Glenluce, where he remained as pastor three years. His preaching was earnest, pointed, and powerful. He was greatly beloved by his flock, and the work of the Lord prospered in his hand. But his ministry in that field was violently interrupted by the vengeance of King Charles, which fell upon the Church in 1662, driving 400 ministers from their parishes. Peden possessed a militant spirit, and ignored the day set by royal authority for the arbitrary vacation. He boldly continued overtime. At length the strain was so great that he had to go. His farewell sermon was preached from Acts 20:31: "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." The text was peculiarly appropriate to the occasion. The house was crowded; tumultuous emotions surged through the audience; the anguish found vent in weeping, wailing, and loud lamentations. The sermon was frequently interrupted with the grief. The service continued until night. He never again preached in that pulpit.

The gift of prophecy distinguished Peden in a striking manner, giving him a unique place in history. He spoke with accuracy of many events, without information other than that received directly from God. But this will astonish no one who is acquainted with man's power in prayer. Prayer was the secret of Peden's prescience. God proceeds on established principles, in His dealings with His people. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him," "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" Peden's prayers on certain occasions lasted all night. Communion with God was his delight; he lived in the presence of the Almighty; his hiding place was in the brightness of the light shining from the face of Jesus Christ. His heart was burdened with the interests of Christ's kingdom. Therefore God gave him eyes to see much that was hidden from others.

He was sixty miles away when the Covenanters fell on the field of Rullion Green. News then traveled no faster than a horse. That evening he was sad. A friend inquired the cause. He replied, "To-morrow I shall tell you." That night he retired to his room, but went not to bed; he spent the hours in prayer. Next morning he said, "Our friends, that were in arms for Christ's interest, are now broken, killed, taken, and fled, every man."

He was forty miles away on the dismal Sabbath when the Covenanters were slaughtered at Bothwell Bridge. He had an engagement to preach. The people assembled in a solitary place for the service. They were hungry for the Word of God, but Peden did not appear. At noon they sent to know the cause. He replied, "Let the people go to their prayers; I neither can, nor will preach this day, for our friends are fallen and fled before the enemy; they are haggling and hacking them down, and their blood is running like water."

One day while preaching, he arose in a flight of inspiration, exclaiming, "I must tell you, in the name of the Lord, who sent me unto you this day, to tell you these things, that ere it be very long, the living shall not be able to bury the dead in thee, O Scotland; and many a mile shall ye walk, or ride, and shall not see a farm-house, but ruinous wastes, for the quarrel of a broken Covenant and wrongs done to the Son of God."

This servant of God had profound knowledge of Bible doctrines. He had a masterly conception of the crown rights of Jesus Christ, and the fundamental principles of His kingdom. He had vivid views of the excellence of holiness and the atrocity of sin. This filled him, like the Psalmist, with horror at the doom of transgressors. His inner life was fiercely swept with the contrary passions of love for righteousness, and hatred for iniquity. His soul was a scene of terrific conflicts. His preaching and praying against the powers of darkness often revealed an internal tragedy. One night while preaching to the Covenanters who had assembled in a sheep-house, he cried out, "Black, black, black will be the day, that shall come upon Ireland; they shall travel forty miles, and not see a reeking house, or hear a crowing cock." Then, clapping his hands with dramatic effect, he exclaimed: "Glory, glory to the Lord, that He has accepted a bloody sacrifice of a sealed testimony off Scotland's hand."

Peden could not brook any departure from Christ and His Covenant. Covenant-breaking was, in his eyes, a most aggravated sin. He was quick to see the Lord coming to avenge the quarrel of His Covenant, and his soul was filled with dread.

Here are some of his utterances:

"Oh, my heart trembles within me, to think

what is coming on the backsliding, soul-murdering ministers of Scotland!

"He is not worth his room, that prays not half his time, to see if he can prevent the dreadful wrath, that is coming on our poor motherland.

"Thirty-six years ago our Lord had a numerous train of ministers in Scotland, but one blast blew six hundred of them away, and they never returned.

"I shall tell you the right way of covenanting with God; it is when Christ and believers meet; and our Lord gives them His laws, statutes, and commandments; and charges them not to quit a hoof of them; no, though they should be torn into a thousand pieces. And the right Covenanter says, Amen."

Peden never married. During twenty-four years of wanderings, his life was pathetically lonely. When death was approaching, he returned to the old home, to spend his last days amid the scenes of his childhood. His brother still dwelt there. He received a cordial welcome, though his presence imperiled the family; for the dragoons were still pursuing him. To that true and tender soul, how beautiful must have been the green fields, the rippling brooks, and the familiar hills, where he had roamed when a child! They made him a cave on the hillside; a bush covered its entrance. There he was hidden from the enemy, and there he lay in his last illness, and ripened for heaven.

When near his end he predicted, that, bury

him where they would, the enemy would lift his body. Forty days after his burial, the spiteful foe raised his body, and buried it among the graves of criminals. Thus they attempted to disgrace this servant of Jesus Christ. But in later years his memory was so dearly cherished that many good people requested to be interred beside him, and the grounds around that grave in time became a beautiful cemetery.

Communion with God is the secret of power, and of spiritual vision; and faithfulness in God's Covenant is the secret of Divine communion. The possibility of living in holy familiarity with God the Father, and with our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Spirit, learning the thoughts of God, feeling the thrill of His power, viewing His far-reaching plans, and co-operating in His glorious work — is this only a fascinating dream? Nay, the Covenanters of the martyr-spirit found it to be a realization. Do their children strive after the same attainment?

Points for the Class

1. What gift specially distinguished Peden?
2. What distress did he meet at his licensure?
3. How did he overcome it?
4. Where was his first pastorate?
5. Why did he leave Glenluce?
6. What remarkable prophecies did he utter?
7. Repeat some of his sayings.
8. What occurred to his body after burial?
9. How may we attain to a similar familiarity with God?

(To be continued)

Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church

By John L. Girardeau

Note: Dr. John L. Girardeau, Professor in Columbia Theological Seminary, many years ago wrote this searching study of the question of the propriety of instrumental music in New Testament worship. Dr. Girardeau's book has never been answered; it has only been by-passed by the advocates of instrumental music in worship. All that can be said in favor of instrumental music in worship, Dr. Girardeau takes up and examines patiently and painstakingly in the light of Scripture. This valuable material has long been out of print and copies of the book have been difficult to obtain. We propose to present the entire book in a series of instalments in **Blue Banner Faith and Life**. The first instalment is presented herewith. Copyright 1888 by John L. Girardeau. — Editor.

PREFACE

The following treatise owes its origin to a desire expressed by members of the last Senior Class in Columbia Theological Seminary to hear a discussion of the question whether instrumental music may be legitimately used in the public worship of the Church. Possessed of deep convictions on that subject, the writer could not refuse compliance with such a request, and accordingly delivered a course of lectures to the class. A dear Christian friend, who heard one of these lectures preached as a sermon, suggested the propriety of their being published, and being aware that the writer was not encumbered with a superfluity of this world's goods, generally tendered the means to render the suggestion practical. Although cautioned that she

might make a useless pecuniary sacrifice, as the current of the Church's views is now set in a direction opposed to the doctrine of the treatise, she insisted upon executing her intention, on the ground that she would contribute to erect a testimony to the truth. Hence the appearance of this little book before the public.

It will, no doubt, be said that the attempt to prove the unjustifiable employment of instrumental music in the public worship of the Church is schismatical, since the practice is now well-nigh universal; that it is trival, inasmuch as it concerns a mere circumstantial in the services of religion; and that it is useless, as the tendency which is resisted is invincible, and is destined to triumph throughout Protestant Christendom. To all this one answer alone is offered, and it is sufficient, namely: that the attempt is grounded in truth. It involves a contest for a mighty and all-comprehending principle, by opposing one of the special forms in which it is now commonly transcended and violated. It is that principle, emphasized in the following remarks as scriptural and regulative, that lends importance to the discussion and redeems it from the reproach of being narrow and trifling.

The argument is commended to the consideration of any of God's people into whose hands it may fall; but it is especially addressed to Presbyterians, to whose venerable standards, as well as directly to the Scriptures, the appeal for proof is taken. They are entreated to read it, and to render judgment according to the evidence submitted. May that Almighty Spirit, whose illumination our divine Lord and Saviour promised to his followers, guide each reader to the truth!

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

In the discussion of the question, Whether the use of instrumental music in the worship of the church is permissible or not, it must be premised:

First, that the question is **not** in regard to private or family worship, or to that of social gatherings which are not ecclesiastical in their nature, nor with reference to the utility or tastefulness of instrumental music, nor in relation to the abuse to which it may be liable; but,

Secondly, the question is precisely, Is the use of instrumental music in the public worship of the church **justifiable**? The design of this discussion is, with the help of the divine Spirit, to prove the negative.

I.

THE GENERAL ARGUMENT FROM SCRIPTURE

Attention, at the outset, is invoked to the considerations which serve to establish the following controlling principle: A divine warrant is necessary for every element of doctrine, government and worship in the church; that is, whatsoever in these spheres is not commanded in the Scriptures, either expressly or by good and necessary consequence from their statements, **is forbidden**.

1. This principle is deducible by logical inference from the great truth—confessed by Protestants—that the Scriptures are an infallible rule of faith and practice, and therefore supreme, perfect and sufficient for all the needs of the Church. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This truth operates positively to the inclusion of everything in the doctrine, government and worship of the church which is commanded, explicitly or implicitly, in the Scriptures, and negatively to the exclusion of everything which is not so commanded.

2. This principle of the necessity of a divine warrant for everything in the faith and practice of the church is proved by didactic statements of Scripture.

Num. xv. 39, 40: "Remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: that ye may remember and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God." Ex. xxv. 40: "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount." Heb. viii. 5: "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." Deut. iv. 2: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." Deut. xii. 32: "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." Prov. xxx. 5, 6: "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Isa. viii. 20: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Dan. ii. 44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be de-

stroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people." Matt. xv. 6: "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Col. ii. 20-23: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which are all to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Rev. xxii. 18, 19: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and out of the things which are written in this book."

These solemn statements and awful warnings teach us the lesson, that to introduce any devices and inventions of our own into the doctrine, government or worship of the church, is to add to the words of God, and to fail in maintaining the principles and truths, or in complying with the institutions and ordinances, delivered to us in the Scriptures, is to take away from the words of God. The Romanists, for example, who hold the doctrine of transubstantiation, and observe the sacrifice of the mass, add to God's words; and the Quakers, who maintain the coordinate authority of immediate revelations of new, original truth with the inspired Oracles, and neglect the observance of the sacraments, both add to and take away from them. And, in like manner, those who import instrumental music into the ordained worship of the New Testament Church transcend the warrant of Scripture, and add to the words which Christ our Lord has commanded.

3. There are concrete instances recorded in the Scriptures which graphically illustrate the same great principle.

(1) Gen. iv: Cain and his offering. The brothers, Cain and Abel, had been in childhood beyond all doubt instructed by their parents in the knowledge of the first promise of redemption to be accomplished by atonement. They had, we have every reason to believe, often seen their

father offering animal sacrifices in the worship of God. To this mode of worship they had been accustomed. Cain, the type of rationalists and fabricators of rites and ceremonies in the house of the Lord, consulted his own wisdom and taste, and ventured to offer in God's worship the fruit of the ground—an unbloody sacrifice; while Abel, conforming to the appointments and prescribed usages in which he had been trained, expressed his faith and obedience by offering a lamb. Abel's worship was accepted and Cain's rejected. "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect." Thus, in the immediate family of Adam, we behold a signal and typical instance of self-assertion and disregard of divine prescriptions in the matter of worship. This was swiftly followed by God's disapprobation, and then came the development of sin in the atrocious crime of fratricide, and the banishment of the murderer from the communion of his family and the presence of his God.

(2.) Lev. x. 1-3: Nadab and Abihu. "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not.¹ And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace." These young men, as the sons of Israel's high priest, were legitimately employed in discharging the appointed functions of the sacerdotal office. But they presumed to add to God's commandments. Exercising their own will in regard to the mode of his worship, they did that which he did not command them, and they were instantly killed for their wicked temerity.

(3.) Num. xvi.; Krah, Dathan and Abiram. God had consecrated those descendants of Levi who sprang from Aaron to the priesthood, while the remaining descendants of Levi were set apart to other offices pertaining to the service of the tabernacle. Korah was a Levite, but not a son of Aaron. Dathan and Abiram were not even Levites, but appear to have descended from Reuben. When, therefore, these men, asserting the claim that the whole congregation were entitled to rank with Moses and Aaron, ventured to assume to themselves functions which God had restricted to a certain class, they were overtaken by the swift indignation of Jehovah, and perished in an awful manner. "The ground clave asunder that was under them; and the

1. That is, which he did not command them.

earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained unto them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation."

(4.) Num. xx.: Moses smiting the rock at Kadesh. When, on a previous occasion, the Israelites were suffering from thirst, God commanded Moses to smite the rock at Horeb. This he did, and water gushed forth abundantly. The apostle Paul tells us that the rock typified Christ. The typical teaching furnished by Moses, then, was that from the one death of Christ under the smiting of the law the grace of the Holy Ghost should proceed to satisfy the thirst of the soul. Christ was to be smitten unto death only once. Now again, at Kadesh, the Israelites suffer for want of water. God commands Moses to **speak** unto the rock. To this explicit command he rashly ventured to add. He spoke to the people, instead of the rock, and he **smote** the rock and smote it twice. He used his own judgment, asserted his own will, and taught the people falsely. For this sin he and Aaron, who concurred with him in its commission, were excluded from entrance into the promised land. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye to the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

We have here an inexpressibly affecting instance of the sin and folly of adding human inventions to the ordinances of God's appointment, of the dreadful results that may follow from what men may conceive slight departures from obedience to the commands of God. Not to speak of Aaron, the accomplished orator, the venerable saint, the first anointed high priest of his people, this incomparable man, Moses, in whom were blended all natural gifts and supernatural graces, the deliverer, the legislator, the historian, the poet, the judge and the commander of Israel, after having brought them out of Egypt, conducted them through the parted waters of

the Red Sea, mediated between them and God amidst the terrors of Sinai, led them through the horrors of the waste and howling desert,—this glorious man, now in sight of the Jordan, which like a thread separated them from the long-sought, long-coveted goal of their hearts, is doomed, for one addition to God's command, which no doubt seemed to him but a slight deviation from his instructions, to die short of the promised land.

(5.) 1 Sam. xiii.: Saul offering a burnt-offering at Gilgal. The king had no command to officiate as priest. Saul added to God's command and performed a function for which he had no authority. The circumstances seemed to him to justify the act. But he gained the divine disapprobation and lost his kingdom for the blunder. "As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling. And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt-offering to me, and peace-offerings. And he offered the burnt-offering. And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him that he might salute him. And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt-offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou has not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou has not kept that which the Lord commanded thee."

(6.) 1 Chron. xiii. 7, 8; xv. 11-15: Uzza and the ark, and David's subsequent obedience. The Levites, or, more particularly, the Kohathites, were expressly commanded to bear the ark. The manner of bearing it was also commanded. Rings were appended, through which staves were run. These poles, covered with gold, were to be supported on the shoulders of the bearers. They were forbidden to touch the ark upon pain of death. "After that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die." Such was God's command. In transporting it from the house of Abinadab, David infringed the divine command by directing the ark to be borne on a cart drawn

by oxen. Then when the animals stumbled, Uzza, with the intention of saving the ark from falling, touched it with his hand. He was instantly killed for his pious disobedience. "And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab; and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart. And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets. And when they came unto the threshing-floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God." The offence was the more inexcusable, because the staves were never detached from the ark, and it is not at all likely that the Philistines, who had been subjected to so severe a treatment while they had it in their possession, had ventured to steal them. And it deserves consideration that those heathen had not been killed for handling the ark, while for doing the same thing God's people who should have known better, were taught an awful lesson.

The magnificent demonstration suffered a disastrous arrest, and the king of Israel, sobered by the warning he had received, returned home to do what he ought to have done before—to study the law of God. Having accomplished this neglected office, he makes a second attempt to remove the sacred symbol of God's covenant to

Jerusalem, but in a different fashion from the former. Let us hear the record. "And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel and Amminadab, and said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it. For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order. So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel. And the children of the Levites bare the ark upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the Lord." It merits notice that when the ark was to be removed and instated in its place in the temple which was about to be dedicated, Solomon caused the "due order" to be observed. "And all the elders of Israel came; and the Levites took up the ark. And they brought up the ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, these did the priests and the Levites bring up. . . . And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place."¹ The history of this matter enforces the impressive lesson that we are not at liberty to use our own judgment and to act without a divine warrant in regard to things of God's appointment.

(To be continued)

The Crisis in Galilee

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

When Jesus began to speak in parables it meant that His enemies were at hand and were keeping Him under close observation. When He sent forth the twelve it signified a realization on His part that His days of active public life and service were drawing to a close. If the Jewish homeland was to be covered it was incumbent upon Him to depute the faithful few and send them forth. For the opposition was growing, the darkness of the national rejection was deepening and soon the night would be closing down. As He said, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).

The opposition in its origin and early development has been noticed in the preceding chapters and will be further discussed in those that follow. It began with the initial reaction to the cleansing of the temple on the part of the leaders when they asked for a sign. From that day on

their whole approach to the situation took that form. The folly and perversity of this approach was exposed by Nicodemus, whose response took a different turn. He at least could see the significance of Jesus' miracles and was duly impressed.

Later the leaders, alarmed by the report of the initial success in the north, began to dog the Master's steps. The seeds of revolt came from Jerusalem but soon found congenial soil in many hearts. The king continued on His way, but resistance was rising, the opposition growing and it was necessary that steps be taken in adaptation to it.

So we see that coincidental with Jesus' progressive revelation was an ever-growing manifestation of the sinfulness of the human heart. There appeared an ever-mounting enmity and hate arising from the carnal nature of the natural

¹ 2 Chron. v. 4, 5, 7.

man. For "the carnal mind is enmity against God" and "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" (Rom. 8:7; 1 Cor. 2:14). The story of the public life of Christ in one of its major aspects is just the conflict between the Spirit and the flesh, between God and the devil.

The leaders were against the Master from the outset. The first response of the public generally was more favorable. "The common people heard Him gladly" (Mk. 12:37). But it was not a great while until they too were adversely affected. They usually allowed themselves to be influenced by their leaders, who were held in high esteem. But besides this influence the sad truth is that, generally speaking, they too were unprepared in heart and life. And so eventually they also fell away and turned against their own Messiah. They despised and rejected Him whom God had sent into the world to be their Saviour-King.

The crisis came in a series of events which took place in the latter half of Jesus' first great Galilean ministry. In a larger sense, of course, it pertained to the entire public life from the baptism and the temptation to the cross. Before considering this series of events let us pass in review some of the events leading to this hour of crisis.

Even before the beginning of the Galilean ministry the cleansing of the temple precipitated a never-ending, ever-growing state of antagonism between Him and the leaders.

Early in the first great Galilean ministry he had been rejected at Nazareth and He had taken His first return journey to Jerusalem for attendance at the feast. On this occasion the impotent man was healed and Jesus' contacts with His foes involved Him henceforth in open conflict with them. Almost immediately thereafter the representatives of the Jewish rulers are found to be on hand wherever He appeared in public, watching for everything in His words and works that they might seize upon to use against Him.

Dr. Edersheim enlarges at great length upon the nature of this conflict and its manifestation in the life of Christ. He no doubt correctly interprets it as an absolute "contrariety," as he expresses it; a state of mutual opposition in fundamental facts and basic principles. It was a divided situation, in which Jesus had no choice other than to dissociate Himself from them in all that pertained to truth and right. They were hostile to Him and there was nothing for Him to do but to engage in open conflict with them and they with Him.

The first appearance of the opposition to Him in the field come on the occasion of the healing of the paralytic. This took place in Capernaum when the four who brought the sufferer opened up the roof and let the sick man down before Him. Somewhat aloof and apart in

the assembled throng was the scribal delegation; there of course in order to observe and criticize. They were on hand again when Matthew, after being called to the discipleship, made a feast for Jesus. This time their fault-finding fixed on His eating and drinking with publicans and sinners.

There came one day, at early dawn, following a night of prayer upon the mountain, Jesus' choice of twelve to be His apostles. There were various reasons for this action but the opposition provided the proximate occasion. The twelve were set apart preparatory to a separated service in a context of division.

Next to be noted is the mountain discourse in which the positive teaching is given on a negative background of opposition to the rabbis in their moral character, teaching and religion. Jesus' opposition next appears in His remarks concerning John, which was followed by His scathing denunciation of the unrepentant cities (Mt. 11). Then in Matthew twelve we see the conflict as it rose to new intensity in the Pharisaic council to destroy Jesus and the ultimate blasphemy, not against Him only, but against the Holy Spirit which lived and moved and wrought in Him.

Coming closer to the very crux of the conflict; we have seen how the resort to the parabolic form of teaching and the mission of the twelve were definitely related to it.

Incidents of the period between the day of parables and the mission of the twelve were such events as the stilling of the storm at sea and the deliverance of the Gadarene demoniac. There were also the cure of the woman with an issue of blood and Jairus' little daughter's restoration to life again.

Following a second visit to Nazareth, this time under different circumstances but with about the same result, there came the mission of the twelve. Now indeed was the day of crisis in Galilee. This final phase of the first Galilean ministry begins with Herod's display of interest in Jesus and inquiry concerning Him. The evangelists take occasion at this point to introduce a flash-back on the death of John the Baptist.

It seems that Herod's first thought with regard to John was to put him to death, but in this he was restrained by his fear of the people who quite generally regarded John as a prophet. Later this second of the Herods was interested in having John brought before him for occasional interview. The result of this seems to have been a further indisposition on his part for the execution of his prisoner. It may be that he had acquired a healthy fear of John himself which deterred him from the deed. However in any desire he may have had to prolong the life of John he was circumvented by the trickery of the vengeful Herodias.

Now that the tetrarch had the blood of John upon his hands, he was conscience-stricken and afraid. Consequently, when tidings came of the activities of another prophet, concerning whom one of the current theories was that He was John the Baptist risen from the dead, Herod was again intrigued and said "John I have beheaded: but who is this of whom I hear such things? **And he desired to see him**" (Luke 9:7-9).

Jesus' reaction, however, to Herod's interest, was to remove Himself from the jurisdiction of the tyrant. "He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart" (Mt. 14:13). As one has said, there was a warning in it for Jesus to the effect "that complications, such as had already led to John's imprisonment and death, might ensue." Luke informs us that later Herod was indeed a partner in a conspiracy to bring about the death of Christ (Lk. 13:31, 32). From a merely human point of view it was highly inadvisable to take chances with the crafty despot. At the same time Jesus was also convinced that sufficient opportunity had been given the Galileans to test their attitude to Him and His preaching.

So it was that the crisis came. To save Himself and the disciples from the threatening danger He quit the scene, but there was no escape from the ever-anxious, eager multitudes. They observed the direction taken and ran around the northern shore and "came together unto Him." Then we read that when He saw them He was "moved with compassion toward them" and that He both "healed the sick" and "began to teach them many things."

All of which led directly to the great miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, the only one which all four evangelists record. It stands forever as one of the most illustrious of all the miracles. The multitude had come a long way and with great haste to find Him again. After having found and gathered unto Him they had a full day of attendance on His ministry. As the day wore on into late afternoon or early evening darkness threatened and they were there in a desert place far from home and food supplies.

This was then the time and place for such a miracle if ever there was one. So they were fed and then were ready for the road again. But first he hurried the twelve into a boat for the return trip across the lake; and, having dismissed the people, He Himself withdrew far up the mountain-side for prayer.

That a notable miracle had been performed none could deny, though the people themselves seemed to be more impressed than the twelve who had assisted in it. It witnessed, as did all of the wonders which flowed from the power of the Lord, to His heavenly Messiahship and mission. But it was also a parable. It pictured the nature of the kingdom and the King. It not only manifested the Saviour's glory but also portrayed the

life which He had come to give, which He alone could give and ever gives to all who believe. Its real lesson was that the Son of God had come to provide above all things "the one thing needful," that is, the salvation of mankind from sin and death.

The direct impact of the miracle in its immediate effect upon the people was decisive for the life and work of Christ. Now those who had witnessed the miracle were quite convinced of His Messiahship as they conceived it. False Christs, they knew, had come and gone and often they had been deceived. But not this time. They were quite convinced that the time so long and often foretold had come. The smoldering embers of messianic expectation burst into a flaming zeal within them. Now they had only to put this man of Nazareth, however reluctant He might be, at the head and the rule of Rome would be over for them. One possessed of such power as He displayed could do anything! In their excited imagination they already envisaged the beneficent reign of the deliverer. There would be an abundance of all good things for all; and, as the original king-makers, they would be in line for special favors.

But of course it was only a delusion of grandeur; a false interpretation and a human construction of the day of the Lord. It was in fact a radical misconstruction of the promise of God; utterly contrary to Christ's own concept of His life and work and mission in the world.

There was just one thing for Him to do, and do it He must and that immediately. The next day He waited in Capernaum and when these Jewish zealots came He met them head on. First He exposed the sinful nature of their desires; and, taking occasion from the miracle itself, went on to disclose yet more fully the true view of things, the true meanings of His presence on earth among men (John 6:22-71).

It was a message of the utmost importance in His teaching ministry. Therein He presented Himself in His own self, and not merely in His power, as the Bread of life, sent down from God out of heaven for the life of the world. In the course of His discourse He taught that of necessity men must eat His flesh and drink His blood for their salvation unto life.

As His ministry to the hungry had aroused the populace to the highest pitch of excitement, so now His teaching plunged them into the deepest depths of despairing unbelief. The moral effect, of course, was to expose the utter worldliness and carnality and unspirituality of their hearts. Such disappointment in Christ and dissatisfaction with Him is characteristic of un-renewed humanity always and everywhere.

The Saviour opened His discourse by say-

ing: "Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." It was as though He had said, You seek me not because you have perceived the deep, spiritual meaning of the miracle but because you "mind earthly things" and desire an earthly kingdom and worldly benefits.

In the colloquy which ensued there was a sharp collision and conflict of view. Now it was not only the leaders who were at variance with Him but also the populace. It was not only the rulers but the people who were asking for signs; not of His kind, however, but of their own.

"This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world," they had said. But what sort of prophet? Did they want such a kingdom as He came to establish? Did they exalt Him in their hearts for what He truly was, the Son of God come down out of heaven from the Father above? And where was their contrition and repentance? And where their faith? They were glad for bread for the body; but what about the hunger and thirst of the soul? What was their real estimate of the Wonder-worker? The answer came in their own words: "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it that he saith, I came down from heaven" (John 6:42)?

We see then how events were moving and how a great turning point had come. There was a possibility that even the disciples themselves may have been adversely affected in their hearts and were ready to leave. This much at least had to be made clear and so Jesus put the question to them. Then it was that Peter, as so often in his association with the Lord, came to the front and proved himself the man of the hour. There was an ineffable sadness in Jesus' heart as in His look and tone of voice as He spoke. "Will ye also go away?" We surmise a pause before the words were ready; and then, forth from the depths of the believing heart the answer came. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

Reviewing the course of events so far, we see how one thing led to another to produce the crisis. The inquiry of Herod led to the removal of Jesus and the twelve into a desert place apart. This maneuver brought about the gathering of the people to Him **in that kind of place**, which led to the miracle. The feeding of the multitude, in turn, led to the determination of the people to "come and take him by force to make him a king." Jesus' perception of this brought His swift and urgent dismissal of the

twelve and dismissal of the multitude and His retirement from the haunts of men. This whole turn of events showed that the time had come for open repudiation of the popular ideal and for full disclosure of the true nature of His life and work and ministry. This action on His part on this occasion, and particularly the saying that, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," led to the **mass-desertion** in Galilee.

Other notable deeds and sayings of the Lord are on record as having taken place during this time. It was in this particular series of events, however, that the great crisis came. There was nothing imaginary about it. It was real and the events were critical.

All of the scholars agree in this. Dr. Purves says that with Herod's inquiry "the work in Galilee came to a crisis." Dr. John Monro Gibson, writing under the head of "The Crisis in Galilee," says that the feeding of the multitude occurred at "a critical time in our Lord's history." Again he speaks of it and the events which flowed from it as "the culmination of the crisis." Dr. Edersheim designates it as "the crisis in the history of the Messiah and His kingdom."* That it meant a great change in the course and tenor of the life of Christ there can be no doubt. It soon led on to other events of other kinds and yet ever richer, deeper and more meaningful.

There is evidence of a growing disposition on the part of the people to concur in the position taken by the leaders, that Jesus was devil-ridden. Indeed, in a sense, the crux of the controversy at this time was the question as to who was devil-possessed and who was not. The rulers had concocted and circulated their theory to account for the miracles. Ere long we read of what the people said, "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil" (John 8:48)? The rank and file were slower to adopt this view. But under the influence of their scribes and as a consequence of their own bitter disappointment they were not long in coming to it.

On the other hand, Jesus, in a hidden reference to Judas said to the twelve, "one of you is a devil." We gather from this that in some obscure manner, all unbeknown to his fellows, Judas had already begun to act his part. Also in the altercation in Capernaum which followed on the miracle, Jesus characterized the unbelievers in general as the devil's offspring. "Ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father ye will do" (John 8:37-44).

It was indeed the culmination of the crisis. "Wise and prudent" though the leaders were;

* Dr. Purves in his article "Jesus Christ", in *Davis Bible Dictionary*; Dr. Gibson in *The Gospel of Matthew*; Dr. Edersheim in *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. I, p. 692.

learned and astute; the facts revealed their moral state of total ignorance and blindness of heart. God, in His infinite wisdom and perfect holiness, had seen fit to hide the things of His new day and kingdom from them. So they declared total war upon His Son and went all out in a nationwide campaign of abuse and opposition.

They were the official leaders, the temple rulers; priests, lawyers, teachers; of great prestige and commonly held in high esteem. They were the official representatives of the law of Moses and followed in the tradition of the elders. Their adherence to tradition, however, involved a radical departure from the Word of God. The consequence was that both the law written in the heart and that received and handed down from patriarch and prophet condemned them, so that in their heart of hearts they felt condemned and could not escape a deep sense of guilt and of the impending judgment on them.

Then Jesus appeared in full scale opposition to their unfaithfulness and so they hated Him. His perfect purity and goodness inflamed them to malicious hate and aroused them to deadly enmity. As He went about doing good, they went about doing evil; sowing seeds of doubt and unbelief, spreading lies, fomenting ugly rumors which they themselves devised and circulated.

Their campaign of derogation and detraction eventually found fertile soil in many hearts, in the natural aversion of the carnal mind to all true thoughts and right ways of God. They were

averse to all true knowledge, righteousness and holiness; averse to real conversion, humble contrition, true faith and repentance and moral transformation.

They were averse to the kind of Christ God gave them, to the kind of heavenly visitant which under God "grew up before Him as a tender plant, as a root out of dry ground," in which they found "no form nor comeliness," no beauty such as when they saw Him they desired Him.

The worldly display and ostentation they required was not found in Him, and the kind of Messiah they envisaged could never be. The kind of Christ they really needed God had planned and provided. But contrary to the right ways of the Lord they were enamored of the Christ of their own minds and hearts. The verdict of their hearts was the same as it later was to be with the enemies of the apostle — "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live" (Acts 22:22).

But the real success or failure of their campaign depended on the people. It met with success because of the innate opposition latent in their hearts. Events moved to a crisis. Eventually the people "went back and walked no more with him," and fell away. It was the national rejection of their national Messiah-king.

Note: Mr. Rankin's studies in the Life of Christ will be continued, D.V., in future issues of this magazine.—Editor.

Some Noteworthy Quotations

"Souls are not saved by 'systems' but by the Spirit of God. Organizations without the Holy Spirit are like mills without power. Methods and plans without the grace of God are pipes without water, lamps without oil, banks without money. Even a church that has an orthodox creed and accepts the Biblical standards is as useless as are clouds without rain until power comes from God."

Charles H. Spurgeon

"For whithersoever the soul of man turns itself, unless towards Thee, it is fastened upon sorrows, even though it is fastened upon things beautiful outside of Thee and itself."

Augustine of Hippo

"Men nowadays cheerfully give up the substance, but never the name of Christianity."

B. B. Warfield

"I consider that the chief dangers that confront the coming century (the twentieth century) will be: Religion without the Holy Ghost;

Christianity without Christ; forgiveness without God; and heaven without hell."

General Booth

"No one will doubt that Christians of today must state their Christian belief in terms of modern thought. Every age has a language of its own and can speak no other. Mischief comes only when, instead of stating Christian belief in terms of modern thought, an effort is made, rather, to state modern thought in terms of Christian belief."

B. B. Warfield

"If men must have a reconciliation of all conflicting truths before they will believe any; if they must see how the promises of God are to be fulfilled before they will obey his commands; if duty is to hang upon the satisfying of the understanding, instead of the submission of the will,—then the greater number of us will find the road of faith and the road of duty blocked at the outset."

J. Oswald Dykes

"If there were no hardship in poverty, no agony in diseases, no distress in ignominy, no horror in death,—what fortitude or moderation would be displayed in regarding them with absolute indifference? But since each of these, by its own essential bitterness, naturally preys on all our hearts, herein the fortitude of a believer is manifested, if, when he experiences such bitterness, how grievously soever he may be distressed by it, yet by valiantly resisting, he at length overcomes it; his patience displays itself if, when he is sharply provoked, he is nevertheless restrained by the fear of God from any eruptions of intemperance; his cheerfulness is conspicuous if, when he is wounded by sadness and sorrow, he is satisfied with the spiritual consolation of God."

John Calvin

"As one tree of the forest protects another against the violence of the storm, so in the communion of saints does one protect the other against the storm-wind of doubt."

Abraham Kuyper

"Let us be sober, and awake from the intoxication of those who have become drunk on the wine of science."

Abraham Kuyper

"Though the world thinks my case most miserable, yet I think it so happy that I know not a man this day on the face of the earth with whom I would exchange my lot. Oh, it is more sweet and pleasant to be swimming in the swellings of Jordan for Christ and with Christ, than to be wallowing in the pleasures of sin and the delights of the flesh."

James Renwick

"If religion be made independent of history there is no such thing as a gospel. For 'gospel' means 'good news,' tidings, information about something that has happened. A gospel independent of history is a contradiction in terms."

— J. Gresham Machen

"Her (the Church's) constitution, as it lies in the Word of God, is perfect; but defects still exist in the best churches. And it is far from easy — is it possible? to prepare a minute statement of the marks of a true church, which will render easy the task of deciding in every case, absolutely and at once, whether a society can be reckoned a true church or not. And yet every intelligent Christian admits that a church, once genuine in its character, may become completely apostate. To draw the line and say, just here, it ought to be abandoned, is not easy. The truth is, all questions of this sort must, as they occur, be left for decision, under the guidance of general principles. . . . to the enlightened judgment, pure hearts,

and honest purposes of the faithful in Christ."

— James M. Wilson

"The mind of a Christian, when it is certainly persuaded that all things happen by the ordination of God, and that there is nothing left to chance, will always direct its views to Him as the supreme cause of all things, and will also consider inferior causes in their proper order. He will reverence and praise God as the principal Author of benefits received, but will also honor men as His ministers (servants), and will understand, what indeed is the fact, that the will of God has laid him under obligations to those persons by whose means the Lord has been pleased to communicate His benefits."

— John Calvin

"Do we really believe that Christ is the only way to heaven? Then act and live as if we believed it! Be not content if anyone is kind, courteous, gentle, generous, patient: only be content when they come to Christ, not until then! Anything is better than a quiet indifference."

— J. C. Ryle

"Truth will ultimately prevail where there is pains taken to bring it to light."

— George Washington

"What is faith unless it is to believe what you do not see?"

— Augustine of Hippo

"We are often moved with passion, and we think it to be zeal."

— Thomas a-Kempis

"Oh, that our Lord would come this day and knock at the door of your hearts. But the devil perhaps may say, 'You and I shall not part so soon.' But when Christ gives an irresistible knock he must come out by authority; He can command him immediately to come forth."

— Richard Cameron

"Is there any of you whom God has awakened out of the deadly slumber of the natural mind? Has He drawn aside the curtains, and made the light of truth to fall upon your heart, revealing the true condition of your soul? Has He made you start to your feet alarmed, that you might go, and weep as you go, to seek the Lord your God? Has He made you exchange the careless smile of gaiety for the tears of anxiety, the loud laugh of folly for the cry of bitter distress about your soul? Are you asking the way to Zion with your face directed thitherward? Then take heed, I beseech you, of sitting down contented in this refuge of lies. Remember, he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; remember, no outward observances, no prayers, or church-going, or Bible-reading, can ever justify you in the sight of God."

— Robert Murray McCheyne

Religious Terms Defined

A few definitions of important religious terms will be given in this department in each issue of **Blue Banner Faith and Life**. The aim will be conciseness without the sacrifice of accuracy. Where possible the Westminster Shorter Catechism will be quoted.

SIN. "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God" (S. C. 14).

SOCINIANISM. A heresy founded by two Italian theologians, Laelius Socinus and his nephew Faustus Socinus, in the Reformation period. Socinianism was quite similar to the Modernism of the present day, denying the Deity of Jesus Christ, the substitutionary atonement, the imputed righteousness of Christ, original sin and predestination, and teaching that salvation is a matter of following the example of Jesus Christ. This heresy flourished especially in Poland in the 16th century.

SORROW FOR SIN. True sorrow for sin, or godly sorrow, is that contrition produced by the special work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, which leads to real and hearty repentance and to salvation. It is a sorrow, not merely for the consequences or penalty of sin, but for the sin itself, as something hateful and contrary to the holiness of God. Godly sorrow is distinguished from "the sorrow of the world" or mere remorse, which does not spring from the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, and does not lead to salvation.

SOUL. The non-material component of the human personality, also called spirit. Man is a composite being consisting of a body formed from dust and a soul or spirit than can never die.

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD. God's absolute, unquestionable, unchallengeable right and power to deal with, determine and dispose all His creatures as seems good in His sight. By the sover-

eighty of God is meant not merely that God possesses this power and right in the abstract, or potentially, but that He actually determines and controls all that ever comes to pass, in all matters both great and small, throughout the entire created universe.

SPIRITUAL MAN. A man who is indwelt and controlled by the Holy Spirit of God, the third person of the Holy Trinity. The very common notion that a spiritual man is a man in whom the human spirit controls the rest of the personality is false and unscriptural. In Paul's Epistles, from which the term "spiritual man" is derived, the adjective "spiritual" refers to the Spirit of God, not to the spirit of man. In the Bible "spiritual" does not mean "religious" or "devotional," as many people wrongly suppose.

SUPEREROGATION, WORKS OF. The Roman Catholic concept of good works performed over and above what it is one's duty to do. It is held that many "saints" in the history of the Church have done much more good than what God required of them, and the Christians today may do the same. The whole notion is false and unscriptural. When Christians have done their utmost they still fall far short of what God requires of them.

THEOLOGY. That science which deals with God, His being, attributes and works. Many people today speak contemptuously of theology, but it is sinful to do so. When people regard theology with contempt, they are regarding the knowledge of God with contempt.

God's Works of Creation and Providence

Note: The numbered questions and answers, printed in bold face type at the beginning of each lesson, are taken from **The Larger Catechism of the Westminster Assembly**.

LESSON 1

Q. 14. How doth God execute his decrees?

A. God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will.

Scripture References:

Ephesians 1:11. (Additional Scripture references will come under the following questions, dealing with God's works of creation and provi-

dence. This 14th question is of the nature of a summary or outline, dividing God's works into two great parts, namely Creation and Providence. The questions which follow deal with these two subjects; 15, 16 and 17 with Creation; and 18, 19 and 20 with Providence).

Questions:

1. What kind of foreknowledge does God have of all things?

Infallible foreknowledge. His foreknowledge is inclusive, exact, and detailed.

2. What is meant by saying that the counsel of God's will is free?

This means that God acted according to his own nature, without constraint from any source outside God himself.

3. What is meant by saying that the counsel of God's will is "immutable"?

This means that God's purposes cannot be changed by "chance" or by any of his creatures. What God has decreed will surely come to pass.

Q. 15. What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is that wherein God did in the beginning, by the word of his power, make of nothing the world, and all things therein, for himself, within the space of six days, and all very good.

Scripture References:

Genesis 1:1 and also the entire first chapter of Genesis. The account of the work of creation.

Hebrews 11:3. The universe created out of nothing; not formed from pre-existing materials.

Proverbs 16:4. God made all things for himself.

Revelation 4:11. All things created by God, for his own pleasure.

Questions:

1. What truth is implied by the use of the words "in the beginning?"

These words imply that the world or the universe is not eternal; it did not always exist; it had a beginning. God, on the other hand, is eternal; God always existed; God never had a beginning.

2. What is the importance of the first three words of the Bible?

These words ("In the beginning") prove that the universe had a beginning; therefore the universe did not exist of itself; therefore the universe owes its existence to God; therefore the universe is dependent on God; therefore all attempts of men or nations to live independently of God are foolish, wicked, and doomed to failure in the end.

3. What does the doctrine of Creation show about the nature of God?

That God is absolutely independent of the world; that God is an almighty being, who possesses infinite supernatural power by which he can do anything which does not contradict his own nature.

4. What was the aim of God's work of creation?

God created all things **for himself**; that is, to manifest his own perfection and glory.

5. What was the character of the created universe as it came from the hand of God?

It was "all very good"; that is, it was wholly free from evil of any kind, both moral evil and physical evil. The evil which exists today is therefore **abnormal** and alien to the universe as God created it.

6. What is the meaning of the phrase "in the space of six days"?

The most natural meaning of this phrase is six literal days of 24 hours each. However some orthodox students of the Bible hold that the expression means six "ages" or periods of time. It is possible, of course, that this is the true meaning. In the Bible the word "day" is sometimes used to designate a long period of time; one day is said to be with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, etc. However the more natural and probable meaning in Genesis chapter 1 is six literal days.

7. When was the world created?

We can only say "In the beginning", as the Bible tells us. We are not told when the "beginning" was.

8. What was the origin of the idea that the world was created in the year 4004 B. C.?

Archbishop Usher, a scholar of about 300 years ago, made elaborate calculations of the chronology and genealogies of the Bible, and on the basis of these calculations he decided that 4004 B. C. was the time of the creation.

9. What should we think of this idea that the world was created in 4004 B. C.?

(1) We can be sure that the world was created **at least** that long ago, if not longer. (2) Usher's calculation is not a statement of the Word of God, but only a human opinion, which may or may not be reliable. (3) Usher's conclusion is based on the assumption that the genealogies given in the Bible are **complete with no links omitted**. But it can be proved by comparison of Scripture with Scripture that in Bible genealogies sometimes generations are omitted; for example, a grandson is spoken of as a son of some person, etc. Therefore **it is impossible accurately to calculate the date of the creation of the world from the genealogies**.

10. What should we think of the statements of scientists who say that the earth is millions or even billions of years old?

(1) These statements are speculative and are not statements of proven fact. This is shown by

the varying estimates given by different scientists as to the age of the earth.

(2) The age of the earth and the age of the human race are two distinct questions. Even according to the Bible the earth is older than the human race, though the Bible does not specify how much older (unless, of course, the six days of creation be all taken literally as 24-hour days, and no time lapse be allowed between Genesis 1:1 and the rest of the chapter).

(3) The science of astronomy seems to afford substantial reasons for believing that the physical universe may be very old. The speed of light is 186,000 miles per second, and some parts of the universe are so far from this earth that it takes over a million years for their light to reach the earth. The Andromeda Galaxy (formerly called a nebula) is so vast that it contains billions of suns. It takes light 100,000 years to reach from one end of the galaxy to the other. The distance from this earth is so great that the light which may register on a photographic film in an observatory tonight, left the Andromeda Galaxy about two million years ago.

(4) In any case, facts discovered by scientists about the physical universe, though they may be of great interest to us, cannot form a part of our religious faith, which is based on the Word of God alone. We should remember, too, that scientists are not infallible. Many theories that once were held to be "proven fact" have had to be revised or even abandoned in the light of later discoveries.

11. How old is the human race?

LESSON 2

Q. 16. How did God create angels?

A. God created all the angels, spirits, immortal, holy, excelling in knowledge, mighty in power, to execute his commandments, and to praise his name, yet subject to change.

Scripture References:

Colossians 1:16. All the angels created by God.

Psalms 104:4; Hebrews 1:7. The angels are spirits.

Matthew 22:30. The angels are immortal.

Jude 6. The angels were created holy.

2 Samuel 14:17; Matthew 24:36. The knowledge of the angels.

2 Thess. 1:7. The angels' power.

Psalms 103:20. Hebrews 1:14. The functions of the angels.

2 Peter 2:4. Jude 6. The angels created subject to change.

The Bible does not tell us. But from the genealogies of the Bible it can be proved that the human race is at least 6,000 years old. It may, of course, be older than that. The Bible leaves room for any reasonable antiquity for the human race. Mankind is not millions of years old, but rather a few thousand years old.

12. Why does the Bible not tell us the exact date of the creation and the exact age of the human race?

If we really needed to know these things, God would have revealed them in the Bible. Since he has not done so, we can only conclude that these are matters which we do not really need to know. We should always remember that the Bible was not written to satisfy our curiosity, but to show us the way of salvation.

Note: A thorough discussion of the theory of evolution, from the standpoint of orthodox Christianity, would require far more space than could be devoted to this important question in the columns of "Blue Banner Faith and Life". The reader is referred to the following excellent books on this subject:

"Evolution in the Balances", by Frank E. Allen. New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1926.

"After Its Kind", by Byron C. Nelson. Minneapolis, Augsburg Publishing House, 1940.

"Genes, Genesis and Evolution," by John Klotz. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, Mo.

Questions:

1. Why is it important to believe that all the angels were created by God?

Because of the fact that if any of them were not created by God, they would be divine, existing from eternity as God did.

2. What important difference is there between the angels and human beings?

The angels are spirits without any bodies; man on the other hand is a composite being consisting of two elements, body and soul, mysteriously united in a single personality.

3. What other important difference is there between the angels and the human race?

The angels are simply a great host of individual beings, not organically related to each other nor descended from a common ancestor; whereas the human race is an organic unity, all members of the human race being mutually related by organic ties, and all being the posterity of a single first ancestor, Adam. Adam has no counterpart among the angels.

4. If the angels are pure spirits with no bodies, how could they appear in human form as is related several times in the Bible?

The angels are pure spirits and have no body of their own. When God sent them, on certain occasions, to appear to men, they **appeared** in human form. This bodily form was merely assumed for the purpose of appearing to men, and was dropped again when their commission had been carried out.

5. What is wrong with the sentiment expressed in an old hymn which says "I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand"?

This sentiment is based upon a misunderstanding-

ing of the Bible teaching about the eternal destiny of the redeemed. We can never be angels, and we would not be satisfied or happy if we could, for the human soul is not complete and self-sufficient apart from the human body. Jesus said that at the resurrection the redeemed will be **as** the angels in one respect, namely, that they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; but that is very different from affirming that the redeemed will **become** angels.

6. What wonderful truth did our Saviour set forth concerning the work of the angels in connection with little children?

See Matthew 18:10.

LESSON 3

Q. 17. How did God create man?

A. After God had made all other creatures, he created man male and female; formed the body of the man of the dust of the ground, and the woman of the rib of the man, endued them with living, reasonable, and immortal souls; made them after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness; having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it, with dominion over the creatures; yet subject to fall.

Scripture References:

Gen. 1:27. Mankind created male and female.

Gen. 2:7. Adam's body made of dust.

Gen. 2:22. Eve made of Adam's rib.

Gen. 2:7. Mankind created with living souls.

Job 35:11. Mankind created with intelligent souls.

Eccles. 12:7. Matt. 10:28. Luke 23:43. Mankind created with immortal souls.

Gen. 1:27. Created in God's image.

Col. 3:10. God's image includes knowledge.

Eph. 4:24. God's image includes righteousness and holiness.

Rom. 2:14, 15. Mankind created with the moral law written on their hearts.

Eccles. 7:29. Mankind created with power to fulfill God's law.

Gen. 1:28. Psalm 8:6-8. Mankind given dominion over the creatures.

Gen. 3:6. Rom. 5:12. Mankind created subject to the possibility of a fall into sin.

Questions:

1. What is the importance of the fact that Adam's body was made out of dust from the ground?

This shows the truth that our physical body is composed of the same chemical elements as the ground, a fact which can be demonstrated by chemical analysis.

2. Why did God make Eve from a rib of Adam, instead of making her of dust from the ground as he had made Adam?

It was necessary for the **organic unity of the human race** that Eve's body be derived from that of Adam, not created separately from the lifeless elements. Otherwise it would not be true that God had made **of one blood** (Acts 17:26) all nations of men. According to God's plan, the human race must have **one** single origin, not two.

3. Why is it important to believe that mankind were endued with immortal souls at the creation?

Because some present-day sects teach that no person has an immortal soul by nature, but only by believing in Christ for salvation. These sects teach this false doctrine as a convenient way of getting rid of the idea of hell. If unbelievers and wicked people do not have immortal souls, then of course they cannot suffer eternal punishment in hell, for if they do not have immortal souls, then death must be the end of their existence. A correct understanding of the Scripture doctrine of the creation of the human race will counteract this dangerous heresy.

4. What common error must be avoided when we say that mankind was created in the image of God?

We must guard against the popular error that the image of God consists in a **physical** resemblance to God. The false religion of Mormonism teaches something like this. Since God is a pure Spirit and has no body, such a thing is of course wholly impossible.

5. If the "image of God" does not involve a physical resemblance to God, then what does it involve?

The Bible itself gives the key to the meaning of this expression, in Col. 3:10 and Eph. 4:24. The "image of God" consists in **knowledge, righteousness and holiness**. To state the same truth in a different way, the image of God in man consists in man's rational nature, man's moral nature and man's spiritual nature. Or we may say that man has a mind, a conscience and a capacity for knowing and loving God.

6. Does mankind have the "image of God" at the present day?

Yes. The "image of God" in man remains, but not perfect as it was at the creation. On the contrary, it is marred and broken because of our fall into sin. Yet the broken fragments remain in every human being even today.

7. What is involved in the statement that mankind was created "with dominion over the creatures"?

This divine commission, given to man at the creation, as recorded in Genesis 1:28, includes the whole relationship of mankind to the world of nature, including science, invention and art. Scientific inventions and discoveries are part of the fulfilment of this commission. See Psalm 8:5-8. We should not think that "the creatures" means only animals, birds and fishes; really it means all created things in this world below man himself.

8. What one element of total perfection was lacking in the condition of mankind at the creation?

As created by God, mankind was "subject to fall", that is, it was possible for the human race to fall into sin. Thus the condition of the human race at the creation was not the highest possible condition. The highest condition will be the state of glory when it will no longer be possible for the redeemed to sin.

LESSON 4

Q. 18. What are God's works of providence?

A. God's works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures; ordering them, and all their actions, to his own glory.

Scripture References:

Psalm 145: 17. God's providence is holy.

Psalm 104: 24. Isaiah 28:29. God's providence is wise.

Hebrews 1:3. God's providence is powerful.

Matthew 10: 29-31. God governs all his creatures.

Genesis 45: 7, 8. God controls the actions of his creatures.

9. What serious error, contrary to the doctrine of creation, is prevalent today?

The theory of evolution, which denies that mankind was a special creation of God, and holds that the human race developed gradually from a brute ancestry, that is, from the lower animals.

10. What should we think of the theory of human evolution?

(1) Even from the scientific viewpoint it is only a theory, and lacks conclusive proof of its validity. (2) It is clearly contrary to the teaching of the Bible, which unquestionably represents mankind as a special creation of God, wholly apart from the brutes. (3) It is true that the acceptance of evolution as truth often, if not always, leads to a gradual deadening of the conscience and weakening of the sense of moral responsibility. It is entirely true that the recent World War was, in the deepest sense, a result of widespread acceptance of the doctrine of human evolution as the truth, accompanied by a gradual but very real rejection of the Bible, by highly educated people, as their standard of faith and life. The logic involved in this moral decline is really unavoidable **when once the assumption of the truth of human evolution has been made**. If we were not created by God, then we are not responsible to God for our beliefs and actions. If we are not responsible to God for our beliefs and actions, then we are responsible only to our fellow men and to ourselves. In that case there is no absolute, permanent moral standard; what is right and wrong changes with the times and the circumstances. From this position it is but a step to the ideology of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. The apparently innocent theory of evolution has wrought tremendous havoc in human life. We should always realize that evolution is not merely a biological theory; it is also a philosophy of life held by many.

Romans 11:36. Isaiah 63:14. God controls all things for his own glory.

Questions:

1. What is the relation of all created things to God?

All created things are always totally **dependent** on God for their existence. No created thing can ever be independent of God.

2. What religious system denies the doctrine of God's providence?

Deism, which holds that God created the universe in the first place, and then left it to work out its own destiny. According to Deism, the universe is like a clock; God made it and wound it up, and since then He has let it alone, and now

it is slowly running down in its own way, according to natural laws, and without divine control.

3. Why is the doctrine of Deism a serious error?

Because Deism denies that God has anything whatever to do with the world in which we live today. According to Deism, God and the world parted company ages ago, and therefore we cannot come into contact with God. He cannot answer our prayers, nor can we have communion with him.

4. What important and popular organizations of the present day are largely found on the doctrine of Deism?

The Freemasons and some other "fraternal" orders, which speak of God as "the Grand Architect of the Universe", are largely based on the Deistic conception of God.

5. Why should Christian people not join these lodges or "fraternal" orders?

There are many good reasons why a Christian should not belong to any secret, oath-bound order; but perhaps the most important reason is that these orders, especially the Masonic order, are founded on the Deistic idea of God, and therefore are really a false religion. The Christian, who holds the Bible doctrine of God, should keep separate from them.

6. What would happen to the whole created universe, including the human race, if God's work of providence were to be withdrawn or suspended for one minute?

The entire universe, and the human race, would instantly cease to exist. It is God's providence that sustains the entire created universe in existence from moment to moment.

7. Prove from the Bible that God's providence controls what are commonly regarded as "chance" happenings.

Matthew 10:29. Proverbs 16:33.

8. Prove from the Bible that the free acts of men are under the control of God's providence.

Genesis 45:8. Proverbs 21:1.

9. Prove from the Bible that even the **sinful** acts of men are under the control of God's providence.

Acts 2:23. Romans 9:17, 18.

10. How do the **prophecies** of the Bible show that God's providence controls all that comes to pass?

The Bible contains many prophecies which have already been fulfilled, and others which still wait fulfillment in the future. If God's Providence did not control all things that come to

pass, without exception, **predictive prophecy** would be impossible. For unless God controls all things, it would be impossible for him to reveal beforehand what is to come to pass, because forces outside of God's control might change everything, so that the prophecy would not be fulfilled. Only a God who controls absolutely everything can really foretell the future with certainty, accuracy and detail.

11. What is the **end** or **purpose** of God's providence?

The end or purpose of God's providence is the manifesting of God's own glory.

12. What false idea is common today about the end or purpose of God's providence?

Today many people say they want to believe in "a democratic God" who does things, not for his own glory, but for the benefit of the majority of his creatures, or for the greatest good of the greatest number.

13. What should we think of this idea of "a democratic God"?

(1) It is contrary to the doctrine of God revealed in the Bible. (2) It is idolatry, for it sets up a god made in man's image as the object of worship. (3) It overlooks the truth that **the glory of God includes the welfare of his creatures in general**; not the welfare of all of his creatures individually, but of his creatures generally. The non-theistic viewpoint that is dominant in the world today makes the welfare of the creatures, or of humanity, the end or purpose of all things. The theistic viewpoint of the Bible, on the contrary, regards the glory of God as the great end or purpose of all things. According to the Bible, the welfare of the creatures (including humanity) is not the main thing, but rather **the by-product** of the glorification of God.

14. If God's providence controls the actions of human beings, does not this destroy human free will?

No. While it is true, as the Bible clearly teaches, that God's providence controls **all** the acts of human beings, still this does not destroy human free will (more correctly called **free agency**), because God does not control the acts of people **by forcing them to do something against their will**, but by so ordering the facts and circumstances of their lives, and the moral state of their hearts, that they voluntarily, of their own accord, without any constraint, always do exactly what God has foreordained that they are to do.

15. If even the sinful acts of wicked men are controlled by God's providence, does not this make God responsible for their sins?

No, because they sin of their own free will, and are not **forced** to sin by God's providential control. This truth is best understood by consider-

ing an actual case, for example the crucifixion of Christ. See Acts 4: 27, 28, "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Herod, Pilate, etc., all acted according to their own desires and free will; God did not force them to commit this sin; yet when they did commit it of their own accord, it all turned out exactly according to the plan of God. The same principle

is illustrated in the history of Joseph's brothers selling him into Egypt. They acted freely, according to their own evil wishes and desires; yet what they did, wicked as it certainly was, turned out to be the exact plan of God.

16. How can it be that God foreordains and controls the sinful acts of men, and yet is not responsible for the sin?

This is a mystery which we cannot wholly understand. However the Bible plainly teaches that it is so.

LESSON 5

Q. 19. What is God's providence towards the angels?

A. God by his providence permitted some of the angels, wilfully and irrecoverably, to fall into sin and damnation, limiting and ordering that, and all their sins, to his own glory; and established the rest in holiness and happiness; employing them all, at his pleasure, in the administrations of his power, mercy, and justice.

Scripture References:

Jude 6. 2 Peter 2:4 God permitted some of the angels to fall into sin.

Hebrews 2:16. God provided no way of salvation for the angels that sinned.

John 8:44. These angels sinned wilfully.

Job 1:12. Matthew 8:31. God limited their sins for his own glory.

I Timothy 5:21. Mark 8:38. Hebrews 12:22. God established the rest of the angels in holiness and happiness.

Psalms 104:4. 2 Kings 19:35. Hebrews 1:14. God employs the angels as his servants.

Questions:

1. What was the great difference between the fall of the wicked angels into sin, and the fall of the human race into sin?

In the case of the human race, the sin of one man brought about the fall of the whole race (Romans 5:12). In the case of the angels, since they are not a related race, organically connected with each other, but a large number of separate unrelated individuals, each must have gone

through his own probation individually and fallen by his own personal act.

2. What other great difference exists between the fall of the angels and the fall of the human race?

Only part of the angels fell into sin; but in the case of the human race, the whole race fell.

3. What special activities of the fallen angels, or demons, took place in connection with the earthly ministry of our Saviour?

At the time of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, when God was most active in executing his plans for the redemption of the human race from sin, Satan and the demons carried on a counter-offensive of desperate activity. Many persons were demon-possessed, that is, demons or fallen angels had entered into them and taken possession of their personality, using them for wicked purposes. In one case (Matthew 8:31) we read of a great host of demons possessing one man. Christ by his divine power cast out the demons, a sign of the arrival of the kingdom of God.

4. What special activities do the holy angels have in connection with Christian people?

Read Hebrews 1:14.

5. What truth does the Epistle to the Hebrews teach about the angels in relation to Christ?

Read Hebrews 1:4-8. Christ is higher than the angels, for they are only God's servants, whereas Christ is God's Son. When Christ came into the world, the angels worshipped him, indicating that he is higher than they. The angels are created beings; Christ is their divine Creator.

LESSON 6

Q. 20. What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created?

A. The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth; putting the creatures under his dominion, and

ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself; instituting the sabbath; entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

Scripture References:

Genesis 2:8, 15, 16. Man placed in paradise, etc.

Genesis 1:28. The creatures placed under man's dominion.

Genesis 2:18. Marriage ordained for man's help.

Genesis 1:28; 3:8. Man originally enjoyed communion with God.

Genesis 2:3. The sabbath instituted.

Galatians 3:12; Romans 10:5; 5:14. The covenant of works instituted.

Genesis 2:9. The tree of life.

Genesis 2:17. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Questions:

1. In what part of the world was "paradise" or the Garden of Eden located?

While the exact location cannot be determined, there can be no doubt that it was in the Near East. Many scholars believe it was in Armenia near the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers; others hold that it was probably near the head of the Persian Gulf.

2. Of the four rivers mentioned in Genesis 2:10-14, which are still known by the same names at the present day?

The Euphrates. Also the river "Hiddekel" is the same as the Tigris river.

3. Why cannot the other two rivers still be identified with certainty today?

Possibly because the great flood in the days of Noah altered the geography of the region.

4. How did God provide for the physical welfare of mankind before the fall?

(a) God provided man with a home, the Garden of Eden; (b) He provided man with wholesome work in the garden; (c) He provided food suitable for the human race; (d) He placed the creatures under man's dominion.

5. How did God provide for the social welfare of mankind before the fall?

By instituting marriage, thus establishing the home or the family, the fundamental social institution of the human race.

6. How did God provide for the spiritual welfare of the human race before the fall?

(a) By affording man communion with God; (b) By instituting the weekly sabbath; (c) By establishing the "covenant of works" or "covenant of life" between God and mankind.

7. Why was the first covenant a covenant of life?

Because by it the human race could have attained eternal life, if Adam had obeyed God.

8. Why is this same covenant often called a covenant of works?

Because it was a plan by which the human race could attain eternal life by works, that is, by perfect obedience to the will of God.

9. Who were the parties to the covenant of works?

The parties were God, who established the covenant, and Adam, the head and representative of the entire human race.

10. What was the condition of the covenant of works?

The condition was perfect obedience to God's revealed will.

11. What particular form did this condition take in the covenant of works?

It took the form of a command not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

12. Why did God command Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

This was a sheer, arbitrary test of obedience to the will of God. The fruit of the tree was good in itself. It was not poisonous or harmful in itself. The only reason why Adam and Eve were not to eat it, was just because God had said "Thou shalt not eat of it." So it was a pure test of obedience to God's will.

13. What kind of fruit was this fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

We do not know, for the Bible does not tell us. The idea that it was the apple is only a popular legend, without any foundation.

14. What would have been the result if Adam and Eve had obeyed God?

The time would have come when they would have received the right to eat the fruit of the tree of life. Then they would have received eternal life, and it would have become impossible for them ever to commit any sin or to die.

15. How long did this test or probation of Adam and Eve in the covenant of works last?

It lasted from the time that God gave the command until Adam ate the fruit of the tree.

16. How long would this probation have lasted if Adam and Eve had obeyed God?

We do not know, for the Bible does not tell us. However, since it was a test or probation, it

could not have lasted forever. The very nature of a probation is temporary, not permanent. There would have come a time when God would announce that Adam and Eve had passed the test successfully and had earned the right to eat the fruit of the tree of life.

17. How long did Adam and Eve live in the Garden of Eden before they ate the forbidden fruit?

We do not know. The Bible says nothing whatever on this point. However, the popular idea that it was only a few days is unfounded. From Genesis 5:3 we know that Adam was 130 years old when Seth was born. It was entirely possible that Adam and Eve may have lived in the Garden of Eden for several years.

18. What was the penalty attached to the covenant of works?

The penalty attached to the covenant of works was death.

19. What was the meaning of death as the penalty of the covenant of works?

Death must have been meant in the fullest, widest sense, including not only the death of the body, but also spiritual death, or alienation from God, and eternal death, which the Bible calls "hell" or "the second death."

2. If Adam and Eve had obeyed God perfectly, how long would they have lived?

They and all their descendants would have lived for ever without dying.

21. How can this be proved from the Bible?

Romans 5:12.

22. If death had not entered the world, and the human race continued to multiply without anyone ever dying, how could the world hold so many people?

No doubt people would have reached a time when God would have taken them to heaven without dying, as he took Enoch and Elijah.

23. How should we answer people who say that it was not fair for God to make Adam the representative of the whole human race?

We should reply as Paul did in answering a similar objection in Romans 9:20, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Sinful human beings have no right to decide what was or was not fair for God to do. God as the Creator of the human race is sovereign and has the right to do as he pleases with all his creatures.

24. Why is this doctrine of the covenant of works very important to us as Christians?

Because it is parallel to the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. Just as the first Adam brought sin and death, so Christ, the second Adam, brings us righteousness and eternal life. Adam was our representative in the covenant of works; Jesus Christ is our representative in the covenant of grace. Those who reject the doctrine of the covenant of works have no right to claim the blessings of the covenant of grace, for the two are parallel, and stand or fall together, as is proved by Romans chapter 5.

LESSON 7

Q. 21. Did man continue in that estate wherein God at first created him?

A. Our first parents being left to the freedom of their own will, through the temptation of Satan, transgressed the commandment of God in eating the forbidden fruit; and thereby fell from the estate of innocency wherein they were created.

Scripture References:

Genesis 3:6-8, 13. The historical account of the fall of the human race.

Ecclesiastes 7:29. Mankind created upright, but later fell into sin.

2 Cor. 11:3. The fall took place through the temptation of Satan.

Romans 5:12. The fall was a definite event involving one particular agent.

1 Timothy 2:14. Eve was deceived, but Adam sinned without being deceived.

Questions:

1. Why was it possible for Adam and Eve to sin against God?

God left them to the freedom of their own will, instead of using his almighty power to prevent them from sinning. Since God is almighty, it would certainly have been possible for him to prevent the human race from falling into sin. But God in his wisdom did not choose to prevent the fall. Since God held back his almighty power, and left Adam and Eve to their own free will, it was possible for them to choose to commit sin.

2. What was the difference between the sin committed by Adam and the sin committed by Eve?

Read 1 Timothy 2:14. Eve was deceived by Satan, and thereupon sinned; Adam was not deceived, but disobeyed God anyway.

3. Which sin was worse, the sin of Adam or the sin of Eve?

Undoubtedly Adam's sin was worse than Eve's. It is bad to sin because a person has been deceived by Satan; it is much worse to commit the same sin without having been deceived, that is, fully realizing that it is contrary to God's will.

4. What was the result of our first parents' eating the forbidden fruit?

They immediately realized that they had alienated themselves from God. Instead of enjoying communion with God, they became afraid of God and tried to escape from God, because their conscience told them that they had sinned.

5. What great mystery is involved in the Bible account of the fall?

The problem of the origin of evil in the human race. Since Adam and Eve were created in a state of knowledge, righteousness and holiness, there was no evil in their nature to which temptation could appeal. Since they were created in righteousness, evil had to enter their lives from an outside source. But how could temptation to commit sin make a real appeal to a sinless being? What motive could have more influence in a sinless person than the motive to obey God?

6. What should be our attitude toward this mystery?

We should accept what the Bible teaches about it in simple faith, and recognize that the psychological problem of the origin of evil in the human race is an insoluble mystery. The information which the Bible provides may be summarized as follows: (a) Our first parents were sinless as they came from the hand of God. (b) Sin entered the human race from an outside source, namely, from the temptation of Satan. (c) Satan tempted Eve through appealing to desires which are not sinful in themselves, but morally indifferent (Genesis 3:6), but which it is

sinful to gratify by disobedience to a direct command of God. (d) The temptation came to Adam not directly from Satan, but through Eve, who had already sinned. (e) Though the psychological problem is insoluble, there is not the slightest doubt as to the fact that mankind, though created holy, was tempted by Satan and thereupon fell into an estate of sin.

7. What false interpretation of the Bible account of the fall (Genesis 3) is popular today?

The mythical interpretation, which holds that the account of the fall is not a record of historical facts, but a story which grew up in ancient times to explain the presence of sin and death in the world. According to this interpretation, Adam and Eve were not historical persons, nor was there a literal tree of life nor a literal tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was all the product of poetic fancy, a beautiful story, but not true.

8. What reasons have we for holding that the account of the fall in Genesis 3 is a record of historical facts, to be literally interpreted?

(a) The record itself, being a part of a book of history, is most naturally understood as being historical. (b) Our Lord Jesus Christ regarded it as historical, and Adam and Eve as actual persons, as is shown by Matthew 19:4-6, where he quotes Genesis 2:24 as having actually been spoken by God when he "at the beginning made them male and female". (c) If the account of the fall in Genesis 3 is not literal historical fact, then the apostle Paul's argument in Romans 5:12-21 is meaningless and worthless, for it assumes the historical character of the record of the fall. Since Romans 5:12-21 forms an essential part of the apostle's argument in the entire epistle, we must conclude that since the Epistle to the Romans is infallibly inspired Scripture, the record of the fall in Genesis 3 must be a record of historical fact.

LESSON 8

Q. 22. Did all mankind fall in that first transgression?

A. The covenant being made with Adam as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.

Scripture References:

Acts 17:26. The organic unity of the human race; all made "of one blood", therefore all the children of Adam.

Genesis 2:16, 17, compared with Romans 5:12-21. Adam constituted by God the federal head or representative of the human race, so that his act was determinative for all.

1 Corinthians 15:21, 22. Adam, like Christ, a federal head or "public person".

Questions:

1. To what official position was Adam appointed by God in the covenant of works?

God appointed Adam as "head" or representative of the human race, to undergo the probation of the covenant of works for the whole human race.

2. What Scripture passage most clearly proves that Adam represented his posterity in the covenant of works?

Romans 5:12-21.

3. What is the meaning of the expression: "all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation"?

This expression means: all mankind except Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ descended from Adam,

it is true, but not by ordinary generation, for Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and had no human father. All mankind except Jesus Christ sinned and fell with Adam in his first transgression. The sin of the first Adam brought about the ruin of all mankind except the second Adam.

4. Why is the first transgression of Adam specially mentioned?

Because it was the first transgression of Adam that affected the entire human race as the breach of the covenant of works. Only that first sin of Adam is imputed on account of the covenant of works. The rest of Adam's sins committed in his later life, were committed by him simply as an individual person, not as "head" or representative of the human race. The later sins of Adam have nothing to do with us today; therefore the Bible does not even mention them.

5. How should we answer the person who objects to the Bible teaching that Adam, as the representative of mankind, brought sin and suffering on all of us?

Whether we like it or not, the Bible teaches that God deals with humanity on the basis of the principle of representation, both in the covenant of works and in the covenant of grace. The principle of representation functions constantly in ordinary human life and no one objects to it. The United States Congress declares war, and the life of every individual in the country is affected by it. Parents decide where they will live, and the nationality of their children is determined by it. If it be objected that the people elect their representatives in Congress, whereas we did not choose Adam to be our representative, the answer is: (a) The decisions of lawful representatives are binding whether those represented chose the representatives or not. The acts of Congress affect millions of people who are too young to vote. A child does not choose its own parents, yet its life is largely affected by their actions and decisions. (b) It is true that we did not choose Adam to be our representative, but God chose him; and who could make a wiser, better or more righteous appointment than God? To object to God's appointment of Adam as our representative in the covenant of works is not only to deny the sovereignty of God, but also to set ourselves up as wiser and more righteous than God.

Q. 23. Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Scripture References:

Romans 5:12. Death the consequence of sin.

Romans 6:23. Death the penalty of sin.

Romans 3:23. Sin is universal in the human race.

Genesis 3:17-19. The curse on the world of nature because of human sin.

Questions:

1. What do we call the estate of mankind before the fall?

(a) The estate of innocency; (b) the estate of original righteousness.

2. Why is sin mentioned before misery in describing the estate into which mankind fell?

Because sin came first, and misery followed afterwards as the result of sin. Sin is the cause of misery; misery is the effect of sin.

3. Which causes the most concern to the human race, misery or sin?

Except for Christian people, the human race is very much concerned about its misery or sufferings, and very little concerned about its sins. And even Christian people are often more concerned about the misery of their condition than they are about their sin.

4. What is the basic error of many non-Christian religions, systems of Philosophy, and human plans for world-betterment?

They all try to find a way to relieve the sufferings of humanity, without first providing a way of deliverance from sin, which is the cause of suffering. All human schemes of betterment which are not founded on redemption from sin through Christ are foredoomed to failure. Permanent relief cannot be obtained by treating symptoms only while ignoring the cause of the trouble.

5. What popular false religion of the present day denies the reality of both sin and misery?

Eddyism, or so-called "Christian Science".

6. What is the error of the modern scientific view of mankind with respect to the condition of the human race?

On the whole modern scientists regard man as he exists today as normal, and decide what is normal in any particular matter, whether physical or psychological, by taking the average of contemporary human beings. Normal health, normal intelligence, normal growth, etc., are all determined in this way. This attitude of regarding the average of present-day humanity as "normal" is contrary to the Bible teaching about mankind having fallen into a condition of sin and misery. According to the Bible, man was normal in the Garden of Eden, as created by God. Having fallen into sin, man became abnormal, and there is not a single normal human being in the world today. The average of contemporary human beings, in any particular matter, is abnormal, that is, diverges from the perfection of man as created by God. In particular, modern science regards old-age and death as normal experiences for human beings, but from the Bible standpoint both of these are strictly abnormal and alien to mankind as created by God.

LESSON 9

Q. 24 What is sin?

A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature.

Scripture References:

1 John 3:4. Sin is defined as transgression of the law.

Galatians 3:10, 12. Want of conformity is sin, as well as positive transgression.

Romans 3:20. Sin impressed on the mind and conscience by the law of God.

Romans 5:13. Apart from law there could be no sin imputed to men.

James 4:17. The mere failure to do good is sin.

Questions:

1. Where does the Bible come nearest to giving a formal definition of sin?

1 John 3:4, "Sin is the transgression of the law," or as translated in the American Standard Version, "Sin is lawlessness."

2. What is the difference between sin and crime?

Strictly, sin is violation of the law of God; crime is violation of the law of the state. However many old writers used the words "crime" and "criminal" in the sense of "sin" and "sinful".

3. May the same act be both a crime and a sin?

Yes. For example, to commit murder, theft, or perjury.

4. May an act be a sin but not a crime?

Yes. For example, to hate one's brother is a sin against God, but not a violation of the law of the state, for the latter has no jurisdiction over men's thoughts.

5. May an act be a crime but not a sin?

Yes. For example, in Scotland 250 years ago many Covenanters were put in prison and even killed because they assembled to worship God without permission from the king. This was a

crime because they violated the law of the state (a wicked and unjust law, in that case), but it was not a sin, because they were obeying God's law by doing it.

6. To what kind of creatures has God given laws?

To his reasonable creatures, that is, to his rational creatures (angels and men).

7. What two kinds of sin does the Catechism speak of?

(a) Negative sin, or want of conformity to God's laws; (b) Positive sin, or transgression of God's laws.

8. What must a person do to be a sinner?

Nothing. Even if there were a person who had never transgressed any of God's laws, still that person would be a sinner, for he would have a sinful want of conformity to God's holy law.

9. What summary of God's law especially stresses the positive sin of transgression?

The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17), eight of which begin with the words "Thou shalt not. . .".

10. What summary of God's law especially stresses the negative sin of want of conformity?

The moral law as summarized by Jesus (Matthew 22:37-39): "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

11. What inadequate definition of sin is often given by those who believe in total sanctification during the present life?

They often define sin as "voluntary transgression of known law".

12. Why is this definition of sin inadequate?

Because it omits two forms of sin; (a) original sin, or the sin of nature with which we are born; (b) the negative sin of want of conformity to God's requirements.

LESSON 10

Q. 25. Wherein consisteth the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and

made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually; which is commonly called Original Sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions.

Scripture References:

Romans 5:12, 19. The guilt of Adam's first sin imputed to all mankind.

Romans 3:10-19. Mankind universally and totally depraved in sin.

Ephesians 2: 1-3. Mankind dead in sin and therefore unable to please God.

Romans 5:6. Mankind spiritually without strength and ungodly.

Romans 8:7, 8. Mankind at enmity with God and cannot please God.

Genesis 6:5. Mankind sinful in imagination and thoughts as well as in deeds.

James 1:14, 15. Original sin the source of actual transgressions.

Matthew 15:19. Sinful deeds proceed from a corrupt and sinful heart.

Questions:

1. What are the two principal kinds of sin?

(a) Original sin, or the sin of nature that we are born with; (b) actual transgressions, or the sin of practice that we do ourselves.

2. Why is only the guilt of Adam's first sin imputed to his posterity?

Adam acted as our representative only until he broke the covenant of works. After he committed his first sin he ceased to have any covenant relationship to us. However he still had a natural relationship to the human race as the first ancestor of all mankind.

3. What righteousness did mankind lose by the fall?

The righteousness in which he was created, or original righteousness.

4. Besides the guilt of Adam's first sin, and the loss of original righteousness, what other evil resulted from the fall?

Man's nature was corrupted so that he became depraved in heart and loved to sin.

5. What is the extent of the corruption of nature that resulted from the fall?

This corruption of nature is complete or total, and is sometimes called "total depravity."

6. Does total corruption of nature mean that the unsaved person cannot do anything good?

No. The unsaved person, by God's common grace, can do things that are good within the civil or human sphere. For example, an unsaved person may save another from drowning, at the risk of his own life. But the unsaved person can do nothing that is spiritually good, that is, nothing truly good and pleasing in God's sight. He may do things that are good in themselves, but he never does them with a right motive, namely, to love, serve and please God; therefore even the "good" works of the unsaved person are spoiled and corrupted by sin.

7. What is the modern attitude toward the doctrine of total depravity?

Those who pride themselves on their "modern" spirit ridicule and scoff at this truth of God's Word.

8. What practical lesson may we learn from the doctrines of original sin and total depravity?

From these doctrines we should learn the lesson that sins in the outward life proceed from the sin in the heart, and therefore reform of the outward life without spiritual cleansing of the heart cannot lead to a truly good life.

9. Is it possible for a person to save himself from his condition of original sin and total depravity?

No. Jeremiah 13:23 proves that a change in nature is beyond our own power. Because we are not merely sick, but **dead** in trespasses and sins, we are spiritually helpless and unable to save ourselves. A person may reform his outward life to some extent, but he cannot give himself a new heart; he may be able to change his conduct in some respects, but he cannot raise himself spiritually from the dead.

10. What is God's gracious remedy for our condition of depravity and helplessness?

God's gracious remedy for our corrupted and helpless condition is the new birth, also called in Scripture the new creation, the washing of regeneration, quickening, etc. This is a sovereign, supernatural work of God the Holy Spirit on our spirit.

LESSON 11

Q. 26. How is original sin conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity?

A. Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin.

Scripture References:

Psalms 51:5. We are conceived and born in a sinful condition.

Job 14:4. Our first parents being sinful, their posterity must be sinful too.

Job 15:14. All mankind are born with a sinful nature.

John 3:6. Natural generation produces only sinful human nature; the new birth produces a new nature.

Questions:

1. Besides being our representative in the covenant of works, what other relationship did Adam have to us?

Besides the federal or covenant relationship, which came to an end when he committed his first sin, Adam also had a natural relationship to us as our first ancestor. This natural relationship continued throughout his life.

2. What has been imputed to us because of Adam's covenant relationship to us?

The guilt of Adam's first sin has been imputed to all of his posterity except Jesus Christ.

3. What have we received from Adam by reason of his natural relationship to us?

We have derived our physical or bodily life from Adam through our parents and more remote ancestors, who descended from him.

4. What was the effect of Adam's first sin on himself?

As a judicial penalty for his violation of the covenant of works, God withdrew from Adam the life-giving influences of the Holy Spirit. The result was, inevitably, moral and physical death. The moment Adam ate the forbidden fruit he became dead in trespasses and sins; at that same moment the principle of death became operative in his physical body, with the certainty that it would return to dust in the end.

5. How is this effect of Adam's first sin on himself paralleled in his descendants?

Every human being is born into the world with the guilt of Adam's first sin reckoned or imputed to him. Therefore because of the broken covenant of works every human being comes into existence morally and spiritually dead, because deprived of the life-giving operations of the Holy Spirit. As for our physical body, the principle of death is at work in it when we are born, so that its return to dust, while by God's common grace it may be delayed, yet cannot be permanently prevented.

6. What is the effect of our beginning our existence morally and spiritually dead?

The effect of our beginning our existence with a depraved and sinful nature, or morally and spiritually dead, is that personal sin and ac-

tual transgressions inevitably follow in the course of time.

7. Is it correct to say that we "inherit" a sinful nature from Adam?

It depends on what we mean by the word "inherit". If we mean that we are born with a sinful nature because of our connection with Adam, our first ancestor, then it is correct to say that we "inherit" a sinful nature from Adam. If we mean that we inherit a sinful nature as we might inherit blond hair or tall stature, then it is not correct to say that we "inherit" a sinful nature from Adam. While we must recognize that the problem of the transmission of original sin is a very difficult one, still it seems safe to say that the Bible does not warrant believing that a sinful nature is transmitted by the mechanism of biological heredity as physical characteristics are transmitted from generation to generation. Sin is a spiritual fact, not a bodily property or characteristic. If original sin were transmitted from parent to child by biological heredity, we would receive it from our immediate parents rather than from Adam. In that case, too, the children of believers would come into the world in a regenerate condition. But as a matter of fact the children of believers are born into the world dead in sin. We may conclude, therefore, that (a) our sinful nature comes to us by reason of our natural birth as descendants of Adam; (b) it comes to us from Adam, rather than from our immediate parents; (c) we "inherit" a sinful nature from Adam as a man might "inherit" money or property from his father or grandfather, not as a person might "inherit" blue eyes or auburn hair from his parents. For a fuller discussion of this difficult subject the reader is referred to A. A. Hodge, "Commentary on the Confession of Faith", pages 151-160.

8. What system of doctrine denies the Bible teaching on original sin?

The system of doctrine called Pelagianism, after its founder Pelagius, a British monk who lived in the fourth century after Christ. Pelagius denied that we are born with a sinful nature, and taught that infants are born without sin, and become sinful only by imitating the sins of other persons. Against the heresy of Pelagius, the Bible doctrine of original sin was defended by Augustine. After a long controversy Pelagianism was condemned as false by the Church, and the Bible doctrine was vindicated. During the Middle Ages, however, a modified form of Pelagianism, called semi-Pelagianism, became the dominant doctrine in the Church.

LESSON 12

Q. 27. What misery did the fall bring upon mankind?

A. The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond

slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come.

Scripture References:

Genesis 3:8-10, 24. By the fall mankind lost communion with God.

Ephesians 2:2, 3. By nature we are the children of wrath.

2 Timothy 2:26. By nature we are bond slaves to Satan.

Genesis 2:17. Lamentations 3:39. Romans 6:23. Because of the fall we are liable to God's punishments in this world.

Matthew 25:41, 46. Jude 7. Because of the fall we are liable to God's punishments in the world to come.

Questions:

1. What was the first misery which the fall brought upon the human race?

The loss of communion with God.

2. How soon after they sinned did Adam and Eve lose communion with God?

Immediately after they sinned.

3. How did they know that they had forfeited communion with God?

Their own conscience, which had become defiled by sin, caused them to realize that a barrier had come between them and God. Genesis 3:7.

4. Can an unsaved person have communion with God today?

Absolutely not. Only through Christ's work of reconciliation can the barrier between God and sinful human beings be removed so that they can have communion with God.

5. How were God's displeasure and curse visited upon Adam and Eve?

(a) God sentenced Adam to life-long labor as the means of existence, until his body should die and be reclaimed by the dust from which it had been taken; (b) God told Eve that her life would be a life of greatly increased suffering; (c) God expelled both Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, prevented them from having access to the tree of life, and appointed for them a perpetual conflict with Satan and the kingdom of evil. Genesis 3:15-20, 22-24.

6. How does our experience parallel that of Adam and Eve after they sinned?

(a) They lost communion with God; we come into the world alienated from God.

(b) The woes pronounced upon Adam and Eve are still the common experience of humanity.

(c) They lost their access to the tree of life, though its fruit had been almost within their grasp; we are born into the world far from the tree of life, and no human being can ever receive eternal life except through Jesus Christ.

(d) Thy faced a life of perpetual enmity between themselves and Satan; we too must fight a life-long battle against Satan and against his allies, the world and the flesh.

7. What is meant by saying that we are by nature children of wrath?

This expression, which is taken from Ephesians 2:3, means that we are born into this world with a nature which is sinful and therefore is the object of God's wrath, that is, his righteous displeasure against sin.

8. What is meant by saying that unsaved people are bond slaves to Satan?

This means that God has justly permitted Satan to have a certain power or dominion over all unsaved people, by reason of which they are not spiritually free, but in bondage to sin and Satan, who tyrannizes over their lives and afflicts them both in soul and in body. Satan's activities are strictly limited by God, however. The believer in Christ, while he may be influenced or tempted by Satan, is no longer a slave of Satan, for he has been liberated by the Son of God (John 8:34-36).

9. What truth is implied by the statement that sinners are "justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come"?

This statement implies the truth that sin involves guilt, for it renders the sinner liable to penalties. Therefore sin is not a mere misfortune or calamity which would call forth the pity of God; nor is it a mere disease which needs to be cured; nor is it a mere moral pollution which needs to be cleansed; it is guilt which deserves punishment and which needs to be forgiven.

10. What is the modern "liberal" attitude toward the doctrines stated in this question of the Catechism?

The modern "liberal" theology denies every one of the truths set forth in the answer to Question 27. (a) Modern "liberalism" teaches that all men are children of God by nature, and therefore anyone can have communion with God by simply realizing that he is already a child of God. (b) "Liberalism" speaks only of the love of God, and objects to the ideas of his displeasure and curse. (c) "Liberalism" follows Pelagius and denies that we are born with a nature that is the object of divine wrath because of its sinfulness. (d) "Liberalism" does not believe in a personal devil, and therefore cannot accept the idea that we are bond slaves to Satan. (e) "Liberalism" defines sin in human or social terms, and therefore rejects the doctrine that sin is guilt before God which deserves divine punishment.

LESSON 13

Q. 28. What are the punishments of sin in this world?

A. The punishments of sin in this world are either inward, as blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections; or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sakes, and all other evils that befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations, and employments, together with death itself.

Scripture References:

Ephesians 4:18. Blindness of heart and mind as a punishment for sin.

Romans 1:28. A reprobate mind a punishment for sin.

2 Thessalonians 2:11. Strong delusions sent by God as punishment for sin.

Romans 2:5. Hardness and an impenitent heart.

Isaiah 33:14. Genesis 4:13. Matthew 27:4. Horrors of conscience one of God's ways of punishing sin.

Romans 1:26. Sinners punished by being given over to vile passions.

Genesis 3:17. God's curse upon the world of nature a penalty for human sin.

Deuteronomy 28: 11-68. All calamities, sufferings and evils are punishments for sin.

Romans 6:21, 23. Death itself is the wages, or penalty, of sin.

Questions:

1. What is the spiritual state of the unsaved person?

A state of spiritual deadness which the Catechism calls "blindness of mind".

2. Is the unsaved person responsible for his own blindness of mind?

Yes, for this blindness is itself a punishment for previous sin.

3. What is the meaning of the expression "a reprobate sense"?

This expression implies a full and willing abandonment to sin, with little or no restraint.

4. What is meant by "strong delusions"?

This expression means a firm, confident belief in something which is itself false. For example, the confident faith of the modern world

in the evolutionary theory of the origin of the human race is a strong delusion; the Nazi belief that the Germans are a "super-race" superior by nature to all other races of men was a strong delusion.

5. How can it be right for God to send people "strong delusions", as Thess. 2:11 affirms that he does?

(a) The Bible often speaks of God doing what he actually permits to happen; for example, God withheld the influences of his grace from Pharaoh; the result was that Pharaoh's heart, following its natural inclination, became harder and harder; then in the Scripture it was said that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. If God leaves people to their own ways they will choose lies rather than the truth; in this sense it can be said that God sends them "strong delusions". James 1: 13, 14 teaches that God does not himself tempt any man to sin, but he does permit people to be tempted and enticed by their own lusts. (b) God does not send "strong delusions" to deceive innocent or righteous people such as Adam and Eve were before the fall, but only to deceive those who have already corrupted themselves by choosing to sin. All through the Bible God is seen to punish sin by abandoning the sinner to his sin, which always results in even greater and worse sin.

6. What is meant by "hardness of heart"?

This means a condition of moral and spiritual indifference, so that the conscience is no longer sensitive and active, and the person is not affected by calls to repentance nor by the invitations of the gospel. The person who has committed the sin against the Holy Spirit is given over to the most extreme form of hardness of heart.

7. Give some Bible example of people who were given over to "hardness of heart".

(a) Pharaoh. Exodus 14:4, etc. (b) King Saul, I Samuel 16:14, etc. (c) Judas Iscariot. John 13: 26, 27.

8. What is the meaning of "horror of conscience"?

The Bible teaches that there is such a thing as hardened sinners becoming greatly afraid of the punishments of sin, even though they are quite complacent about the sinfulness of sin. The fact that they have offended against God does not trouble them, but they are terrified at God's judgments which they know will overtake them. There are accounts of famous infidels being filled with terrors and fear of hell while on their deathbeds.

9. How does Paul in Romans 1:28 explain the presence of vile and gross sins in the world?

These "vile affections" are the result of God abandoning people to their own sinful nature and tendencies, as a punishment for their not "liking to retain God in their knowledge."

10. How should we look upon the present condition of the world of nature?

The whole world of nature is under a curse of God, as we learn from Genesis 3:17-19 as well as other places in Scripture. Floods, dust storms, calamities of all kinds, as well as bad climates, extremes of weather, thorns and thistles, are all part of this curse. We should realize that the world as created by God was quite different from the world as we know it today. We live in an abnormal world, in the wreckage of a world that has been devastated and cursed by sin. Apart from the testimony of the Bible that the world as God made it was "all very good" (Genesis 1:31), modern scientific investigation has proved that there once was a warm climate in northern Alaska and other far northern regions. Fossils of palm leaves and other tropical vegetation have been found in the rocks of the frozen north.

11. In what sense is the curse upon the world of nature a punishment for sin?

In the case of unsaved sinners, the curse upon nature is strictly and simply a punishment for sin. In the case of Christian people, the curse upon nature is not strictly a penalty for sin, for they have been delivered from that by Christ's atonement. Rather, in the case of Christian people, the curse upon nature is to be regarded as a consequence of sin and a part of God's fatherly chastening or discipline by which he prepares us for the life eternal.

12. In what sense is physical death itself a punishment for sin?

Death is called "the wages of sin" (Romans 6:23). Wages means "that which we have earned" or "what we deserve". In the case of the unsaved person, death is simply the wages of sin, a judicial penalty. In the case of the Christian, Christ has already suffered death as his substitute. The Christian still has to die, of course, but in the case of the Christian, death is no longer a penalty. It remains an enemy, but it is not a judicial penalty. Rather, to the Christian death is a change by which God transfers him to the region and the condition of perfect holiness. Thus physical death, to the Christian, is part of God's fatherly discipline. It proceeds not from God's wrath, but from his love, in the case of the Christian.

LESSON 14

Q. 29. What are the punishments of sin in the world to come?

A. The punishments of sin in the world to come, are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body without intermission, in hell-fire forever.

Scripture References:

2 Thess. 1:9. Everlasting separation from the presence of God.

Mark 9:44-48. Grievous torments in soul and body.

Luke 16:24. The torment of hell-fire.

Revelation 14:9-12. The torments of hell without intermission.

Matthew 5:29, 30. Hell involves bodily suffering.

Matthew 25:41, 46. The punishment of hell equally eternal with the bliss of heaven.

Questions:

1. What three heresies deny the doctrine of eternal punishment for sin?

(a) **Annihilationism**, which teaches that in the case of the unsaved death ends their existence, or else that after suffering a certain duration of

punishment for sin they will be annihilated and cease to exist.

(b) **Universalism**, which teaches that all human souls will finally be saved.

(c) **Restorationism**, which teaches that after death the wicked will have a "second chance" to accept salvation, and thus will be saved.

2. How can we answer those who say that the word "eternal" in the New Testament means "age-long", and therefore eternal punishment does not really mean for ever?

Matthew 25:46 is a text which cannot be explained away. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal". In the Greek of this verse, everlasting and eternal are exactly the same word. Therefore if the punishment of hell is not really forever, then neither will the blessedness of heaven be forever. The same Greek adjective is used to describe one as the other. It is unfortunate that the King James Version uses two different words, "everlasting" and "eternal". The Revised Version translates this verse as follows: "And these shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

3. What is the main punishment of sin in the world to come?

Beyond question the main or chief punishment

of sin in the world to come is "everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God". The presence of God is what will make heaven a place of blessedness, and separation from God is what will make hell a place of woe.

4. What parable told by Christ proves that memory of life on earth will continue to exist in hell?

The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31, especially verse 25, "But Abraham said, Son remember, that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

5. How can it be proved from Scripture that the punishments of hell include the body as well as the soul?

Matthew 5:29, 30, "It is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." Revelation 20:13-15, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it . . . and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (The dead in the sea must mean men's bodies, not their souls). Matthew 10: 28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

6. How can we answer the argument that God is too good and loving to send any of his creatures to hell?

How do we know whether God is good and loving or not? The only way we know about God's goodness and his love is from his written Word, the Holy Bible. But according to the Bible, love is only one among God's attributes. God is love, but it does not follow that God is nothing but love. The Bible teaches that God is also a God of absolute justice. It is God's attribute of absolute justice that finds expression in the eternal punishment of sinners.

7. How should we answer the person who says that the doctrine of hell is contrary to "the spirit of Christ"?

We have no right to define "the spirit of Christ" according to our own imaginations, ideas or preferences. The only way we can know anything about the teachings of Jesus Christ is from his sayings which are recorded in the New Testament. It has been observed that there is more about hell in the teachings of Jesus than in all the rest of the Bible taken together. The person who claims that "the spirit of Christ" is contrary to the doctrine of hell does not want to take all of the teachings of Christ as his standard (far less is he willing to take the whole Word of God as his guide); he wants to pick and choose among Christ's sayings, taking what appeals to him and omitting the rest. The result of this process is that Christ's teaching is warped and twisted to fit a person's own ideas and prejudices.

8. What feature do many false religions of the present day have in common?

The doctrine that there is no hell. There is nothing Satan would rather have men believe than this doctrine that there is no hell.

9. Is it a mistake to urge the fear of hell on people as a motive for believing on Christ as their Saviour?

Certainly fear of hell is not the only motive, nor the highest motive for being a Christian. But the Bible does present this motive over and over again, especially in the teachings of Jesus Christ himself. We conclude that this motive has its place. It is true that we read in I John 4:18, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment; he that feareth is not made perfect in love". But there is a stage in a person's Christian experience where the motive of fear has its place, and this motive may be used by the Holy Spirit to drive an unsaved person to Christ.

The End.

The Puritan Principle of Worship

By the Rev. William Young, B. Litt., Th. D.

(Continued from preceding issue)

Perkins: *A Warning against the Idolatrie of the last times and An instruction touching Religious or Divine Worship*, 1608.

"The 2nd way of erecting an Idoll is, when God is worshipped otherwise, and by other meanes, then he hath revealed in the Word. For when men set up a devised worship, they set up also a devised God. Augustine saith of the Gentiles, that they refused to worship the God of the Hebrewes, Because if their pleasures were to wor-

ship him in any other sort then he had appointed they should not indeed worship him, but that which they had faigned. Aug. *de consensu Evang.* lib. 1 C. 18. *Si alio modo Deum colere vellent quam se colendum ipse dixisset, non utique illum colerent, sed quod ipsi finxissent.* The Samaritans worshipped the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob: and they waited for the coming of the Messias: and yet Christ saith of them, Ye worship ye know not what, John 4:22: because they worshipped the

true God by a worship devised of old, and set up by men. The Lord saith to the Israelites, ye shall call me no more Baali, whereby he signifieth, that because the Jewes did some time worshipping God in the same manner with the same images, rites, and names whereby the heathen worshipped the false God Baal, therefore they made him indeed to be even as the Idol Baal. . . . God's worship must be according to his Nature, heavenly, divine, and spirituall; but all devised worship is according to the nature and disposition of the deviser, foolish, carnal, vaine, as Christ saith, Matt. 15:9. And according to this worship is the God that is worshipped. Therefore, when God is worshipped, not according to his owne will, but according to the pleasure and will of man, the true God is not worshipped, but a God of man's invention is set up. One notable example we have in this kind, When God is either represented or worshipped in any Image of mans devising, there is presently made a double Idoll, the one is the Image representing: the other is GOD represented, who is by this means turned into an Idoll.

"The 2d point, is the rule of worship: and that is, that nothing may goe under the name of the worship of God, which he hath not ordained in his owne word, and commanded to us as his owne worship. For we are forbidden under paine of the curse of God, either to adde, or to take away anything from the precepts of God in which he prescribes his owne worship. . . . Again, the Lord forbids us in his worship to follow after our owne hearts and eies, or to walk in the ordinance of our forefathers, but only in his commandments. And he holds it a vaine thing, to teach his worship and feare by the precepts of men. . . . All voluntairie religion and will-service, is utterly condemned. Therefore nothing may goe under the name of God's worship, but that which he prescribes. It is alleadged to the contrarie, that when a worke is done without commandment, so there be an intention to honour God, it is the worship of God. I answer, it is false. For that any worke or action may be the worship of God, foure things are required; the person or doer must be regenerate: the matter of the worke must be a thing commanded; it must be done in faith; and then, in the intention of the minde, it must be directed to the honour of God. Secondly, the intention to honour God is not alwaies good, unlesse it be an intention to honour him by yeelding obedience to that which he commandeth. Againe, it is alleadged that a work done in love to God, though there be no commandment thereof, is the worship of God. I answer, that love keeps itselfe to the word, and will of God: and things done without a word from God are not of love. For love is the fulfilling of the law. Gal. 5:14."

English Puritanisme containening the maine opinions of the rigidest sort of those that are called Puritanes in the Realme of England. Acts

24: 14, 28:22 1605 (by W. Bradshaw, preface by Ames). "Chap I Concerning Religion or the Worship of God in generall.

"Imprimis, They hould and maintaine that the word of God contained in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, is of absolute perfection, given by Christ the head of the Church, to be unto the same, the sole Canon and rule of all matters of Religion, and the worship and service of God whatsoever. And that whatsoever done in the same service and worship cannot bee justified by the said word, is unlawfull. And therefore that it is a sinne to force any Christian to doe any act of religion or divine service, that cannot evidently be warranted by the same.

"2. They hould that all Ecclesiasticall actions invented and devised by man, are utterlie to be excluded out of the exercises of religion? Especially such actions as are famous and notorious mysteries of an Idolatrous Religion, and in doing whereof, the true religion is conformed (whether in whol or in part) to Idolatrie and superstition.

"3. They hould that all outward means instituted and set apart to expresse and set forth the Inward worship of God, are parts of divine worship and that not only all morall actions but all typical rites and figures ordained to shadowe forth in the solemne worship and service of God, any spirituall or religious act or habit in the minde of man, are speciall parts of the same. And therefore that every such act ought evidently to be prescribed by the word of God, or else ought not to be done? it being a sinne to performe any other worship to God, whether Externall or Internall, Morall or Ceremoniall, in wholl or in part, then that which God himselfe requires in his word.

"4. They hould it to be grosse superstition, for any mortall man to institute and ordaine as parts of divine worship, any mysticall rite and Ceremonie of Religion whatsoever and to mingle the same with the divine rites and mysteries of God's Ordinance. But they hould it to be high presumption to institute and bring into divine worship such rites and Ceremonies of Religion as are acknowledged to be no partes of divine worship at all but only of civill worship: and honor: For they that shall require to have performed unto themselves a ceremonial obedience of service and worship, consisting in rites of Religion to be done at that very instant that God is solemnly served and worshipped? and even in that same worship make both themselves and God also an Idol; so that they judge it a far more fearful sin to add unto, and to use in the worship and service of God, or any part thereof, such mystical Rites and Ceremonies as they esteem to be no parts or parcells of God's worship at all, than such as in a vaine or ignorant superstition, they imagine and conceive to be parts thereof."

Notes on the Regulative Principle of Worship

1. Commandment in the narrow sense is not required. What God reveals to be acceptable to Him is warranted, even though it is not commanded so as to be binding on all. So Perkins in answer to the objection "that vowes in the O. T. were a part of the worship of God, and that they were not commanded.": "Though God did not bind all men by a commandment to make vowes; yet hath he testified in his word, that vowes were acceptable to him: for he prescribed the matter of vowes, and the manner of making, and the keeping of them." Works I, 684.

2. A particular commandment is not required if a general one has been given and the particular is an instance of it. "It is urged, that Marie who annointed Christ, had no commaundment so to doe, and yet she did a worke acceptable to Christ. I answer, though she had no particular commaundment yet had she a generall. For the worke she did, was a confession of her faith and love to Christ, and that is commanded." Ibid.

3. The content of worship does not belong to the *adiaphora* ("things indifferent" — Ed.). Perkins considers the case of Paul preaching the Gospel freely, and looking for his reward from God, for which he had no commandment. "I answer, to take a stipend for preaching the Gospell, is in itselfe a thing indifferent, and may be done or not done. Yet was it not a thing indifferent in the Church of Corinth, by reason of the offence of many. And therefore Paul preached freely: and he could doe no otherwise, unlesse he would have abused (as he saith) his authority. For a thing indifferient in the case of skandall, ceaseth to be indifferent, and is a thing commanded."

4. The prescribing of worship does not belong to ministerial authority. Luke 10:16 is adduced.

"I answer, first the place is properly to be understood, not of all teachers, but of the Apostles. Secondly, if it be spoken of all teachers the words may be understood with limitation. And this to the Ministerial Commission, Teach them to observe all things which I have commanded you." "Thus the truth of this rule is manifest; and we must lay it up in our hearts as a treasure, and never suffer ourselves to be deprived of it; for the use of it is great. By it we may discerne the prophaneness of our times. All men can say, God must be worshipped: but when it comes to the point, what is the worship wherewith they honour God? Surely, what they list themselves. Some worship God with their good meaning; some with their good dealing; some with the babling of a few words, as namely, of the Apostles Creed, and ten Commandements for prayers. This service of God is very common; but alas, it is poore service. For the rule of divine honour is not the will of him that honour-eth, but the will of him which is honoured. Secondly, here we learn to detest the service and worship which is performed to God in the church of Rome. For it containes many parts and points of will-worship, having no warrant from God, either by commaundment or promise. . . . For these and many other practices, let them bring forth the Word of God, if they can. They pleade for many things: that they have the word of Traditions. I answer, that Traditions Ecclesiastical are no word of God; but the word of man. And traditions which are called Apostolicall, are either of no moment or doubtfull. For how shall we know certainly, that they were the traditions of the Apostles, considering none hath said so, but some of the Fathers, whose testimonies are not sufficient, because they are subject to error?"

(To be concluded)

Reviews of Religious Books

The favorable reviewing of a book here is not to be understood as necessarily implying an endorsement of everything contained in it. Within the editorial policy of Blue Banner Faith and Life each reviewer is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in his reviews. Please purchase books from your book dealer or direct from the publishers; do not send orders for books to the manager of this magazine.

PICTURES OF APOSTOLIC CHURCH, by William M. Ramsay. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1959 (Reprinted from the 1910 edition by Hodder and Stoughton, London), pp. 367. \$3.50.

This book is a series of word pictures of life in the New Testament church as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. Since this book originally was written as many separate lessons for

the International Sunday School Lessons, it is not a comprehensive commentary of the book of Acts. Rather it deals primarily with those incidents that were assigned to the author and briefly mentions the intervening incidents.

The author includes a wealth of outside descriptive information to color his word pictures of the New Testament church in action. This information has been gleaned from Roman and Jewish history and greatly enhances the accounts for the

average reader who would not have this additional store of facts.

One of the author's purposes which is evident throughout his pictures is to establish Luke's source of knowledge for the incidents he records in the Acts of the Apostles. These informants are usually established by process of logical deduction and make Luke's accounts more interesting. The author paints his word pictures from the viewpoint that the inspiration of the Scriptures came through the Holy Spirit leading Luke to the right informants and to recording from them only that which was true.

This book provides excellent background for any person attempting to teach the book of Acts as it will add color and life to his teaching material.

—Glenn McFarland

THE PRAYING CHRIST, by James G. S. S. Thomson. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 155. \$3.00.

The sub-title of this book is "Jesus' Doctrine and Practice of Prayer." This is a book from which every Christian would reap great profit for his own prayer life. The reader is given a close up of Christ's prayer life both in public and private. Not only are the contents of the prayers noted but the circumstances that brought forth the instances of prayer are given. Thus we are led to see Christ as one who depended upon this union with the Father both for personal strengthening and for the carrying out of His ministry here upon the earth. The author seeks to apply these experiences from the intimate prayer life of our Lord to the lives of Christians today.

Although this book does not emphasize general phases of prayer, it is still a valuable reference work for pastors and layman because it is a study of our Lord who had a perfect prayer life and is our perfect example. Any sermon or lecture on prayer would not be complete without some reference to the Saviour's prayer life which this book emphasizes from an evangelical viewpoint.

This book also convicts the reader of his poor habits in prayer and challenges him to follow the Saviour's lead in prayer. Few books on prayer offer the challenge to the Christian's prayer life which this one does.

— Glenn McFarland

FROM EDEN TO ETERNITY, by Howard A. Hanke. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1960, pp. 196, \$3.50.

The author of this book is Professor of Religion at Asbury College. His thesis is that there is the same true religion revealed throughout the Bible, throughout the history and future of man: from Eden to eternity. He discusses this by periods of Bible history: before the flood; from the

flood to Abraham; in the Hebrew nation; and, through several chapters, in the period of Jesus and the Apostles. One of the important chapters is called, "The Beginnings of Christianity," which was not at Bethlehem nor Calvary, but Eden. Christ founded the Christian religion in the beginning; but He did not found it during His humiliation in Palestine.

This book defines Christians as the true Jews. Not Christians, but those who rejected Christ, were apostates from the religion of the Old Testament; for the Jewish religion was Christian. The author makes his point convincingly.

He shows that since Christ has always been, it is somewhat misleading to refer to B.C. and A.D. as though there was a time that Christ began to be. An important statement is, "It is Christ, and not His coming, which forms the great central idea of religion."

Here is correction for some common misconceptions. True Judaism is not to be identified with the present day false Judaism, which is without a Messiah. The religion of the Jews was good, and the law is perfect, converting the soul, because the law is Christian. The Gospel is proclaimed in the Old Testament as well as the New, for the world to believe and be saved.

— T. R. Hutcheson

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT, ITS CRITICS AND THE BIBLE, by George M. Bowman, the Guidance Press, Box 151, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, 1960, pp. 30. 40 cents per copy; over 25 copies, 20 cents per copy.

The author of this booklet is a layman, a financial consultant by profession, but also an able writer, being the president of the Christian Writers Association of Canada.

His concern is that capital punishment should not be abolished in Canada.

The author shows the absurdity of the argument that capital punishment violates the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." He regards the deterrent effect of capital punishment as beside the point. "Capital punishment is a moral law of God for the good of all society."

What about those sad cases where an innocent man is condemned? "It is better (Mr. Bowman believes) to lay a charge of manslaughter where there is large doubt as to the man's guilt of murder. The Bible seems to lean toward a lesser punishment than the death penalty when proof of murder is not thoroughly established. I agree with that."

The author quotes with approval Charles Simmons, an American clergyman of the nineteenth century: "Wickedness, when properly punished, is disgraceful only to the offender; unpunished, it is disgraceful to the whole community."

The last section is devoted to proving that capital punishment is not only taught but commanded in the New Testament as well as in the Old.

Mr. Bowman is writing on a live subject. His booklet would be profitable as a study guide in your Adult Group on Sabbath evenings.

— Robert McMillan

THE THEOLOGY OF THE MAJOR SECTS, by John H. Gerstner. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 1960, pp. 206. \$3.95.

The writer is Professor of Church History and Government at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (United Presbyterian). In this book he has furnished an excellent reference work for those wanting to study the more common sects that deviate from historic Christianity. The discussions do not cover the entire field, but are limited to the cults most often encountered in this country, namely: Seventh Day Adventism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Liberalism, New Thought, Spiritualism, Theosophy, and Faith Healing.

The chapters are concise, yet they are packed with usable information. As an example, in the discussion of Seventh Day Adventism, not only does the writer set forth the tenets and many of the good points of the Seventh Day Adventists, but he goes on to furnish a wealth of information showing the change of the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week, as provided by the New Testament and also by the history of the early Church.

One somewhat astonishing statement is found on page 24: "The Hebrew word for 'Sabbath' means 'seventh' and not 'Saturday.' Evidently two different Hebrew words have been confused. Actually the Hebrew word for Sabbath ("Shabath" in the Hebrew) means neither "seventh" nor "Saturday." The Hebrew word for Sabbath means "rest." The Hebrew word for "seventh" is "Shabaya" which is something quite different from "Shabath." Having pointed out this one misdealing with Moses' Hebrew, it should be stated that, by and large, the discussions are informative and helpful. Dr. Gerstner does his work with the thoroughness of a scholar.

The chapter on Faith Healing provides excellent and fresh material for the study of this present-day movement. While dealing with such "faith healers" as Kathryn Kuhlman, Oral Roberts, A. A. Allen, etc., the writer also discusses the place that genuine faith and prayer can have in recovery from illness.

The closing part of the book is made up of charts and tables comparing the doctrines of historic Christianity with the doctrines of the cults under discussion. The book concludes with a glossary of terms.

This book is recommended to serious students of present day cults.

—G. M. Robb.

FROM PAGAN TO CHRISTIAN, by Lin Yutang, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland 2, Ohio, 1959, pp. 251. \$3.50.

Dr. Lin Yutang was born in a Christian family, the third son of a Presbyterian minister in Fukien Province of China in 1895. Graduating from St. John's College in 1916, he studied at Harvard in the United States and Jena in Germany during the years that followed, receiving his doctorate from Leipzig in 1923.

Dr. Lin Yutang is well known in the United States as well as in China for his contribution to the world of literature and philosophy. Lin is the author of 27 books, all in English and most of them are best-sellers, such as *My Country and My People*, *The Wisdom of China and India*, etc. Twenty-three years ago Dr. Lin wrote a book entitled *The Importance of Living*. In the last chapter of this book the author described why he was a pagan. In the present volume the distinguished writer tells the story of his spiritual development since that time. After he joined the church most of the church people thought that Dr. Lin has really returned to the Christian religion which his father proclaimed when he was a baby.

This book contains eight chapters: 1. Childhood; 2. The Grand Detour Begins; 3. The Mansion of Confucius; 4. The Peak of Mount Tao; 5. The Dissolving Mist of Buddhism; 6. Reason in Religion; 7. The Challenge of Materialism and 8. The Majesty of Light. It is to this particular chapter our attention is directed.

In the preface of the book Dr. Lin criticized that many people found their religion too easy. "For religion is, first and last, an individual facing up to the astounding heavens, a matter between him and God. It is a matter of individual growth from within and cannot be 'given' by anybody." (p. 14). He declared that he wrote the book mainly for those who do not know where they are going in religious search. The subject of the whole book can be summarized in the first two sentences of the preface: "This is a record of one man's experience in his quest for religion. It is a record of his adventure in belief, his doubts and perplexities, his encounters with different philosophers and religions of the world, and his explorations of the best that has been said and thought and taught by the sages of the past" (p. 13).

From reading of Dr. Lin's this latest book and according to the reviewer's point of view he still remains in the darkness so far as his spiritual condition goes. Almost all of the Christian cardinal doctrines are kept out of Dr. Lin's thinking. Lin is bitterly against theology. He put

his emphasis on Christian living. He said, "What prevented me from knowing Jesus is exactly these doctrinaire busybodies, that their confusion of creeds and dogmas kept me away from Christianity for thirty years, and that their five-and-ten theology prevented me from seeing Jesus." (p. 231) Dr. Lin neglected the truth that doctrine is the very basis of Christian living. No structure can stand long without foundation.

It is rather strange to say that a man can call himself a Christian and yet he does not like the word "sinner." Dr. Lin is exactly this type of "Christian." "Sin is almost essential to ministers as disease and death are to doctors. Jesus never mentioned sin but to forgive it. I don't seem to remember that He ever damned even Judas Iscariot. Judas was actually forgiven from the cross." (p. 237) It is an awful thing for a layman like Dr. Lin to deal with Biblical doctrine in this manner.

Dr. Lin Yutang is a bitter enemy of Calvinism. He does not believe in Total Depravity. "Why does no theologian discover an 'original conscience' and allow Calvin to run away with his 'total depravity'? . . . If the kingdom of God is within you, how can depravity be 'Total'? (I must say here that the Presbyterian Church is greater than Calvin. I believe in Jesus against Calvin)" (p. 175). Lin declares that Calvinism has been terribly unkind to God and man. The reason why this famous author is so bitterly against sin and total depravity is because he wants to enter heaven by his own righteousness.

Dr. Lin's view on the doctrine of Atonement is extremely liberal. Fruit-bearing, personal deeds are recognized as the essential to salvation. "It seems to me that Christian theology is largely responsible for shifting the emphasis of Christ on 'bearing fruit' and doing his commandments to some easy-to-take, near magical formula for salvation which does not require moral effort on the part of the individual . . . The working of the doctrine of Atonement appears to be automatic and foolproof; that is what the priests wanted their congregation to believe. Jesus taught otherwise. Jesus makes salvation or forgiveness conditional upon 'bearing fruit' and doing his commandments" (pp. 235, 236). Dr. Lin followed the good example of the rich young ruler who asked the question: "What good deed shall I do to possess eternal life?"

As a member of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York City (of which Dr. David Read is the minister) Dr. Lin has pleasure in going. To him to go to church is to be near the true spirit of Jesus Christ. "I believe there are churches in New York and elsewhere it is still possible for a modern, educated man to go and worship and come out renewed because of the fresh contacts, feeling a better man for it, instead of more like a doomed sinner escaping

damnation by Someone's efforts . . . Isn't the peculiarity of Christ that He made one feel a better and worthier person instead of a sinner in His presence?" (p. 238). Dr. Lin has committed a gross blunder. Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Dr. Lin was made furious by the doctrine of Original Sin. He thought the Christian concept of Original Sin is too mystical. "Very often Christians make original sin into a myth, wrapped up into a 'package' of salvation for the buyer to take or leave . . . And nothing makes me more furious than the belief that a new born babe with big innocent eyes is going to be sent to Hell by a Christian God which is all love" (p. 173).

The knowledge of the noted scholar is too deep which prevents him from accepting the revealed truth of God and the fact of the lost condition of men in their first parents. Jeremiah has well said that the heart is deceitful above all things and utterly corrupt; who can know it? It was David, the great king and Psalmist, who declared: "Behold, in sinful state I was born and in sin did my mother conceive me." It is the sincere desire of this reviewer that Dr. Lin should study more of the Word of God prayerfully and ask God's Spirit to enlighten his mind to see his dangerous condition and accept Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour.

Calvinism, the Reformed Faith, is the only true form of Christian theology that the Bible knows. It has survived for more than a thousand years and it is still supported by many scholars in the Christian churches of the world today. It will do justice if we quote Dr. Loraine Boettner's words here to conclude this review: "This does not mean that we deprecate scholarship. Nowhere has the principle of sound scholarship and scientific investigation existed in a healthier state than in the loyal sons of the Evangelical churches." If Dr. Lin really considers himself a scholar and an educated man he should, by all means, study more concerning Calvinism.

—Charles H. Chao

A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MEN AND THINGS, by Gordon H. Clark. Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 255 Jefferson Ave., S. E., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1952, pp. 325. \$4.00. Paper-back reprint, 1960, \$2.45.

This work from the pen of the Professor of Philosophy at Butler University is an extended form of the Payton Lectures delivered at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1951. The author contrasts the Christian theistic view of the universe with the various philosophies which are now contending for the attention and loyalty of students. His title might suggest, at first sight, the monumental work of Dr. James Orr written in

the 1890's, "The Christian View of God and the World". It might be inferred that Dr. Clark has lowered his sights and is merely taking a broadside at humanism. But a careful examination of the method and treatment of the subject matter involved shows a frank recognition of the modern limitation placed on intellectual investigation. The systems of the modern philosophers are examined in the light of Christian theism.

The table of contents lists the following areas of investigation: "The Philosophy of History"; "The Philosophy of Politics"; "Ethics"; "Science"; "Religion"; and "Epistemology". Under each of these topics representative spokesman of modern thought are analyzed and the suggested theistic point of view presented in answer. The author summarizes the task that he has set for himself. "In the first place, although a theistic philosophy of systematic proportions has not been developed to meet contemporary needs, and in fact awaits a modern Augustine, some elements and implications of theism are available in several fields. . . In the second place, for the mass of naturalistic literature a picture may be drawn that will clarify theism by contrast. . . In the third place, nothing will be lost if the whole can be phrased in the elementary form of an introduction to philosophy" (p. 17).

The author's thesis developed in the chapter on "The Philosophy of Politics" is that "social stability demands a Christian Society." On page 143, paragraph 2, he writes: "The purpose of this chapter is to give evidence that Christian presuppositions justify civil governments of limited rights, whereas humanistic principles imply either anarchy or totalitarianism." This states the stark choice faced by the world as underlined by the events which have occurred since this book was first published in 1952. The paper-back edition will undoubtedly gain a wider reading audience for this timely book.

— S. Bruce Willson

THE NEW TESTAMENT DOCUMENTS: ARE THEY RELIABLE? by F. F. Bruce. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan. 1960, revised reprint of 1954, pp. 120, paper cover. \$1.25.

This volume by the scholarly Head of the Department of Biblical History and Literature in the University of Sheffield, England, provides a clear and accurate defence of the integrity and trustworthiness of the books of the New Testament. Though the author ranks high as a Biblical scholar, the book is not at all difficult to read. The author first takes up the question "Does it matter whether the New Testament documents are reliable or not?" and clearly shows that it does matter very much, for the truth of the Christian religion depends upon the answer to this question.

Next the author takes up the New Testament documents, and presents the evidence for their early date and genuineness. There is an informative chapter on the Canon of the New Testament, in which it is brought out that the books are not authoritative because included in the canon, but rather they were included in the canon because they were recognized as authoritative.

There is material on archaeological evidence, and on the evidence provided by early Jewish writings and by the early Gentile writers.

This is an excellent book for ministers, theological students, and especially for college and university students who are faced with confident and sweeping denials of the integrity and truthfulness of the New Testament. It should confirm and strengthen the faith of anyone troubled by doubts on this subject. The reviewer recommends it heartily.

— J. G. Vos

SHRINES OF GOD, by Kenneth Clinton. W. A. Wilde Company, 10 Huron Drive, Natick, Mass. 1960, pp. 127. \$2.00.

The author is pastor of the Hope Congregational Church in Springfield, Massachusetts. The twelve "Shrines of God" discussed are Nature, Man, the Family, Jesus, the Church, the Bible, Human Society, Prayer, Faith-Hope-Love, Suffering and the Cross of Christ, the Seven Last Words, Eternal Life.

This book cannot be recommended because it is basically unsound at the very heart of Christian truth — the doctrine of the vicarious or substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. The author regards the sacrificial system of the Old Testament as a human development rather than a divine institution. The great prophets are said to have been "against the whole sacrificial system" (p. 102). The substitutionary atonement of Christ is explained away, and the uniqueness of Christ's death on the cross is by implication denied. Jesus is said to have died "for goodness" (p. 103). The sacrificial system is declared to have beclouded the forgiving nature of God (p. 102). This typically liberal explaining away of the central truth of Christianity renders the book without value from the standpoint of evangelical faith.

The author has no notion of the awfulness of man's guilt and the holiness of God. He holds the typically liberal idea that a loving God cannot require an atonement before forgiving sinners. Where the substitutionary atonement is no longer believed and taught, all else becomes unimportant. This book, therefore, is tragically irrelevant because it is basically biased against the truth which is the heart of the Christian Gospel — the truth that Jesus Christ bore our sins in his own body on the cross, the just for the unjust, that we might be forgiven and saved.

— J. G. Vos

FAITH IS THE VICTORY, by E. M. Blaiklock. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 1959, pp. 64. \$2.00.

This exposition of John's first Epistle was presented originally as a series of Bible studies in the 1959 British Keswick meetings. Happily, these studies were put into book form, and will prove a valuable addition to the present expository literature on First John.

Dr. Blaiklock is qualified to write in this field. He is professor of classics in the University of Auckland, New Zealand. His approach is that of the conservative scholar who regards the Divine inspiration of the Bible as axiomatic, and goes on from there.

The writer prefaces his discussion of each section of First John with his own translation of the text; and his comments on the shades of meaning in the Greek, add immeasurably. He knows the words with which he is dealing.

However, there is no hint of any dry-as-dust flavor in the expositions. They are illuminated by fresh material from the field of archaeology, by pertinent illustrations from history and from the classics, and by pungent applications of John's first Epistle to the situations that confront Christians in this present period. The writer makes it plain that twentieth century Christians, like first century Christians, must endure "violence, slander, and ridicule."

Especially clear and helpful are the explanations of such controverted passages as: the assertion that "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar" (1:10) followed by the command to "sin not" (2:1); "the spirit of anti-christ (2:18); and the "sin unto death" (5:16).

In the short compass of 64 pages Dr. Blaiklock accomplishes much in acquainting his readers with first John.

— G. M. Robb

BAKER'S DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY, edited by Everett F. Harrison, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Carl F. H. Henry. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. 1960, pp. 566. \$8.95.

This Dictionary of Theology is the work of 138 scholars, many of whom are widely known as defenders of historic orthodox Christianity. Among the contributors who will be known to many readers of this magazine, the following may be mentioned: Oswald T. Allis, Loraine Boettner, Frederick F. Bruce, Joseph P. Free, John H. Gerstner, Carl F. H. Henry, John Murray, Charles F. Pfeiffer, W. Stanford Reid, William Childs Robinson, John H. Skilton, Wilbur M. Smith, Cornelius Van Til, Paul Woolley, J. Stafford Wright, Edward J. Young.

Books of this kind often disappoint the careful student because of unsatisfactory viewpoint or lack of precision in statement. The present work,

however, is not disappointing. The viewpoint is orthodox, and the material commends itself as the work of scholars thoroughly competent in their respective fields and as consistently accurate and precise in definition and statement. To spend an evening with this book is to sharpen one's mind in its grasp of Biblical and theological ideas. Its principal use, naturally, will be as a book for ready reference. It will prove itself a valuable tool in the hands of ministers, students and, indeed, intelligent laymen of ordinary education.

It is not to be expected that a reviewer or reader will agree with everything in such a large book produced by so many men. However, this reviewer found the material, in general, highly acceptable. The paper and print are good and the binding is attractive.

Attention may be called to a few doubtful statements. On page 39 it is stated that the French theologian Moses Amyraut was "a staunch defender of the Calvinist articles of the Synod of Dort." The Synod of Dort (1618-19), however, affirmed belief in the limited or particular atonement, whereas Amyraut advocated a form of universal atonement. On pages 203-4 it is stated that: "Archaeology shows that creatures which were anatomically man-like existed 100,000 years ago — perhaps earlier. The Bible dates man at, probably, 5-10,000 B.C. . . ." Here "archaeology" should perhaps be "paleontology", and it seems hazardous to affirm, even "probably", that the Bible "dates man." We also question the statement about 100,000 years.

On page 147 it is stated that "traducianism is associated especially with the Roman Church", whereas on page 527 we read that "Roman Catholics and most Reformed theologians are creationists". The matter concerns the various views held concerning the origin of the human soul. Obviously both statements about Roman Catholic teaching cannot be correct.

In the discussion of "Freedom, Free Will" on pages 229-30, it seems to the reviewer that free will is inadequately treated, for while the statements about man's will being in bondage to sin are true, no distinction is made between moral freedom and psychological freedom of the will. In the reviewer's opinion it should have been clearly brought out that though man is in bondage to sin, still he is a free agent and his acts are his own acts for which he is responsible because they are produced by his own personality without external constraint.

On page 70 the article of Assurance seems to confuse the **grounds of assurance** with the **grounds of salvation**. The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter XVIII, impresses the reviewer as a better statement of the grounds of assurance.

It was a disappointment to find no article on Sacerdotalism.

The defects which have been mentioned, and others like them, are minor, are far outweighed by the wealth of valuable, accurate, informative material in this excellent production. It is heartily recommended to our readers. This book would make an excellent gift for any person or church organization to give to their pastor. It would also be an excellent gift to college, university and seminary students.

— J. G. Vos

FIVE ENGLISH REFORMERS, by J. C. Ryle. The Banner and Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W.1, England. 1960, pp. 160, pocket size, paper cover. 2 shillings sixpence.

FIVE CHRISTIAN LEADERS OF THE 18TH CENTURY, by J. C. Ryle. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W.1, England. 1960, pp. 192, pocket size, paper cover. 2 shillings sixpence.

John Charles Ryle (1816-1900) was a prominent evangelical leader in the Church of England. In 1880 he became the first Bishop of Liverpool, where he continued until shortly before his death in 1900. Ryle was a very learned man and extremely influential. His writings exhibit a quality of honest, outspoken frankness while at the same time they seek earnestly to win the reader to acceptance of the truth.

The two volumes under review are paperback reprints of some of Ryle's biographical writings. They are attractively printed with colored pictures on the front covers and a brief sketch of the life of the author on the back cover. The price of each book is equivalent to 35c. Persons in the United States and Canada ordering these books should add a few cents for overseas postage. Money can be sent by ordinary personal bank check or by international postal money order.

The five English Reformers are John Hooper, Rowland Taylor, Hugh Latimer, John Bradford and Nicholas Ridley. These men were valiant for the truth in the Reformation in the sixteenth century in England. The study of the lives of these Reformers is preceded by a discussion of "Why were our Reformers burned?"

The five Christian leaders of the 18th century are William Grimshaw, William Romaine, Daniel Rowlands, John Berridge and Henry Venn. These are less well known than the sixteenth century Reformers but their lives are well worth study. This book also discusses the religious and moral condition of England at the beginning of the 18th century, and demonstrates that the preaching of the Gospel was the chief instrumentality by which real Christianity was revived in that century.

One reason the Church is weak today is lack of knowledge of its past history. Conflicts fought and won long ago have to be fought and won all over again. Revival of loyalty to truth necessarily involves renewed concern about the past exper-

iences and conflicts of the covenant people of God on earth. These little books are a valuable contribution to that end. Ryle's writing is always forceful, interesting and readable. These books would be a fine addition to any church or Sabbath School library.

—J. G. Vos

THE CHILDREN'S 'KING JAMES' BIBLE (NEW TESTAMENT), prepared by Jay Green and 'Peter' Palmer, illustrated by Manning De V. Lee. Modern Bible Translations, Inc., 1124 S.E. First Street, Evansville, Indiana. 1960, pp. 688 plus 16. \$6.95.

This book presents the entire New Testament translated in language that can be understood by children in the fourth grade. The term "King James" is included in the title, we are informed, for three reasons: (1) It is intended to be "the same type of translation" that the King James Version is. (2) It is based on the same Greek text (the so-called "textus receptus" or "received text") as the King James Version. (3) Hundreds of verses commonly memorized are in the exact words of the King James Version.

Interspersed between the chapters of the Biblical text are 100 Bible stories for children written by Mrs. Edwin H. Palmer. These are well done, eminently true to the Bible, and will prove interesting and attractive to children.

The book is illustrated by some 400 pictures, of which over half are in color. The pictures are of the type that is conventional in children's Bible story books and Sabbath School materials. They will prove attractive to children, but they are not really art and do not interpret personality and character in any penetrating manner. In connection with the pictures, there is one feature which is especially commendable: pictures purporting to represent Jesus Christ are completely absent. In the preface it is stated: "There are no pictures claiming to be the Lord Jesus in the Bible. First, the publisher feels it is a violation of the Second Commandment to produce a picture of Jesus. Second, it is impossible for the grandest artist to portray the loveliness and godliness of Jesus Christ. Third, no one knows how He looked, for God saw fit to deprive us of any likeness of our Lord. The many different pictures claiming to be Jesus are most confusing to children. Fourth, in all scenes where a picture of the Lord Jesus appears, the child does not learn much about what is going on — he only has his eyes on the figure which is said to be Jesus. You will find that in the pictures in this children's Bible the child for the first time really gets an idea of what went on in the life of Jesus." This is well said, and we are glad that someone has the courage to go against the overwhelming trend of our time in this matter of attempted portrayal of our Lord's person.

Throughout the Biblical material, words supplied in the translation (not based on actual words

in the Greek, but required to give the meaning in English) are printed in italics. This should be called to the attention of children who are given this book to read, lest they assume that the use of italics means that certain words are to be emphasized.

At the end of the volume there is a glossary of difficult terms with simple definitions or explanations. The pronunciation of the terms is also indicated.

This reviewer is not in agreement with the view that the Greek text from which the King James Version was made three and one-half centuries ago is the most accurate Greek text of the New Testament, or the text closest to the New Testament autographs as originally written by the

inspired writers. See **Blue Banner Question Box**, July-September, 1958, pages 139-141; also April-June, 1959 issue, pages 115-117. The reviewer believes that it is our duty, in deciding what is the genuine text of the Greek New Testament, to avail ourselves of all of the existing evidence, including those manuscripts that have been discovered since the King James Version was made.

We commend Mr. Green and Mrs. Palmer for an excellent production, and hope that it may have a large circulation and may prove a blessing to many. The printing is by the offset process and the type clear and readable. This book should prove usable for daily Bible readings in public school classrooms in states which allow or require such reading.

— J. G. Vos

Back Issues Available

From time to time orders have been received for back issues of this magazine which could not be filled because the supply was exhausted. **Blue Banner Faith and Life** began publication in 1946, and for two or three years only 700 copies of each issue were printed. Later this was changed to 1,000 copies and still later to 1,200 copies, which is the number printed now. It was impossible to provide copies of the earlier issues of the magazine.

During recent months, in response to an advertisement published in **The Covenanter Witness**, a considerable supply of used copies of issues of the magazine for all years from 1946 to the present has been obtained. Some of these are in practically new condition, while others show signs of more or less use, while a few are in rather poor condition with markings, some ink blots, and the like. Most, however, are in good usable condition even though not as clean as absolutely new copies. In the case of some issues, good supplies of absolutely new copies are on hand.

All of these back issues, both new and used, have been sorted out and prepared for mailing to customers. Complete sets of all years from 1946 to 1960 are available at \$1.00 per year, postpaid to any address, domestic or foreign. In filling orders for these, we shall send new copies if available, and otherwise the cleanest used copies that remain on hand. Anyone not satisfied with the condition of used copies, after examining them, may return them for refund of the price paid for same.

No complete set for any year will be broken to provide a single copy or copies. Where extra single copies are available apart from the complete sets for years, they will be furnished at 25c per issue, postpaid. As in the case of yearly sets, new copies will be sent if available; otherwise the best used copies on hand will be furnished.

Besides complete sets for all the years, the following odd copies of particular issues are available:

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March 1946	3
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October-December 1955	1
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January-March 1957	5
April-June 1957	3
October-December 1957	5
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Reprints of Articles Available

Copies of reprints of the following articles are available in unlimited quantities at 5c per single copy or 25 copies for \$1.00 postpaid:

"Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs", by Frank D. Frazer. Reprinted from the April-June 1957 issue.

Ashamed of the Tents of Shem? by J. G. Vos. Reprinted from the January-March 1959 issue.

Photographic copies of any other article that has appeared in **Blue Banner Faith and Life**, made by Verifax copying machine, can be furnished at 15c per page of material reproduced. It

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Blue Banner Question Box

Readers are invited to submit Biblical, doctrinal and practical questions for answer in this department. Names of correspondents will not be published, but anonymous communications will be disregarded. Not all questions submitted by readers can be answered in the magazine. Preference will be given to questions of general concern or interest.

Question:

Please explain the meaning of "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28) and "of that day and hour knoweth no man . . . neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32). How can these statements be harmonized with the doctrine of Christ's deity?

Answer:

The problem presented by these two texts is insoluble **except on the basis of the doctrine that Christ was and is God and man in two distinct natures and one Person forever.**

Christ has **two** natures, divine and human. These two natures are mysteriously united in one divine Person, but they remain **distinct**, therefore they are not mixed or blended. Because of the distinctness of the two natures, Christ had and has both a human soul and His divine Spirit. Therefore He had and has two distinct kinds of knowledge, the relation between which must always remain a mystery to us.

As God, in His divine nature and Person, Christ was and is fully equal to the Father and absolutely omniscient, knowing everything, including "that day and hour." As man, by reason of His human nature, He could truthfully say, "My Father is greater than I. We should understand that sometimes the properties of the one

nature, and sometimes the properties of the other nature, are attributed to the Person in whom both natures were and are united.

See the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter VIII, Sections 2, 3 and especially Section 7. When Christ disclaimed knowledge of "that day and hour" (the day and hour of His own second coming), He was referring not to His divine knowledge, but only to the knowledge which pertained to His human nature. As a divine Person He certainly always knew all things.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

The Westminster Confession of Faith says that wilful desertion is a ground for divorce. How can this be justified from Scripture?

Answer:

The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter XXIV, Section 6, reads as follows: "Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joined together in marriage; yet nothing but adultery, **or such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied by the Church or civil magistrate**, is cause sufficient by dissolving the bond of marriage; wherein, a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed; and the

persons concerned in it not left to their own wills and discretion, in their own case." (Emphasis mine - J.G.V.).

The Scripture texts cited by the Confession in support of this section are: Matt. 19:8,9; 1 Cor. 7:15; Matt. 19:6; Deut. 24:1-4. The only one of these texts that concerns desertion as a ground of divorce is 1 Cor. 7:15. It will be noted that this text does not speak simply of irremediable wilful desertion in general, but of a very specific type of desertion, namely, the case where there is a mixed marriage between a Christian and an unbeliever, and the unbeliever deserts the Christian. "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace." Even in this specific case, where the Christian party is deserted by the unbeliever, it is not clear that the Christian party is at liberty to be re-married to someone else. The matter is debatable, to say the least. While not wishing to criticize such a worthy standard as the Westminster Confession of Faith, it is the writer's opinion that the Westminster Divines here went beyond what Scripture warrants in that with only this one text, which deals with desertion of a Christian by an unbeliever, they generalized the matter to make it cover irremediable wilful desertion as such. It is to be noted that the Confession does not speak of **judicial separation**, but of **dissolving the bond of marriage**.

This matter is discussed at length in the book entitled **Divorce**, by Professor John Murray (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Box 185, Nutley 10, New Jersey, U.S.A.).

The Westminster Confession of Faith is a binding official standard of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and other bodies of the Presbyterian family. Therefore irremediable wilful desertion stands as a lawful ground of divorce in such denominations, until such time as the statement of the Confession may be modified or amended. The Confession is of course not infallible, and if in any particular it is not fully supported by Scripture, it should be amended to bring it into full harmony with the Bible, which is the only infallible rule of faith and life.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

Is it true that Mark 16 verses 17 and 18 are interpolations and not part of the genuine text of Scripture?

Answer:

This is a difficult and highly technical question in the field of textual criticism. It is not only verses 17 and 18 that are involved, but verses 9-20, that is, from verse 9 to the end of the chapter. The ancient manuscript authority for this section is defective. The section is re-

jected as spurious by critical Greek texts such as those of Nestle and Westcott-Hort. On the other hand, it is included by the **Textus Receptus** or "Received Text" on which the King James Version is based. The matter is further complicated by the fact that some ancient manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark have a partly different ending to the Gospel, which may be translated as follows:

"But they set forth briefly to those about Peter all things that they had been commanded. And after these things, Jesus Himself also sent forth through them from east unto west the sacred and inconvertible proclamation of the eternal salvation."

Dr. Ned B. Stonehouse of Westminster Theological Seminary, in his book **The Witness of Matthew and Mark to Christ**, holds that the Genuine text of the Gospel of Mark ends with 16:8. The contrary position is defended in **The Last Twelve Verses of Mark**, by J. W. Burgon (reprinted 1959 by The Sovereign Grace Book Club, 1124 S. E. First St., Evansville, Indiana, U.S.A.).

It should be realized that verses 9-20 may represent a genuine tradition and contain genuine sayings of our Lord. The question at issue is not whether Jesus really said these things, but whether verses 9-20 of Mark 16 are a part of the genuine text of the Gospel of Mark, that is, whether Mark really wrote them or whether they were added later by someone else. If they are part of the genuine text, they form part of the inspired, infallible Word of God. It is not fair to say, as some do, that those who regard verses 9-20 as spurious are "taking away part of the Word of God." That is a question-begging manner of speaking — the question at issue is precisely whether these verses are part of the Word of God or not. The infallible Word of God is the genuine text as written by the inspired writers in the original languages—neither more nor less. It is not right to make a particular English version our standard as to what is genuine and what is not. There are many Greek manuscripts and they do not all perfectly agree. Therefore scholars must do their best to decide, on the basis of all the available evidence, what the genuine text is—that is to say, which manuscript(s) are to be regarded as reproducing most accurately the text as originally given by divine inspiration.

While admitting that the matter is debatable, and while disclaiming expert knowledge in the field of New Testament textual criticism, the present writer is inclined, on the whole, to agree with those scholars who regard the genuine text of the Gospel of Mark as ending with chapter 16 verse 8.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

I came across the following statement in the works of Charles Simeon: "There is not any one, on whom the Spirit has not frequently exerted his influence, to bring him to repentance" (Vol. 18, sermon outline on 1 Thess. 5:19). Is this in line with the teaching of Scripture?

Answer:

1 Thess. 5:19 reads, "Quench not the Spirit." This verse is a command addressed to Christians—persons indwelt by the Spirit of God. The command to "quench not the Spirit" presupposes that the person spoken to is a Christian. The context shows that Christians are in the apostle's mind, not unbelievers or people in general. This text, therefore, properly has no bearing on the sentence quoted from the works of Charles Simeon.

A more relevant text would be Romans 2:4, "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" This concerns the common grace of God, or the general operations of the Holy

Spirit, which are not limited to Christians or the elect, but are bestowed on all men everywhere. The goodness of God, which bestows many benefits on all men, is calculated to lead men to repentance, even though none can or does truly repent **unto life** except he be born anew of the Holy Spirit (by a special or particular operation of divine grace).

The statement quoted from Charles Simeon is open to objection on the ground that it does not clearly distinguish between the common operations of the Spirit, of which all men are the recipients, and the saving operations of the Spirit, which are limited to the elect. Simeon seems to imply that all men everywhere experience the same kind of operations of the Holy Spirit. If this is his meaning, it is certainly not in accord with the teaching of Scripture.

God has not let Himself without witness, even in the darkness of the heathen world (Acts 14:17). But the operation of the Holy Spirit which leads to **repentance unto life** does not take place in the non-elect, nor does it take place where the Word (the Gospel) is unknown.

—J. G. Vos

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