
BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

J. G. VOS, Editor and Manager

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VOLUME 21

JANUARY-MARCH, 1966

NUMBER 1

The Christian and the Jigsaw	3
Christianity for the Twentieth Century?	5
Instrumental Music in Public Worship	9
The Lord's Great Controversy	13
The Death of Death	15
The Law of God for the Modern World	16
Studies in the Epistle to the Ephesians	25

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J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager

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Editorial Committee: D. Howard Elliott, Marion L. McFarland, Wilbur C. Copeland

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Selections from the Poems of Christina G. Rossetti

"The Love of Christ which Passeth Knowledge"

I bore with thee long weary days and nights,
Through many pangs of heart, through many tears;
I bore with thee, thy hardness, coldness, slights,
For three and thirty years.

Who else had dared for thee what I have dared?
I plunged the depth most deep from bliss above,
I not My flesh, I not My spirit spared:
Give thou Me love for love.

For thee I thirsted in the daily drouth,
For thee I trembled in the nightly frost:
Much sweeter thou than honey to My mouth:
Why wilt thou still be lost?

I bore thee on My shoulders and rejoiced:
Men only marked upon My shoulders borne

The branding cross; and shouted hungry-voiced,
Or wagged their heads in scorn.

Thee did nails grave upon My hands, thy name
Did thorns for frontlets stamp between Mine eyes:
I, Holy One, put on thy guilt and shame;
I, God, Priest, Sacrifice.

A thief upon my right hand and my left;
Six hours alone, athirst, in misery:
At length in death one smote My heart and cleft
A hiding-place for thee.

Nailed to the racking cross, than bed of down
More dear, whereon to stretch Myself and sleep:
So did I win a kingdom, — share My crown;
A harvest, — come and reap.

A Better Resurrection

I have no wit, no words, no tears;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numbed too much for hopes or fears;
Look right, look left, I dwell alone;
I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief
No everlasting hills I see;
My life is in the falling leaf:
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk;
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk;

My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud or greenness can I see;
Yet rise it shall — the sap of Spring;
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul
Or cordial in the searching cold;
Cast in the fire the perished thing,
Melt and remould it, till it be
A royal cup for Him my King:
O Jesus, drink of me.

From House to Home

(Closing stanzas)

Therefore, O friend, I would not if I might
Rebuild my house of lies, wherein I joyed
One time to dwell; my soul shall walk in white
Cast down but not destroyed.

Therefore in patience I possess my soul;
Yea, therefore as a flint I set my face,
To pluck down, to build up again the whole.
But in a distant place.

These thorns are sharp, yet I can tread on them;
This cup is loathsome, yet He makes it sweet:
My face is steadfast toward Jerusalem,
My heart remembers it.

I lift the hanging hands, the feeble knees,
I, precious more than seven times molten gold,

Until the day when from His storehouses
God shall bring new and old;

Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for grief,
Garment of praise for spirit of heaviness:
Although today I fade as doth a leaf,
I languish and grow less.

Although today He prunes my twigs with pain,
Yet doth His blood nourish and warm my root:
Tomorrow I shall put forth buds again,
And clothe myself with fruit.

Although today I walk in tedious ways,
Today His staff is turned into a rod,
Yet will I wait for Him the appointed days
And stay upon my God.

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The Christian and the Jigsaw

By Paul E. G. Cook

In recent years most extraordinary oddities have fallen from the press in the name of Christianity. They are odd, that is to say, to those of us who have always regarded the Christian gospel as light from God breaking into our darkness. What seems so strange about these books is the twilight they ascribe to both the gospel and the world. The impression given is that the battle between light and darkness is now over; an uneasy truce has been negotiated on the grounds that there is much darkness in the light and not a little light in the darkness. Hey presto! the believer has shaken hands with the unbeliever in a unity brought about by an unusual scepticism. The Christians have written **Objections to Christian Belief** and the Humanists have written **Objections to Humanism**. Thus the old antagonists are now to be seen evangelizing themselves with one another's gospel. Self-criticism has discovered so many chinks in the armour that one is left wondering why they bother to wear it at all. It is not at all surprising to read in the preface to a recent book, **Religion and Humanism**, published by the BBC, the view expressed that, "No one aware of this literature can fairly pretend any more that the line of division between the believer and the unbeliever within Christendom is easily discernible or even that it can in principle be sharply drawn".

We would not wish to play any game of "let's pretend", and readily admit that the line between **professing** believers and unbelievers is without question now almost invisible. Nor would we wish to attempt an explanation of the difference between an atheist and the Bishop of Woolwich: the task is too difficult. The blacks and whites of the past have given way to the greys of the present. Certainty and conviction have been swallowed up by what is called "tolerance". A better name for it might be toleration. Any belief is acceptable provided it is based upon human reason. Revelation is unacceptable, and if anyone should claim to know the truth, the limits of this modern tolerance become immediately apparent.

Upon the basis of the Scriptures we contend that the line between believers and unbelievers can, and should, **in principle** be clearly drawn. A refusal to draw it is made possible only by an agnosticism of mind: by an outlook denying any essential difference between Christian and non-Christian thinking.

The salvation of the gospel is not confined to experience alone. God renews a man's mind by the Spirit of truth, and it is this renewal which leads to a change in conduct. The Christian mind is orientated in a way radically different from the unbeliever's mind. An unbeliever rejects the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the realm of thinking as well as in the realm of living. This means that the divergence between the Christian and non-Christian mind is sharp and irreconcilable. Common ground between the two is limited to a psychological awareness of God which arises from the image in which man was first created. Paul at Athens describes paganism and its religious expressions as "ignorance" (Acts 17.22-31); an approach unlikely to be rewarded by a professorial chair in a modern university.

The World View

When the unbeliever looks out across this world he sees what resembles an immense jigsaw puzzle. He has never seen the complete picture, and so as he tries to piece it together he has no idea of what it should be. He feels that some total view must exist otherwise the world would be without meaning or purpose. The unbeliever freely admits his ignorance, and from this unhappy position he optimistically investigates a number of pieces in this gigantic jigsaw in an attempt to make some sense out of life. Frequently he becomes an expert in his knowledge of a number of pieces, but rarely does he claim the ability to arrange them in their proper place in relation to the other pieces. Unfortunately for him, as his knowledge increases, he discovers that there are more pieces in the puzzle than he had at first thought.

The believer also looks out across a puzzling world. There is much he does not understand. "The world is a vale of tears, and everywhere care, trouble and fears". It is a jigsaw with so many pieces that life is not long enough in which to examine them all. The complete picture which makes life meaningful has, however, been **revealed** to him. He would not claim to have understood the mystery by some incredible feat of human reason, but simply testifies that God has spoken to him and made it known. So he begins his study of any one piece of the jigsaw from a knowledge of the whole picture in which it has a place.

This simple illustration serves to demonstrate the fundamental difference between believing and unbelieving minds. The believer begins all his thinking about life from a position of knowledge, and he relates all his learning to that total and meaningful world view. The unbeliever begins from a position in which he is ignorant of the total meaning of life, and in consequence is quite unable to relate any of his learning to a world view. The believer is in a position to evaluate everything; the unbeliever can evaluate nothing. Revelation has given the truth to the believer; reason is the key by which the unbeliever hopes to discover it, and yet never does.

The Christian is primarily a man of faith. He accepts in humble and childlike simplicity God's Word. He understands "that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear". (Hebrews 11.3). All his studies begin with a mind bathed in light. The so-called impartial and "blank mind" approach he leaves to the unbeliever who searches in darkness. He cannot accept "the scientific method" which begins with the assumption that God is irrelevant to knowledge. The "blank mind" observes certain things and the experimental observations lead to a hunch or hypothesis. If this hypothesis stands up to further investigation a "law" is propounded. The history of science shows that generally these laws are short-lived. Other discoveries change the picture; it turns out to be an illusion.

The true believer does not join the Humanists in their search for truth. He has the truth. **He knows** this is God's world, that it was created for His glory, and is under His sovereign control. Every part of life has a meaning given it by God, a meaning springing from its relationship to the Creator under whom it subsists. Each part of the immense jigsaw fits neatly into God's eternal purpose. Of the frustration and futility of life, with all its unhappiness, the believer cries, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccl. 7:29). Man's wilful rejection of God and His revelation is the cause of his blindness. A man in unbelief is in no position rightly to understand anything. An uneducated believer has a wisdom quite beyond that of the most brilliant unbeliever.

We can only conclude that in our day professing Christians and Humanists are beginning to see eye to eye because the Christians have rejected this Biblical world view revealed in the Scriptures. They have no right to be called Christians. Having rejected the revelation of God they study life in an unbelieving way. Their outlook is that of the agnostic. It is tragic, however, that this approach is followed in most theological colleges. The man who rejoices in light and truth is despised as an obscurantist. It

is not the man of faith, however, who is obscure; the obscurity lies with his critics whose inability to be definite about anything, is considered the hallmark of their learning.

This world will never make sense seen through man's eyes. It never has done. The history of philosophy is the story of man's self-confessed ignorance. His vision is distorted, and the myopia is too great. God alone sees clearly, and His creatures will only understand when they see through His eyes. The Christian mind is able to see blacks and whites because everything is brought to the Master mind for assessment. This Christian mind operates in every department of life, examining its many parts from a Biblical point of view. Science, history, geography and art are all approached from the standpoint of a committed faith. The approach is partial, of course; it is committed to a believing point of view at the outset and all conclusions are coloured by it. The hue is divine.

The Dogmatism of Faith

The revelation of God which the Christian accepts by faith is not subject to the possibility of change. Man's philosophies of life are fluid. They are modified and abandoned with the discovery of fresh knowledge. It ill behoves the unbeliever to speak dogmatically because he has no grounds for certainty. The Christian, on the other hand, not only has an authority for certainty but also an obligation to express it. He cannot advance his world view as just one of the many human interpretations of life. It is not a point of view for weighing in the balances of public opinion; it is a God-given revelation, and as such it is quite unique. The believer must declare it as the truth. His dogmatism is one of faith in the reliability of God.

Christian faith by its very nature implies dogmatism; not the loud shouting of the man whose argument is weak, but the quiet confidence that in Jesus Christ are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The Son of God did not claim to be one truth among many, but **the** Truth apart from whom all else is in error. The line of division between the believer and unbeliever is only indistinct because the "believer" is in effect an unbeliever.

There can be no fellowship between truth and falsehood. Light is the opposite of darkness; they are mutually irreconcilable. The unbelieving world is not in a degree of darkness; it is darkness (cf. Ephesians 5.8). The Christian gospel can only be accommodated to the outlook of the unbeliever by ceasing to be the gospel. The spiritual mind is entirely different from the carnal mind. It starts with the knowledge of God and understands man, whereas the unbelieving mind begins with man's knowledge and vainly tries to understand God.

Thinking and Scholarship

The Christian faith makes a man a thinker. His understanding of the total picture of life enables him to relate things together in the light of their over all purpose. The unbeliever has no complete world view, and as a result he is unable to relate together the various aspects of his knowledge. He has no system by which the real significance of things can be evaluated. His learning and knowledge about many matters may make him a scholar of rare distinction, but this does not qualify him as a thinker. Most scholars are not thinkers; their scholarship prevents them from being thinkers. The more they know the more they realize they do not know. An increase of knowledge rarely leads to incisive thinking; it usually results in more indecision and bewilderment. Harry Blamires has put it well in his excellent book, *The Christian Mind*: "The scholar evades decisiveness; he hesitates to praise or condemn; he balances conclusion against competing conclusion so as to cancel out conclusiveness; he is tentative, sceptical, uncommitted. The thinker hates indecision and confusion; he firmly distinguishes right from wrong, good from evil; he is at home in a world of clearly demarcated categories and proven conclusions; he is dogmatic and committed; he works towards decisive action" (p. 51).

Scholarship is being praised within the Christian Church today for its own sake. There is an increasing tendency within Evangelical circles to court academic approval. The value of what a man says or writes is often measured more by the number of books he quotes and footnotes he has than by what he actually says. The scribal authority of our Lord's day was of this nature. Our Lord's teaching was clear and relevant, incisive and dogmatic; it was not academic and it lacked scholarship, but it was with authority. He was **the** Thinker; they crucified Him.

The Christian who thinks in a Christian way will not secure the highest academic awards. There will always be a certain "foolishness" about him. To many it will seem that he is one-sided. His certainty will often be judged as ignorance. "The words of truth and soberness" which he speaks will be accounted as the learning of a madman. The cost is great, but so was the sacrifice.

Note: The foregoing penetrating article is reproduced from *The Banner of Truth* of London, England. It is highly relevant to the American scene where even in Church-related colleges there is often manifested a strong tendency to divorce education from a Christian world view. — Editor

A Perceptive Examination of THE CROSS AND THE SWITCHBLADE —

Christianity for the Twentieth Century?

By Iain Murray

For several months the best selling religious book has been *The Cross and the Switchblade* (by David Wilkerson with John and Elizabeth Sherrill: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1963: 5s.). This paperback is an autobiographical account of the work of an American minister, David Wilkerson, between the years 1958 and 1961. The narrative commences with Wilkerson as a young pastor of a Pentecostal church in a country area of Pennsylvania and describes how, having substituted prayer for the hours he had previously given to watching television, he receives a concern for teen-agers in New York (350 miles away) through reading an article in *Life* magazine on teen-age criminals in that city. This leads to visits to New York in an attempt to contact the youngsters described in the article, and through unanticipated incidents he soon has an opportunity to speak in the cellar-den of one gang. A picture of lonely, faceless boys and girls, in a world of sex and drug-taking, is sketched and the lines are drawn more heavily as the book proceeds. The first response occurred after Wilkerson, aided by a trumpeter, held an open-air meeting in the Fort Greene district of the city, and four boys who were

gang leaders knelt down on the pavement following the preacher's appeal: "I want you to kneel down right here on the street and ask the Holy Spirit to come into your lives so that you will become new men" (61).

The next step after this was the organizing of a week's campaign for teen-agers, in July 1959, held in St. Nicholas Arena and backed by 65 sponsoring churches (Spanish Pentecostal Assemblies). Wilkerson was uncertain about what the results of this campaign might be. He told the sponsors beforehand: "The experience at Fort Greene may have been a one-time piece of good luck. I have no idea that it could be repeated on a larger scale" (66). Despite bulletins posted all over New York, buses laid on, and "a remarkable young singer, as pretty as a movie star" (78) nothing did happen until the last night. Then, after a gang leader and his friends were invited to take the collection, and after Wilkerson had, in his own words, handed over the meeting to Jesus (81), the appeal, "If you want your life changed . . . stand up and come forward" was immediately successful. "The surge forward was contagious" and was joined in by more than 30 teen-agers.

A year after this Wilkerson resigned his pastorate and moved to New York to devote himself full-time to the work amongst teen-agers. A ministry entitled "Teen-Age Evangelism" was inaugurated. The main means of evangelism at first were literature, television and films, but this gave way to Wilkerson's original method of direct personal contact. With inter-denominational sponsorship a Teen Challenge Center was opened in 1961, being a home in which follow-up work and rehabilitation in certain cases could be carried on. During the first month of the home's operation "more than five hundred boys and girls had been saved" (126) and by the end of the summer "records showed that 2,500 young people . . . had turned their lives over to Christ" (172).

The book terminates with an emphasis on the power of drug addiction, and how after initial failure Wilkerson came to "a magnificent discovery" (153) of the way of deliverance from such bondage, namely, through individuals receiving "the Baptism of the Holy Ghost".

Singular and Unique

It will be seen from the above that there are things in **The Cross and the Switchblade** about which those who believe Reformed Christianity to be Biblical Christianity cannot be at all happy. Nevertheless, recognizing that a saving belief in Christ may be accompanied by a certain degree of theological confusion, and that men may be used by God who are themselves immature, it would be unjustifiable to dismiss the book simply on account of its pronounced Arminianism. Anything which may be extending the kingdom of Christ and bringing a saving change in men's lives ought to have our sympathy.

One's opinion of the book cannot, however, be left at that point, and for two reasons. First, the book itself claims to be **more** than a record of a genuine attempt to reach a low stratum of lost mankind. Others are making that same attempt in different cities and on the mission fields of the world. If **The Cross and the Switchblade** confined itself simply to an account of a much needed ministry in a district of New York there would be no question of attaching to it any **unique** significance. But the story is presented in such a way that it does appear singular and unique. The descriptive word which runs through it from the preliminary blurb onwards is the word "amazing". An observer of Teen Challenge Center is quoted as saying that "he thought our work was the closest thing he had seen to the challenge found in Apostolic times" (119) and Wilkerson's work is represented as "a fast-growing movement". Statements like this compel some sort of verdict on the part of the reader.

Secondly, this book necessitates a more thorough criticism than would be usually given to an

autobiography because the story is purposefully presented in a way which leads the uncritical reader to suppose the **beliefs** of the author must be true. The aim is not simple autobiography, it is the presentation of a **type** of Christianity and the author's conviction is that **this type of Christianity** is the answer not only for Brooklyn but for the 20th Century. The book is a **vehicle** for a message. In our judgment this message is far removed from the Word of God and we would submit the following reasons for such a serious allegation.

A Serious Omission

1. The presentation of the Gospel which the book contains has no reference to the **character** of God as demonstrating the need of man's salvation from sin. Man needs salvation because God's holiness and righteousness are against him and he stands before God in a state of condemnation. At the heart of New Testament salvation lies deliverance from the wrath to come and the certainty of this wrath is based upon the purity and justice of God. Once this is stated, as Paul states it in Romans 1 to 3, there is no Gospel adequate to man's position except the one which demonstrates how God may declare the ungodly "righteous" without lessening in the least degree His own righteousness and justice. The apostolic Gospel does demonstrate this. It shows us how, when the Spirit of God unites a sinner to Christ in saving faith, God treats that man as freed from all guilt and positively righteous, on the grounds that Christ once bore his full deserts and fulfilled all obedience towards the law of God on his behalf. This Gospel is a revelation of "righteousness" freely bestowed upon those who believe in Christ crucified.

Scarcely the slightest trace of such a message appears in **The Cross and the Switchblade**. The perversities of sin, paralleling Romans I, are depicted but without the slightest reference to the wrath of God. "God is on your side. That I can promise you," Wilkerson tells the teenager who was pressing a knife in his stomach. The only mention of Hell in the book is a jocular one contained in a story about a message the author's grandfather once preached (38). It is the kind of story commonly told by those who ridicule historic Christianity. This omission of any reference to divine justice explains why the person and work of Christ is barely mentioned and why the duty of sinners towards the Saviour is nowhere stated in terms of faith and repentance. About the only reference to the cross in the whole book is one quotation of I John 1:7. Salvation is represented solely as a change of **experience** rather than as a change of relationship towards God — deciding "to try a new beginning" (68) in which a better kind of experience can be found. Referring to his first sermon to a New York gang, Wilkerson says:

"I didn't try to get a complicated message over to them, just that they were loved. They were loved as they were, there, amid the vodka bottles and the weary, searching sex. God understood what they were looking for when they drank and played with sex, and He yearned for them to have what they were looking for: stimulation and exhilaration and a sense of being sought after" (29).

Under the purest Gospel preaching in the world some false professions will be found, but under the type of preaching referred to above the professed results, so confidently given, are no guide at all. The only sound evidence of regeneration is the evidence of hatred towards sin and love to God's commandments — evidence which needs more than a few weeks or months to test its reality. Of all the converts mentioned in the book no more than half a dozen emerge with any clarity in the pages of the printed record. How anyone could read this book and imagine it parallels in any sense the work of David Brainerd amongst pagan Indians or the ministry of J. G. Paton amongst cannibals passes our comprehension.

Defective and Untrustworthy

2. The book gives very defective and untrustworthy marks for evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit.

"From the beginning", says the prefatory blurb, "he was directed by the Holy Spirit". This is, in essence, the theme of the book, and over against a handful of references to God and to His Son there are scores if not hundreds to the Spirit of God. The author's view of the Holy Spirit includes the following points:

(1) The Spirit's presence is **physically** known. "I had the most incredible feeling" (26); "I was shaking as if I had a chill . . . I felt a tremendous exhilaration" (97) "He felt a strange sensation of warmth the minute he walked through the doors" (127); "He began to tremble as if current were flowing through him" (163). Allied to quotations like these is the continual reference to crying and tears, which are invested with great spiritual importance (7, 9, 10, 22 etc.): "I think I could almost put it down as a rule that the touch of God is marked by tears. When finally we let the Holy Spirit into our innermost sanctuary, the reaction is to cry" (68). This crying is treated as a psychological release (76) and yet also represented as the last thing New York teenagers would naturally do: consequently, the presence of tears is carefully marked as proof of a break-through (81, 91, 136).

We are far from supposing that the Spirit of God may not affect a man's body but where in the New Testament is anything like this brought forward as a reliable mark of the work of the Holy Spirit? The history of revivals has frequently

proved that those who weep loudest have later given the clearest proof of unchanged hearts.

(2) The guidance of the Holy Spirit is conceived of as essentially **miraculous** in its nature. The author believes in a guidance "apparently completely independent of my own feelings and ideas" (8), and this not on general matters of living where Scripture leads us but with regard to "getting pinpointed instructions from God" (22). Foremost among the ways this guidance is obtained is by asking God to ratify particular and specific prayers by the granting of "a sign". On such matters as a call to a pastorate, the sale of a television set, and the buying of a house in New York, evidence of God's will is obtained by "signs". On the eve of the birth of his first son, Wilkerson accepts the challenge of an unbelieving enquirer who, knowing the event to be near, prayed, "Now God, if You are up there and if You love me, give this preacher a boy". Wilkerson says, "I ran into my bare little bedroom and I began to pray as I hadn't prayed since I'd been in New York" (76). The same night the requested "sign" was given. He is also guided, he believes, by direct impulses from the Holy Spirit. Driving to unknown destinations he is twice led to stop his car by an "incomprehensible urge" at the exact place he needed to be. This guidance was miraculous because all Wilkerson did was "to drive aimlessly in the direction the car was headed, which happened to be north" (31). On another occasion God tells him the name of a street where he is to go (108). "Miracles" also occur frequently with regard to financial provision and in terms of healing of the body (42, 94). All these miracles are regarded as the norm of a healthy, Spirit-guided life: "As long as we really let Him lead, miracles all along the path were going to be ours to enjoy" (105).

To question the whole theology implied in the above is not to doubt whether God does daily guide His children in providence. We believe He does. This is quite a different thing, however, to the "signs" and "miracles" of the New Testament. The extraordinary was never meant to be the norm for the Church in all ages; the apostolic ministry, necessary to the foundation of the Church, constituted that age as a distinct era and the miracles of that age were Divine confirmations and seals to the first full revelation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. By miracles God attested the mission and inspired message of these men — a message which is now **unchangeably** recorded in Scripture. The same attestation was true, to some extent, of Old Testament prophets. For men who are neither apostles nor prophets to expect their ministry to be **accredited** by the same seals is without any Scriptural warrant. The preaching of men is now to be judged, not by the presence of signs and wonders, but solely by the **written Word**. Any teaching which ignores this, far from honouring the Holy Spirit, is an

influence from Satan. The "signs" and "miracles" of which Medieval Christendom was full established an attitude of unquestioning submission towards the authority of "the Church" and made the Bible unnecessary. Wherever miracles are appealed to as **evidence** of a Divine work the tendency is for men to shut their Bibles. When Scripture ceases to be our sole rule it ceases to be any rule at all.

The Spirit's Work

(3) The Spirit's greatest work in the souls of men is not taught in this book. It is difficult to see how anyone, after a study of the New Testament, could contradict the assertion that the glory and grace of the Spirit's power is pre-eminently seen in His work of effectual calling whereby sinners are made new creatures — regenerated — and united to Christ in His Death and Resurrection Life. Ceasing to commit sin (I Jn. 3:9), liberation from bondage, the indwelling of the Spirit, sanctification by the truth: these are privileges which belong to all who are born again and they are blessings which Christ secured for all His people by His sacrifice and death. The merit of the atonement is the ground of the Spirit's work in us.

To make these blessings refer — as Pentecostalism does — not to the rebirth but to some **subsequent** experience, does despite both to the glory of what Christ has obtained for all His people and to the glory of what the Spirit of God actually does when we are quickened by Him into newness of life. The doctrine of conversion in **The Cross and the Switchblade** is a very poor and threadbare thing when compared with the doctrine of the New Testament: it presents conversion as a thing which men may get and yet still have no power over sin — a thing which is initiated by man's decision: the Holy Spirit is represented as "trying to reach inside" (61); "Give God a chance", a teen-ager is counselled (70); "Damn it, Davie", says one who has responded to the appeal and is annoyed by Wilkerson's hesitancy, "I've given my heart to God" (82). Not surprisingly a conversion of this type is regarded in the book as no final solution, it provides no moral power and ensures no security against falling away. It is quite a different experience, namely, "the baptism", which the author thinks gives power and security.

We do believe that Christians may have pronounced experiences of the Spirit's blessing after their conversion: this is not the point at issue. The contention of Pentecostalism is that the receiving of the Spirit is a distinct thing from conversion — a separate event by which every Christian's life should be marked. For such a contention we see no proof in Scripture, on the contrary so many of the very texts which are alleged to refer to this experience are references to regeneration and the privileges of all the children

of God (cf. 162-163). By what process of logic it can be argued that all who are now converted are initially in the same state as the disciples were before Pentecost we are at a loss to understand.

The teaching of this book about "the baptism of the Spirit" is a complete confusion. It vitiates the scriptural meaning of the re-birth and ignores any distinctiveness in the apostolic ministry. Addressing professing Christians at the Teen Challenge Center, a preacher says:

"If you want this change and power and hope and freedom in your life, get on your feet and come up front. I'm going to lay my hands on your head just like Paul did and the same thing is going to happen to you that happened to the new Christians in his time. You're going to receive the Holy Spirit!" (163).

Worldly Thinking

(4) Deliverance from a worldly way of thinking, as a mark of the Spirit's work, is little seen in this book. The writer is preoccupied with the dramatic and sensational as proof of the Holy Spirit being in control. There is surely no particular value about the hour when a man prays — why then does the author tell us no less than four times that his time for prayer was 12 a.m.-2 a.m. (13, 76, 102, 108)? The information is in line with the drift of the book. The writer does not seem to realize that it is no evidence of spirituality to be taken up with the extraordinary. We can be worldly in our thinking in crusading for the Gospel: remarks like one on a female helper, "I hope she's pretty. She's got to be pretty for the job", are revealing. Similarly what is said about prayer in various places appears to us to contain not a little of worldly thought. A chain of prayer, day and night, around the clock may appear at first sight evidence of great spiritual effort but the thinking which motivates it may be akin to the Tibetan priest's prayer wheel rotating in the wind. Finally, without making language a shibboleth for orthodoxy, the style of the book is more akin to **Time** magazine than to Christian literature. The narrative is in the first person singular and yet three authors names appear on the jacket. Perhaps if David Wilkerson had been left to himself it would have been a simpler book and lacking the slick composition which it now has: the writers evidently meant to avoid dullness at all costs. They achieved their object but the price of success is a bad taste in the reader's mouth.

Signs of the Spirit's Working

If the above are all inadequate evidences of the Spirit's working, for what kind of marks should we look in any movement which claims to possess the outstanding blessing of God? Another minister, once a pastor in New York himself, gives these marks:

"1. When the operation is such as to raise their esteem of that Jesus who was born of the virgin, and was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem; and seems more to confirm and establish their minds in the truth of what the gospel declares to us of his being the Son of God, and the Saviour of men; is a sure sign that it is from the Spirit of God . . .

2. "When the spirit that is at work operates against the interests of Satan's kingdom, which lies in encouraging and establishing men's worldly lusts; this is a sure sign that it is a true, and not a false spirit . . .

3. "The spirit that operates in such a manner as to cause in men a greater regard to the Holy Scriptures, and establish them more in the truth and divinity, is certainly the Spirit of God . . . the devil never would attempt to beget in persons a regard to that divine word which God has given to be the great and standing rule for the direction of his Church in all religious matters, and all concerns of their souls, in all ages . . .

4. "Another rule to judge of spirits may be drawn from those compellations given to the opposite spirits, in the last words of the 6th verse, "the spirit of truth and the spirit of error". These words exhibit the two opposite characters of the Spirit of God, and other spirits that counterfeit his operations . . . For instance, if we observe that the spirit at work makes men more sensible than they used to be, that there is a God, and that he is a great and a sin-hating God; that life is short, and very uncertain; and that there is another world; that they have immortal souls, and must give account of themselves to God, that they are exceeding sinful by nature and practice; that they are helpless in themselves . . . we may conclude that it is not the spirit of darkness that doth thus discover and make manifest the truth.

5. "If the spirit that is at work among a people operates as a spirit of love to God and man,

it is a sure sign that it is the Spirit of God . . . The surest character of true divine supernatural love — distinguishing it from counterfeits that arise from a natural self-love — is, that the Christian virtue of **humility** shines in it; that which above all others renounces, abases, and annihilates what we term **self . . .**' (Jonathan Edwards' Works, 1834, vol. 2, **Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God**).

If the work of Teen Challenge Center were judged by these standards we hope some good thing would still be found in it. The impact of the book, however, is to lead the reader to judge of this work, and all Christian work, by different tests. In so far as these tests are accepted the tendency will be to advance, under the name of apostolic Christianity, a type of religious experience and a form of religious belief which is thoroughly detrimental to the true Evangelical Faith. That this book has had such a wide reading is to us another sign of the times, but we hope it will also have the effect of awakening some to realise more than ever the need of a restoration of the solid Faith of former ages. The Reformation theology of salvation by grace, through faith, will be found in the last resort to be the only true guardian of holiness and godliness and all who love that theology should, for the sake of this and future generations, work to prevent believers accepting the outlook presented in the above book. It will be a sad day for England if, out of dislike of controversy, ministers say nothing while this kind of literature is circulating amongst our congregations. We have tried to show that the issues involved are very serious.

Note: The above article is reproduced from **The Banner of Truth** of London, England. It should prove a timely warning against the too common tendency to accept a book like **The Cross and the Switchblade** enthusiastically without critical examination of its basic theological orientation. — Editor

Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

VI.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CONSIDERED

(Continued)

2. Arguments derived from the Confession of Faith:

(1.) It is not claimed, so far as I know, by

the advocates of instrumental music that it is necessary to any performance at all of the act of singing praise, but it is claimed that it is necessary to the "decent and orderly" performance of that act. It is justified by an appeal to the last clause of the following sentence of the Confession of Faith, about which so much has been said in the course of the foregoing argument: "There are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church,

common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed." (Chap. i., Sec. vi.) Among those general rules of the Word cited in the proof-texts, supporting this whole statement, beginning, "there are some circumstances," is the following: "Let all things be done decently and in order." This, it is claimed, warrants the use of instrumental music. Among the "all things" to "be done decently and in order" is the singing of praise, and instrumental music is necessary to this thing being "done decently and in order."

First, It must be observed that the last clause of the statement of the Confession, the clause which is used in this argument for instrumental music, has reference to the "circumstances" mentioned in that statement. It is these circumstances, and not something else different from them, in regard to which "the general rules of the Word," including this one, "Let all things be done decently and in order," "are always to be observed." Now it has already been clearly pointed out that these circumstances are circumstances "common to human actions and societies." It is precisely such circumstances concerning which the statement of the Confession enjoins that they be ordered according to the general rules of the Word. It is precisely such circumstances, consequently, that that statement requires to "be done decently and in order." The question before us, then, is this: Is instrumental music one of those circumstances? It has, in a previous part of this discussion, by a somewhat pains-taking argument, been proved that it cannot be one of them. Those circumstances have been shown to be undistinctive conditions upon which the actions of all societies are performed. They are common to them all. But instrumental music is not common to the actions of all societies. It cannot, therefore, be one of the circumstances indicated by the statement in the Confession. The conclusion is irresistible that, so far as that statement is concerned, it is not necessary to the decent and orderly performance of the singing of praise as a part of church-worship. This particular argument in favor of instrumental music will be still further considered as the discussion draws towards its close.

Secondly, The argument takes on the aspect of preposterous arrogance, as containing an indictment of the true church of God in almost all the centuries of the Christian era for an indecent and disorderly singing of praise in its public worship, not to speak of the church in the old dispensation in its ordinary Sabbath-day services. It would be folly to test the question of the decent and orderly, or the indecorous and disorderly, singing of praise by a temporary standard, especially one erected in a modern and corrupt condition of the nominal church. Shall the standard by which the practice of the Christian church — leaving out of

account the Jewish — for twelve centuries is to be judged be one in which the Church of Rome slowly and reluctantly acquiesced as late as the middle or the close of the thirteenth century? And by this standard will we convict of indecorous and disorderly worship the Reformed churches of Europe, the Swiss, the French and the Dutch, the churches of Scotland for centuries, the English Puritans and the Presbyterian Church of Ireland? Has it been left to the church in these latter days to discover the only decorous and orderly way in which God's praises shall be sung? The supposition is intolerable.

The same considerations avail against the plea that instrumental music is a help in the singing of praise. If the church of Christ has not felt the need of this help during the greater part of its existence, it requires no argument to show that she can do without it now. It may be admitted that it is a help to such "rendering" (!) of singing as is demanded by ears cultivated for the enjoyment of Italian operas and the like artistic performances. But that is quite a different thing from admitting that it is a help to the singing of praise by humble and penitent sinners, by the afflicted people of God passing as cross-bearing pilgrims through a world to which they are crucified and which is crucified to them. The discussion is gratuitous and needless. It is sufficient to say, that that cannot be a true help to worship which the Being to be worshipped does not himself approve.

(2.) It is contended that instrumental music is to be ranked among the circumstances allowed by the Confession of Faith, and that this is proved by the fact that it is on the same foot as other circumstances about which there is no dispute: such as houses of worship, reading sermons, the length of sermons, of prayers and of singing, bells, tuning-forks and pitch-pipes, tune-books, and the like.

One would be entitled to meet this argument upon the general ground already so often and earnestly maintained, that all the circumstances remitted by the Confession to the discretion — the natural judgment — of the church are common to human actions and societies, and are such as belong to the natural sphere in which the acts of all societies are performed, and, therefore, cannot be distinctively spiritual or even ecclesiastical. As instrumental music, used in professedly spiritual and actually ecclesiastical worship, cannot possibly be assigned to that category, it is for that patent reason ruled out by the very terms of the Confession's statement. This ground I hold to be impregnable. But inasmuch as it is a fact that certain minds do consider instrumental music as saveable to the church for the reason that it may be viewed as standing on the same foot with the circumstances which have been mentioned, I will endeavor to meet their difficulties, albeit at the conscious expense of strict logical consis-

tency, by following this argument into its minute details; and I pray that the Spirit of God may bestow his guidance in this last step of the discussion.

First, It has been argued, that the use of instrumental music is a circumstance of the same kind with the building of a house of worship and the selection of its arrangements; that it is not an absolutely necessary condition of the church's acts that it should hold its meetings in edifices: They might be held, as has often in fact been done, in the open air. To this the obvious reply is, that this circumstance is one common to the acts of all societies. They must meet somewhere, and it is of course competent to all of them to determine, whether they shall be subjected to the inconveniences of open-air assemblages, or avail themselves of the advantages afforded by buildings. So of the arrangements and furniture of the edifices in which they convene. Every society, even an infidel society, has this circumstance conditioning its meetings and acts, either as necessary to any performance of them or as necessary to their decorous and orderly discharge. But instrumental music is not such a circumstance: it is not common to human actions and societies. This destroys the alleged analogy, and consequently the argument founded upon it fails.

Secondly, The same disproof is applicable to the assumed analogy between the alleged circumstance of instrumental music and that of reading sermons. It is urged that a sermon must be delivered in one of two ways: either with or without reading, and there is discretion left to the church to elect between them. If she thinks reading the better way, she is at liberty to employ it. So with the choice of instrumental music as a mode in which praise shall be sung. There might be, as there has been, some discussion in regard to the legitimacy of reading sermons. But that question aside, and the argument being considered on its own ground, it is sufficient to reply that the analogy asserted does not obtain. The delivery of discourses, speeches, reports and resolutions is an act common to all human societies. Now, it is competent to all societies to say whether they shall be simply spoken or read, whether the delivery shall be extemporaneous or from manuscript. They can, each for itself, determine the circumstance of the mode in which an act common to all shall be performed. But the singing of praise in the worship of God is not an act common to all societies. It is therefore not one in regard to which the Confession grants the liberty to the church of fixing the circumstance of the mode in which it shall be done. (In addition to this, let it be noticed that in preaching to men worship is not directly offered to God; in singing praise it is, at least in great part.)

Thirdly, The same line of argument, it is contended, holds good with reference to the discretionary power of the church to order the cir-

cumstances of the length of sermons, of prayers, and of singing. But, it is replied, all societies must, of necessity, fix the time allotted to their several exercises, or their meetings would be failures. Nature itself dictates this. The church, therefore, has the natural right to order this circumstance in connection with all her services. But the question of determining the length of an exercise is a very different one from that introducing the exercise at all. There is no analogy between the determination of the time to be allowed to all acts, and the determination of the legitimacy of some special act. The adjustment of the length of its exercises is a circumstance common to all societies. The employment of instrumental music, as a concomitant of worship, is a circumstance peculiar to the church as a distinctive society. The analogy in every respect breaks down.

Fourthly, If the church has bells, it is asked, why may it not have organs? They are both instruments of sound which serve an ecclesiastical purpose. The answer is so obvious that one feels almost ashamed to give it. The bell is not directly connected with worship; the organ is. The bell stops ringing before the worship begins, the organ accompanies the worship itself. There is not the least likeness between them, so far as this question is concerned. A bell simply marks the time for assembling. So does a clock; and we may as well institute a comparison between the hands of the clock at a certain hour and instrumental music in worship after that hour, as between the sound of the bell and it. The question is in regard to a concomitant of worship, not as to something that precedes it and gives way to it.

Fifthly, It is by some gravely contended that if tuning-forks and pitch-pipes may be used, so may organs. The same answer as was returned to the immediately foregoing argument is pertinent here. Did those who submit this argument ever notice the use made of a tuning-fork or a pitch-pipe by a leader of singing? It is struck or sounded in a way to be heard by the leader himself, and when by means of it he has got the pitch of the tune to be sung, it is put into his pocket, where it snugly and silently rests while the singing proceeds. It no more accompanies the worship than does a bell. Like it, it stops sounding before the act of worship begins. What analogy is there between it and an instrument that accompanies every note of the singing by a corresponding note of its own. Assign to the organ the same office as the humbler tuning-fork or pitch-pipe, namely, merely to give the leader of the simple singing the pitch of the tunes, and who would object to it? The question of organs would be as quiet as they would be. One too before the singing, and then they would be, what they ought to be during the public singing of praise, as silent as the grave. One cannot help wondering that the admirers of this "majestic

instrument" would employ a comparison which reduces it to a pitch so low!

Sixthly, There is only one other argument of this minute class which will be considered. It is one which I have known some brethren to maintain as men do a last redoubt. It is argued that instrumental music is just as fairly entitled to rank among the circumstances indicated by the Confession of Faith as is a tune-book. Does a tune-book assist the singing of praise? So does an organ. If the church has discretion in employing one kind of assistance to singing, why not another?

Has it not occurred to the minds of those who insist so strenuously upon this view that they may be using a tune-book to accomplish an office to which it may be inadequate, when they wield it to knock down arguments derived from the Old Testament and the New Testament Scriptures, from the old dispensation and the new, from the practice of the Jewish synagogue, of the apostles, of the whole church for twelve hundred years, and of the Calvinistic Reformed Church for centuries? Does it not occur to them also that there may be a flaw in the statement of their argument? Expanded, it is this: Whatever assists the singing of praise is a legitimate circumstance; the tune-book and the organ alike assist, etc., therefore they are alike legitimate circumstances. The true statement would be, whatever is necessary to the singing of praise is a legitimate circumstance; the tune-book and the organ are alike so necessary; therefore they are alike legitimate circumstances. It behooves them to show that the organ is necessary to the singing of praise. It is not enough to say that it assists it. They cannot prove its necessity. Praise has been and is sung without the organ. But it also behooves me to show that the tune-book is necessary to the singing of praise, that it is a condition without which it could not be done. If this can be evinced, as the organ is not necessary to singing, it does not, as is assumed, stand on the same foot with the tune-book, and the argument is unfounded.

It will be granted that a tune is necessary to modulated singing — that is, to singing which is not merely the prolongation of a single note, and that could not be denominated singing. But the tune-book gives the tune. The tune is necessary to singing; the tune-book is necessary to the tune; therefore the tune-book is necessary to singing. Need this simple argument be pressed? Whence the tune, if not from the tune-book? Is it improvised by the leading singer? Suppose that it may be, and he would be the only singer. It would be impossible for others to unite with him.

It may be replied that the organ also gives the tune. This is a mistake. The organ is as much indebted to the tune-book for the tune as

is a leading singer. If the organist should improvise the tune, where would be the singing? It will hardly be contended that a solo on the organ would be the singing of the congregation, or that the organ sings at all.

It may still be said that the tune-book is not necessary to singing, since it is a fact that singing, is often done without it. This is a mistake also. The tune-book may be absent as a book, but the tune it contains is present in the mind of the leading singer. He remembers what he got from it. It is a necessity to him, whether literally absent or present. He cannot sing without the tune, and the tune is in the tune-book.

Finally, the mighty contest may yet be maintained on the ground that some leading singers do not know the musical notes, and, therefore, cannot depend on the tune-book for the tune. True, there are some who are ignorant of the notes, but all the same they depend on the tune-book, not immediately, but mediately and really. For the tune is learned, in the first instance, only from some one who does know the notes and got the tune from the book. The tune-book is the first cause of the tune, and is necessary to its existence. Of course, tunes are learned by the ear. Most members of a congregation so learn them. But these persons acquire them from the leading singer, and he received them from the tune-book. So that, look at the matter as we may, the tune-book is necessary to the singing of praise: it conditions its performance.

If, now, it be objected that the tune-book is a circumstance not common to human actions and societies, and is equally, with instrumental music, according to this argument, excluded from the discretionary control of the church, I answer, That is true. It is circumstances in the natural sphere, those which attend actions as actions, and not this or that particular action of a distinctive society, that fall within the discretion of the church. Consequently both of these circumstances — the tune-book and instrumental music — fall without that discretion. They both condition the performance of an act peculiar to the church. But the difference between them is this: One is necessary to the performance of a commanded duty, namely, the singing of praise, and the other is not. The singing of praise is undoubtedly a commanded duty, and it follows that what is a necessary condition of its discharge comes also under the scope of command. It is, therefore, not discretionary with the church to employ it; it is obligatory. It must be employed, or the commanded duty fails to be done. It is not so with instrumental music. It is not a condition necessary to the commanded duty of singing praise; neither is it a natural circumstance conditioning the acts of all societies. It is, therefore, neither obligatory upon nor discretionary with the church to use it. It is consequently excluded.

(To be concluded)

The Lord's Great Controversy

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

(Continued from last issue)

IV. God's Great Division

Once upon a day early in his ministry the thought which is to engage our attention in this chapter was forcibly impressed upon a certain gospel preacher. The occasion was a visit from his Sabbath School superintendent who came with what had come to him as a great new insight. He came to see what the pastor would have to say about it. We opened the subject and back and forth it went between these two as together they explored a particular teaching of God's Word. Both were Bible believers, but neither could by any means be rated as an expert in theology. It is doubtful that either had ever even heard of such a thing as "the antithesis." Nevertheless there it was, and that was that for which they were looking in the Scriptures.

It was the thought of God as the author of a great division, making Himself known as the great Divider both in the realm of His natural creation and in the world of human thought and life. Together they began at the beginning and followed through from one end of the Bible to the other and from the beginning to the end of time and on beyond. They discovered that this representation of God and of the truth concerning Him pervades the sacred Book. "Darkness," it is said, "was upon the face of the deep." "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."

The account goes on to tell how God divided the waters below from the waters above, the sea from the land, and made lights in the heavens to divide the day from the night. As the story proceeds we see how God willed the presence of innumerable differentiations among all material and living things.

Male and female appears as one aspect of God's divisionism in the realm of His animate creation. Presently all the vastness and variety of the created universe is crowned with God's creation of man in His own image, male and female, whom He blessed, and to whom He said: "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it . . . and have dominion over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

The original scene has its setting in the lovely garden. Now at the first all is peace and joy and fellowship; the fellowship of God and man and between Adam and his helpmeet. And then, of a sudden, almost before either of our first par-

ents knew what they were doing, all is changed. Sin enters, and death by sin, and there is no help for sinner-men except as God may intervene. Darkness reigns and the power of darkness over-spreads the world. But a flash of heavenly sunlight penetrates the gloom. For the mother of all living shall have at length a son who shall crush the serpent's head and conquer sin and death (Gen. 3:15). So man is given to understand that God's great redemption, his eternal salvation, is on the way.

Even so; but now "enmity" is to obtain, and universal peace and harmony are no more. In other words, division and conflict are now the order of the day. And how could it be otherwise? For man is now at war with his Creator, and there is alienation and estrangement between him and his Maker. The inevitable expulsion from the garden follows, and presently the awfulness of the divisive effect of sin in human relations appears as Cain lifts his hand against his brother's life.

The important thing, of course, is that God would intervene in the situation brought about by Adam's first sin for the salvation of some from among the generality of men. So the human race would be divided between the saved and the unsaved. Two major factors combine to produce the great division. These are the original alienation and separation from God on the one hand, and the God-given reconciliation of some to be accomplished in and through the death of Christ on the other. These two together are productive of a double line of descent, with its accompaniment of "sides" diametrically opposed the one to the other. On the one hand there are those who, however few in number and unworthy in themselves, are worthy to be called "the sons of God." Ranged in opposition to them are the sons of men. The children of God are the believers, the heroes of the faith. They occupy one side of a dividing line by which they are separated from all others.

Especially noteworthy in this blessed succession of the sons of God are first Seth, then Enoch and then Noah and his family. Subsequently to the flood there comes the confusion of tongues and the consequent dispersion with its age-long separationism.

We may not pursue the matter further at this point since we are to return to it later. However, enough has been said to show that a fascinating aspect of divine truth and Bible teaching opens before us. It leads on through the lives of the patriarchs to the time of Moses and Joshua, the

dividing of the Red Sea waters and Jordan's flood, then on through the days of the judges and the kings, the priests and the prophets, and so on through the life and teaching of the Lord Himself, and His apostles.

The radical nature and extent of the difference between these two, which is there despite all appearance to the contrary, cannot be over-emphasized. The death of the martyr Stephen (Acts 7:54-60), not to mention the death of Christ Himself, may serve to illustrate something of the deep underlying feelings on both sides. There are in fact two kinds of hatred here; on the one side that of an holy loathing, which, however, is tempered and controlled by love; on the other side a deadly malice, unknown perhaps to its possessor, skulks and hides until occasion brings it to expression.

The variations in this radical divergence among men are endless, but one theme pervades the whole. It is the theme of a basic divine divisionism as between God Himself and all true followers and friends of the Lord on the one hand, and lost, apostate and rebellious mankind on the other. It is a Scriptural view of things which, however unpopular it may be at any time, is the only true representation of the situation and has an assured position in God's plan for the world.

God's Division in Nature

Of importance for the subject of God's division in history is His work of division in the natural creation. It is evident that these two go together, and designedly so. Division is apparently intended to characterize the whole. God knew what He had before ordained and what was forthcoming in the life of man. In the eternal counsel of His will He had decreed that a general condition of division should prevail. This being the case, what is more natural than that the appropriate setting should be laid in nature? We believe that such was the case and that in anticipation of the great division in the moral sphere God foreordained a suitable background for it in the natural.

The workman in any sort of occupation knows what it means to have everything in readiness for him in his work. Suitable surroundings must be provided. The workshop or place of business must be suited to the requirements of the work to be done. And the place must be kept in order, each tool in its place and the work materials ready to hand. Even so, we believe, in God's plan and provision for His own life and work on earth as the great Divider in the life of man. God's divisionism is a built-in condition, incorporated in the very nature and structure of the universe.

Polarity Everywhere

The general situation in this respect is a mat-

ter of common observation among men. It makes no difference what we are considering. No matter where we turn our attention a state of polarity is found to characterize the totality of persons and things. We have, for example, as a law of physics the fact that "action is equal to reaction in the opposite direction." Then there is the "law of contradiction" in logic, and the highly significant principle of "contrast" in esthetics. The same characteristic of polarity is to be observed in religion and ethics. Ralph Waldo Emerson developed the concept of a universal state of things in this respect in his famous essay on **Compensation**. And, fundamentally at fault as he was in his thinking, we cannot deny that he had a point in his elucidation of the universal polarity of being and life.

By way of illustration we have only to enumerate some of the many sets of opposites to be observed, as follows: light and darkness, day and night, sight and blindness, heat and cold, summer and winter. There is inside and out, top and bottom, up and down, above and below, high and low, right and left and near and far. So also great and small. There is to and fro, ebb and flow, and fast and slow. There is hard and soft and loud and low. There is rich and poor, plenty and want, strength and weakness, success and failure, victory and defeat, advance and retreat. There is sweet and bitter, attraction and repulsion, joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, health and sickness and life and death. There is assertion and denial, affirmation and negation. And there is what we see as chance versus what we know as choice.

Even more to the point for the matter in hand are the antinomies to be observed in ethics and religion. Right and wrong, true and false, good and evil, loveliness and ugliness, love and hate, reward and punishment are ever with us. "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" What mutuality can there be between Satan and God?

More particularly in the realm of theology there are the antinomies of election and reprobation, divine sovereignty and human responsibility. And there is the eternal mystery of singularity and plurality in God as seen in the doctrine of the Trinity: which doctrine is not that three persons are one person but that the only living and real God exists in three persons, one God forever blest.

(To be continued)

"If you find yourself loving any pleasure better than your prayers, and any book better than the Bible, any house better than the house of God, any table better than the Lord's table, any person better than Christ, any indulgence better than the hope of heaven — TAKE ALARM."

— Thomas Guthrie

The Death of Death

By J. G. Vos

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for everyone, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" — Rev. 1:18.

The Puritan John Owen entitled a book, "The Death of Death in the Death of Christ." Christ's death fully atoned for sin, therefore He could not remain dead. On the third day He rose with new life and power. A Chinese inquirer asked a missionary: "That story in the Bible about Jesus rising from the dead — is that really true or is it just a story?" This missionary was a liberal in theology, so he replied, "If you believe it is true, it is true for you; if I believe it is true, it is true for me, but the important question is, Are you following the ethical ideals of Jesus?" This kind of double talk abounds on every hand today. Over against all such attitudes the Bible affirms that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a fact of history as truly as the crucifixion was a fact of history.

Christ has crashed the barrier of death. He has overcome the reality and power of this terrible last enemy of mankind. The horror and abnormality of death, its apparent destruction of all human hopes and values, has been cancelled by the One who passed through that dark portal and returned clothed with the life of immortality. He rose in the same body that was nailed to the cross; the print of the nails was still visible. Yet that body was changed and could never again suffer or die. He is the One whom death could not hold — the once dead but now forever deathless One, with "the power of an indissoluble life" (Heb. 7:16, Greek).

Christ's resurrection is our ultimate ground of optimism. If this be true, nothing else really matters in comparison with it. If it be true, the ultimate issues of life and of the universe can only be favorable to the one who is in vital union with Christ. If this be true, our future is held in the hands of Him who has conquered our final enemy — death. If this be true, all else must eventually be adjusted to it.

During World War II a liberal minister preached on the question, "What would Hitler do with Jesus?" But a Bible-believing minister reproved him, saying that the real question is rather, "What will Jesus do with Hitler?" Jesus Christ, and not the evil men of this world, will have the absolute last word, and it will mean eternal peace and victory for His own. We have the key to facing death without fear, and this really includes victory over all our lesser fears.

So Jesus, vibrant with the power of immortality, says to His fearful disciples "All hail!" (Matt. 28:9). This means "Rejoice!". In the next verse He says "Be not afraid." What is your relationship to this Person who has crashed the dark barrier of death? The most important question for every person in the world is "What is my relationship to Jesus Christ?" There are various possibilities — opposition, unbelief, indifference, formal assent, or true faith in and commitment to Him. Has the Christ of history become the Christ of experience in your heart and life?

(Reproduced from *The Goal Post*)

Some Noteworthy Quotations

"To wish and struggle for the growth of an external organization called a Church, disregarding the Presence which gives it all its sanctity, is no uncommon fault in some who think that they are actuated by 'zeal for the Lord', when it is a much more earthly flame that burns in them."

— Alexander Maclaren

"The power of truth is the greatest power on earth. Next to it, however, is the power of sincere, earnest, and steadfast conviction."

— B. B. Warfield

"The human mind is very subtle, but with all its subtlety it will hardly be able to find a way to refuse to follow Scripture in one of the doctrines it teaches without undermining its authority as a teacher of doctrine."

— B. B. Warfield

"Christianity is not a distinctive interpretation of a religious experience common to all men, much less is it an indeterminate and constantly changing interpretation of a religious experience common to all men; it is a distinctive religious experience begotten in men by a distinctive body of facts known only to or rightly apprehended only by Christians."

— B. B. Warfield

"Charles Spurgeon and D. L. Moody, in the latter years of the nineteenth century, were facing a situation entirely different from that which faces the evangelists of today. They were facing a world in which many people in their youth had been imbued with Christian convictions, and in which public opinion, to a very considerable extent, was in favor of the Christian faith. Today,

on the other hand, public opinion, even in England and America, is predominantly opposed to the Christian faith, and the people from their youth are imbued with the notion that Christian convictions are antiquated and absurd. Never

was there a stronger call of God than there is today for a vigorous and scholarly defence of the faith."

— J. Gresham Machen

Religious Terms Defined

ARIANISM. A heresy in the ancient Church which denied the true deity of Jesus Christ. Named after Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, Arianism taught Christ existed before the creation of the world, but denied that He is the eternal Son, of the same substance with the Father. Arianism was opposed by Athanasius, and rejected as a heresy by the Church at the Council of Nicaea, A.D. 325.

ASCETICISM. The tendency, which came into the Christian Church from pagan sources in the early centuries, to seek a higher type of holiness by withdrawal from human society and renunciation of the ordinary pleasures and comforts of life which are not necessarily sinful. In practice, asceticism led to the notion that it is a sin to be comfortable and enjoy life. It sought holiness by self-decreed misery.

ATONEMENT. That perfect, finished work of Jesus Christ by which He offered Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile sinners to God. There are many false theories of the atonement; the true doctrine of the atonement is that Christ, as the sinner's substitute, bore the wrath and curse of God.

BAPTISM. "Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's" (S.C. 94).

CANON. The list of books recognized as Holy Scripture.

CENSURE. The act of judging and blaming others for their faults. Censure may be private or official, and it may be just or unjust. Improper private censure, and all unjust censure, are sinful.

CHEERFULNESS. A state of mind free from gloom or dejection. It is the duty of every Christian, by faith in the goodness, power and love of God, to cultivate a cheerful frame of mind, even though this may be difficult by reason of afflictions.

CHRISTIAN. One who believes on Christ as his Saviour from sin, and obeys Christ as the Lord of his life. This means not merely Lord of his religious life, but Lord of his whole life. Since Christianity is the way of salvation from sin, it is manifestly improper to speak of Jesus Christ (who was sinless) as a Christian.

CHRISTIANITY. The system of faith and practice revealed in the Word of God, in which Jesus Christ occupies the position of Mediator between God and sinners.

CHRISTOLOGY. That branch of Christian doctrine which sets forth the truth about Christ, His Person and work.

CHRONOLOGY. The science of calculating periods of time, and dates of historical events.

COMMENTARY. A book giving a continuous exposition of the Bible, or of some portion of it

The Law of God in the Modern World

(Continued from last issue)

Note: This series of lessons is an introduction to the Moral Law of God, including its source, nature, functions and relevance for the present

day. It follows the order of treatment in **The Larger Catechism** of the Westminster Assembly, beginning with Question 91.

LESSON 63

Aggravated Degrees of Human Guilt

Q. 151 (Continued). What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?

A. Sins receive their aggravations, 2. From

the parties offended; if immediately against God, his attributes, and worship; against Christ, and his grace; the Holy Spirit, his witness, and workings, against superiors, men of eminency, and such as we stand especially related and engaged unto;

against any of the saints, particularly weak brethren, the souls of them, or any other, and the common good of all or many.

Scripture References:

Matt. 21:38, 39. An example of the wickedness of a sin increased by reason of the position of the person injured by the sin.

1 Sam. 2:25. Acts 5:4. Psalm 51:4. Rom. 2:4. Mal. 1:8, 14. The guilt of a sin is increased when it is committed directly against God, His attributes and worship.

Heb. 2:2, 3; 12:25. Those who sin against the Lord Jesus Christ and His grace are guilty of aggravated transgression.

Heb. 10:29; 6:4-6. Matt. 12:31, 32. Eph. 4:30. Those who sin against the Holy Spirit, His witness and workings, are guilty of sin of aggravated seriousness.

Jude 8. Num. 12:8, 9. Isa. 3:5. It is especially offensive to God when offences are committed against persons who should be specially honored and respected for any reason.

Prov. 30:17. 2 Cor. 12:15. Psalm 55: 12-15. To sin against those to whom we are closely related, or specially obligated, is to be guilty of aggravated sin.

Zeph. 2: 8-11. Matt. 18:6. 1 Cor. 6:8. Rev. 17:6. Any offence against Christian people is an aggravated offence in God's sight.

1 Cor. 8:11, 12. Rom. 14:13, 15, 21. It is our duty to be especially considerate concerning weak brethren, and therefore any offence which injures them is an aggravated sin against God.

Ezek. 13:19. 1 Cor. 8-12. Rev. 18:12, 13. Matt. 23:15. Any offence which imperils the souls of others, or works against their salvation, is especially heinous in God's sight.

1 Thess. 2:15, 16. Josh. 22:20. A sin which involves others, or which interferes with the true welfare of all or many, is an aggravated transgression.

Questions:

1. Can we sin against men, or only against God?

Strictly speaking, we can sin only against God, our Creator and Judge, to whom we are morally responsible. We injure our fellow men, but in doing so we sin against God. Therefore David, who had grievously injured Uriah and Bathsheba, nevertheless said in his prayer to God, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned". Strictly speaking, we cannot injure God, and we cannot sin against men. But in our common speech we often say that we have sinned against men, and the Bible itself uses such language sometimes. This is of course perfectly proper, provided we understand

that in the strict sense of the words we sin only against God, and injure only our fellow men. Our moral responsibility is solely to God.

2. What part of the Ten Commandments deal with sins committed directly against God?

The first "table" of the law, or the first four commandments.

3. Why are sins committed directly against God especially heinous?

Because of the infinite majesty and holiness of God, against whom such sins offend, and because our highest obligation is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. Thus the person who sins directly against God disregards and violates his highest obligation.

4. In what ways do men sin directly against God?

Men sin directly against God by violating the commandments of the first table of the law. Particularly flagrant are such sins as atheism, idolatry, taking God's name in vain, and Sabbath breaking. All those, in their many forms, are sins directly against God; some are sins directly against God Himself as a Person; others are sins directly against God as revealed in His worship, ordinances, etc.

5. Why are sins against Christ, and His grace, especially heinous in God's sight?

(a) Because Christ is Himself truly God, just as the Father is, and therefore to sin against Christ is the same as to sin against God. (b) Because Christ's grace is the gift of God's love to lost and guilty sinners, and the person who sins against Christ's grace is sinning against the love and mercy of God, which should lead him to repentance.

6. Give a Bible instance of someone who sinned against the Holy Spirit.

Ananias. Acts 5:3 ("to lie to the Holy Ghost") and verse 4 ("Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God")

7. Why is sinning against the witness and workings of the Holy Spirit especially heinous in God's sight?

Because the Holy Spirit is given by God's love and grace to dwell and work in the hearts of His people. Those who sin against the inward witness and workings of the Holy Spirit are treating this gracious gift of God with contempt. Not every sin against the inward work of the Holy Spirit is the "unpardonable" sin mentioned in the Bible. But every person who resists or despises the inward work of the Holy Spirit is guilty of aggravated sin.

8. Why are offences against "superiors" and "men of eminency" especially serious?

We are under special obligations to treat some persons with honor and respect. For example, children are commanded to honor their parents, and it is the duty of citizens to honor those in positions of authority in the State. Similarly, in God's Word it is commanded that aged people be treated with honor and respect. Where there is a special obligation to honor and respect, any offence that is committed must be regarded as an aggravated offence. Thus, while it is wrong to slander any person, it is an aggravated offence to slander the President of our Country, or any other public official.

9. Why is it a heinous sin to injure "such as we stand especially related and engaged unto"?

The closer the relationship to any person, the greater our obligation to treat that person with justice and love. This is true regardless of whether the relationship is a blood relationship, or a social connection of some other kind. It is our duty to treat all our fellow-men with justice and love, but especially those who, in God's providence, are closely connected with us in some way or other. This truth is often forgotten and disregarded. People often treat outsiders better than they treat their own family. But it ought not to be so. One's own family, one's own relations, one's own employer, employees, etc., have a special claim on one's consideration. An injury done to such is an aggravated offence in God's sight.

10. What should we think of offences committed against our fellow Christians?

Offences committed against our fellow Christians are especially grievous in God's sight. This does not mean merely members of our own Church, but "any of the saints", as the Catechism rightly affirms. This is, all Christian people are our brethren in Christ and have a special claim on our consideration; an offence against any of them involves one member of the body of Christ injuring another member of the body of Christ. One of Satan's most effective ways of hindering God's cause in the world is by stirring up quarrels and trouble between Christian people. In the Bible this is called "discord among brethren", and we are told that sowing discord among brethren is one of the things that God hates (Prov. 6: 19).

11. What is meant by "weak brethren"?

Romans chapter 14 gives the key to the meaning of this expression. Briefly, a "weak brother" is a true Christian whose knowledge is defective, and whose faith, though real, is yet weak and wavering. He may have scruples of conscience about matters which are not really wrong at all, and he may be easily scandalized and discouraged by seeing other Christians doing things which he considers wrong. The "weak brother" has a really hard time to keep on going forward in the Christian life. Such people should have special consideration on the part of other Christians, but this does not mean that the scruples of the weak brother are to be imposed on other Christians as necessary rules of conduct, nor that the weak brother may be allowed to dominate the Church and dictate to its officers and members. The weak brother's scruples constitute an infirmity to be tolerated, not a platform to be propagated by the Church as a whole. But we should be careful to avoid offending against weak brethren, that is, shocking and scandalizing them needlessly by conduct which they consider wrong, even though it may not really be wrong in itself. Such disregard of the problems and difficulties of weak brethren is a heinous sin against Christ (1 Cor. 8:12).

12. Why is it an aggravated sin to offend against "the common good of all or many"?

We are all members of human society, and as Christians we are all members of the body of Christ, the Church. If each individual person could live out his life alone on an isolated island as Robinson Crusoe did for several years, he would have only God and himself to think of in connection with his moral life. But we cannot live like Robinson Crusoe. We are members of society and as such we are mutually dependent. Therefore we must realize that any sin we commit may involve three parties—God, ourself and our neighbor (or society in general). Obviously, the more people affected or injured by our conduct, the greater will be our guilt before God. Thus a person whose criminal negligence results in a train being wrecked, a hotel destroyed by fire, or a great forest fire started, is much more guilty than one whose carelessness has endangered only his own life or his own property.

LESSON 64

Sin in the Heart — Sins in the Life

Q. 151 (Continued). What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?

A. Sins receive their aggravations, 3. From the nature and quality of the offence: if it be against the express letter of the law, break many commandments, contain in it many sins; if not only conceived in the heart, but break forth in

words and actions, scandalize others, and admit of no reparation; . . .

Scripture References:

Prov. 6:30-33. The seriousness of a sin depends, in part, on the nature and quality of the offence committed.

Ezra 9:10-12. 1 Kings 11:9, 10. Offences

against the express letter of God's law are especially heinous, since they violate a direct command of God.

Col. 3:5. 1 Tim. 6:10. Prov. 5:8-12. Josh. 7:21. An offence which involves breaking several of the commandments, or committing many sins, is especially displeasing to God.

James 1:14, 15. Matt. 5:22. Micah 2:1. When sin is not only conceived in the heart, but breaks forth into words and actions, it is of aggravated seriousness.

Matt. 18:7. Rom. 2:23, 24. A sin which scandalizes others is an aggravated offence in God's sight.

2 Sam. 12:7-10. A sin which admits of no reparation is especially heinous in God's sight.

Questions:

1. What is meant by "the nature and quality of the offence"?

This expression means the inherent character of an offence, considered apart from all questions of persons and circumstances. Thus murder is a more heinous sin than theft, entirely regardless of who the murderer or thief may be, who may be the victims of the crimes, the time, place, etc. No matter who does it, or when or where or why, murder is in itself more wicked than theft.

2. What is meant by "the express letter of the law"?

This means the actual words of the law of God as given in the Scripture. Thus to steal is against the express letter of the law, for God's law commands, in so many words, "Thou shalt not steal". But to participate in a raffle or a lottery, although sinful, is not against the express letter of the law. It requires a process of logical reasoning based on the law of God in the Bible to prove that raffles and lotteries are sinful.

3. Give some examples of offences which involve breaking many commandments, or committing many sins.

(a) The Bible teaches that covetousness is idolatry. Thus the person who covets also commits idolatry, by setting his heart on worldly possessions. (b) Sabbath breaking also involves the sins of theft, irreverence and taking God's name in vain. The person who breaks the Sabbath in doing so violates the second, third, fourth and eighth commandments.

4. Where do all sins originate?

In the "heart" or innermost character of a person. (Read Mark 7:21-23). Sin proceeds from the heart, and finally finds expression in the outward conduct (words and deeds) of the person.

5. Which is more wicked, to harbor sin in the heart, or to express it in actual conduct?

To express the sin in actual conduct is much more wicked, though we should not forget that even to conceive a sin in the heart is sinful in God's sight. But the sin which is expressed in actual conduct is even more wicked, because it is a fuller development of rebellion against God. Read James 1:14, 15, and note how these verses teach this very truth.

6. Why is a sin which has the effect of scandalizing others especially grievous in God's sight?

Because such a sin concerns not merely two, but three, parties, namely oneself, one's neighbor, and God. A sin which does not affect other persons, or a secret sin known only to the sinner and God, is sinful and offensive to God; much more offensive is the sin which scandalizes others, or tempts others to sin too. Thus Eve's sin of eating the forbidden fruit had the effect of leading Adam to commit sin too; this multiplied its seriousness in God's sight.

7. What is meant by an offence which admits of no reparation?

So far as our relation to God is concerned, no sin that a person commits admits of any reparation. We are all guilty before God, and only the shed blood of Jesus Christ can take away the guilt of our sin. But in our relation to our fellow-men some sins admit of reparation, and others do not. For example, the sin of theft admits of reparation; a person who has stolen a sum of money from his neighbor can pay the money back. But the sins of murder and adultery do not admit of reparation; when once the wrong is done to our neighbor, there is no way by which it can be undone. The sin of bearing false witness against our neighbor may or may not admit of reparation. Thus, for example, if a person were to bear false witness in court, and then during the same session of the court confess this sin and retract the false statement, the harm done would be largely undone. But if the retraction were made years later, it would be too late to undo the wrong done.

LESSON 65

Sins of Hypocrisy

Q. 151. (Continued). What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?

A. Sins receive their aggravations, 3. From the nature and quality of the offence: . . . if against means, mercies, judgments, light of na-

ture, conviction of conscience, public or private admonition, censures of the church, civil punishments; and our prayers, purposes, promises, vows, covenants, and engagements to God or men:

Scripture References:

Matt. 11:21-24. John 15:22. Sins are aggravated when committed in spite of means used by God which should restrain sin.

Isa. 1:3. Deut. 32:6. Sins committed in spite of God's special mercies are aggravated transgressions.

Amos 4:8-11. Jer. 5:3. To sin against God's judgments is to commit aggravated sin.

Rom. 1:26, 27. 1 Cor. 11:14, 15. It is especially sinful to do what nature, even apart from Scripture, shows to be wrong.

Rom. 1:32. Dan. 5:22. Titus 3:10, 11. Those who sin in spite of the conviction of their own conscience commit aggravated transgression.

Prov. 29:1. Sin is aggravated by being committed in spite of warning or reproof.

Titus 3:10. Matt. 18:17. Sin is aggravated by being committed in spite of the censures of Church discipline.

Prov. 27:22; 23:35. Those who disregard civil penalties become guilty of aggravated transgression.

Psalms 78:34-37. Jer. 2:20; 42:5, 6, 20, 21. Eccles. 5:4-6. Prov. 2:17; 20:25. Lev. 26:25. Ezek. 17:18, 19. Sins committed in spite of our promises, vows, covenants, etc., are aggravated transgressions.

Questions:

1. What is meant by sins committed against means?

As used in the Catechism, this expression means sins committed in spite of special acts of God which should have the effect of restraining people's sinning. In Bible times such special acts of God often took the form of miracles; in our own day they may take the form of special and remarkable workings of God's providence, which should have the effect of making us stop and abstain from sin.

2. How do people sin against God's mercies?

All human beings sin against God's mercies continually, inasmuch as the very continuance of our existence depends on the free mercy of God. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:22, 23). Christian people especially sin against God's mercies, since Christian people have received the special mercy of God in His salva-

tion. There are also cases where people sin against particular special mercies and blessings which they have received from God; for example, where a person is by God's mercy delivered from danger of death, or from serious illness, and then instead of turning to God in repentance and faith, simply forgets God and lives a selfish, worldly life. Clearly all sinning against God's mercies amounts to aggravated transgression.

3. What is meant by sinning against God's judgments?

In the case of those who are not God's children, God's judgments are sent both to punish them for their sins and to warn them against continuing in sin. In the case of God's own children, His judgments are for the purpose of chastening, that is, to bring about their sanctification and prevent their being condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11:32). In either case, God's judgments should have the effect of leading a person to repentance and submission and obedience to God. In the Book of Revelation we read symbolic descriptions of many terrible judgments of God upon an unbelieving and Christ-rejecting world, several times with the added statement that these judgments did not bring about repentance (Rev. 9:20, 21; 16:9, 11). Such continued sinning in spite of divine judgments greatly increases people's guilt before God.

4. What is meant by the "light of nature", and how do people sin against it?

By the expression "light of nature" the Catechism means that elementary knowledge of God and of moral obligation which men have from the general revelation of God in the world of nature and the human heart and conscience, apart from God's special revelation in Scripture. The light of nature is insufficient for salvation, but it is sufficient to teach men that there is a God, that it is their duty to worship and honor Him, and that certain things are wrong. Thus the light of nature leaves men without excuse (Rom. 1:20). The light of nature, apart from Scripture, is in no sense adequate as a rule of conduct for sinners, but it does teach men that certain sins, such as murder, atheism and dishonesty, are wrong. When people commit sins which not only the Bible, but even the light of nature shows to be sinful, they are guilty of aggravated transgression. The person who sins against the light of nature sins against the law of God written in the constitution of his own being (Rom. 2:14-16), and thus violates not only God's revelation but his own psychical make-up.

5. How do people sin against "conviction of conscience"?

Conscience is that moral thermometer within our soul that registers disapproval when we act contrary to what we believe to be right, and approval when our action is in harmony with that we believe to be right. Conscience cannot tell us

what is right and what is wrong; it can only tell us whether we are acting according to what we believe to be right or wrong in any case. A person's conscience needs to be enlightened by the moral law revealed in Scripture. But it is always wrong to act against conscience; that is, it is always a sin to drive past the red light of conscience and do something which we believe to be wrong. There is a general operation of conscience, caused by the general operation of the Holy Spirit, in all human beings except those who have committed the "unpardonable" sin and have been abandoned by God to the most extreme moral and spiritual hardening. Apart from such exceptional cases, every person has some conviction of conscience, or sense of right and wrong. To disregard this is to commit aggravated sin. The Christian, by the special grace and operation of the Holy Spirit (through the new birth and sanctification) has a quickened or highly sensitized conscience, which functions far more quickly and accurately than the conscience of the non-Christian person. Yet even Christian people, because of their indwelling sinful nature, often act against conviction of conscience. In the case of the Christian, acting against conscience is even more heinous than in the case of the non-Christian person.

6. Why does sinning against "public or private admonition, censures of the church, civil punishments" involve increased guilt before God?

Because all these admonitions, censures and punishments are ways by which God shows His displeasure against sin and warns men to turn from it and practice righteousness. The Church and the State are both divine institutions, and as God's servants, each in its own sphere and manner, are to warn against wrongdoing and to encourage men in well-doing. The person who goes on in a course of sinful conduct in spite of one or more of these forms of warning and reproof is hardening himself in sin and rebellion against God. The more warnings he disregards, the greater his guilt.

7. Why does acting contrary to our own prayers, purposes, promises, vows, etc., involve aggravated sin before God?

Our own prayers, purposes, promises, vows, etc., are an abomination to God unless they are sincere; that is, unless we really mean them from the bottom of our heart and intend, by God's help, to live according to them for all time to come. If our prayers, etc., are not sincere, then they are hypocritical and God will not accept them (Psalm 66:18). If they are sincere, but at a later time we act contrary to them, this indicates backsliding or falling from a spiritual to a more or less carnal state. To allow ourselves to slip or retreat from high ground already attained in our Christian life must always be very displeasing to God and an offence against His holiness, and involves increased guilt which can only be cleansed away by the blood of Jesus Christ.

LESSON 66

Presumptuous Sinning

Q. 151 (Continued). What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?

A. Sins receive their aggravations, 3. From the nature and quality of the offence: . . . if done deliberately, wilfully, presumptuously, impudently, boastingly, maliciously, frequently, obstinately, with delight, continuance, or relapsing after repentance.

Scripture References:

Psalm 36:4. Jer. 6:16. Num. 15:30. Ex. 21:24. Deliberate, wilful and presumptuous sinning.

Jer. 3:3. Prov. 7:13. Impudent sinning.

Psalm 52:1. Boastful sinning.

3 John 10. Malicious sinning.

Num. 14:22. Zech. 7:11, 12. Prov. 2:14. Isa. 57:17. The wickedness of a person's sin is increased by stubbornness, persistence, delight and various other characteristics.

Questions:

1. What is meant by sinning "deliberately, wilfully, presumptuously"?

These three adverbs are closely related in their meaning in connection with sin. To sin deliberately is to sin after some consideration of the matter in one's mind. To sin wilfully is to sin with the attitude of being bent on having one's own way, no matter whether it is right or wrong. To sin presumptuously is to sin intentionally, counting on God's grace to bestow forgiveness for our sin afterwards. Deliberate, wilful and presumptuous sinning is to be contrasted with unintentional sinning, sinning resulting from weakness or sudden temptation rather than from a set purpose to sin, and sin resulting from ignorance or a faulty understanding of the requirements of God's law. Clearly all deliberate, presumptuous and wilful sinning is heinous and highly offensive to God.

2. What special form of wilful sinning is common at the present day?

Unwillingness to submit our judgments, opinions and practices to the authority of the Holy Scripture which is the special revelation of God's truth and will. There are those who frankly admit that the Bible requires the singing of the inspired Psalms exclusively, and without instrumental music, in the worship of God, who yet say,

"I like hymns and instrumental music and I intend to have them". Some who would not say this in words say it by their actions, even contradicting their own voluntary profession by their inconsistent practices. Similarly there are persons who are violently opposed to the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination or election, who yet do not venture to deny that it is taught in the Scriptures. It is one thing to fail to grasp or understand the teaching of the Scriptures about some matter; it is quite a different thing to refuse to submit ourselves to a doctrine or principle which we admit to be Scriptural. Wilful rejection of a teaching of God's Word, understood and admitted to be such, is one of the most awful sins that a person can commit.

3. Give some Bible examples of godly people who sinned deliberately, wilfully or presumptuously.

(a) David's sin in numbering the people of Israel, even after Joab had tried to dissuade him from it (2 Sam. 24:1-14). (b) Peter's sin of dissimulation, for which Paul rebuked him to his face (Gal. 2:11-14).

4. What is meant by sinning "impudently, boastingly maliciously"?

To sin impudently is to sin boldly, without any feeling of shame because of our sin. The person who sins impudently makes no attempt to conceal his sin; he does not care who knows about it. The person who sins boastingly goes one step even beyond this; he is even proud of his sinning, and brags about it to others; his glory is in his shame (Phil. 3:19). When Claverhouse shot the Covenanter martyr John Brown and then on being asked "How will you answer for this morning's work?" replied, "To man I can be answerable, and as for God I will take him into my own hands!", he sinned impudently and boastingly. To sin maliciously is to sin with spite or enmity against God or God's people. When officials of the Roman Empire were not satisfied with taking the lives of Christian people, but must do it in

the most cruel and inhuman ways that could be invented, by lingering excruciating tortures, they were guilty of sinning maliciously against God.

5. What makes people sin "frequently, obstinately, with delight, continuance"?

It is the perverse, wicked stubbornness and hardness of the human heart that brings about such inveterate sinning. It can only be explained by the Bible doctrines of original sin and total depravity. According to God's Word, sin is not a superficial defect in human nature, but a deep-rooted, all-pervasive moral corruption. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Thus there are people who actually sin not with regret or remorse, but with pleasure and delight (Rom. 1:32). Indeed it is really true of all unconverted people that they love sin (2 Tim. 3:4), and only the common grace of God restrains this natural love of sin from finding its fullest expression in outward deeds of iniquity and abomination.

6. Why does relapsing after repentance aggravate the seriousness of a person's sin?

Relapsing after repentance is particularly offensive to God because it involves a fall from a degree of separation from sin previously attained. This is peculiarly a sin of Christian people, for the person who is not a Christian never really repents in the true sense of the word. The non-Christian may experience a kind of natural regret for sin and resolution to "turn over a new leaf", but as he has not been born again this "repentance" is not real "repentance unto life". Christian people experience true repentance unto life, and yet often fall back into various sins of which they had once truly repented before God. In their case this lapse will be only temporary and will be followed ultimately by new repentance and restoration to a spiritual state. But even a temporary lapse into our old sins grieves the Holy Spirit and displeases God. The only way of preventing it is by constant self-distrust, spiritual watchfulness and prayer.

LESSON 67

Sins which Compound Human Guilt

Q. 151 (Continued). What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?

A. Sins receive their aggravations, 4. From circumstances of time and place: if on the Lord's day, or other times of divine worship; or immediately before or after these, or other helps to prevent or remedy such miscarriages; if in public, or in the presence of others, who are thereby likely to be provoked or defiled.

Scripture References:

2. Kings 5:26. Jer. 7:10. Isa. 26:10. Sins aggravated by circumstances of time and place.

Ezek. 23:37-39. Isa. 58:3-5. Num. 25:6, 7. Sins aggravated by being committed on the Lord's day, or other time of divine worship.

1 Cor. 11:20, 21. Jer. 7:8-10. Prov. 7:14, 15. John 13:27, 30. The guilt of sins increased by their being committed immediately before or after divine worship.

Ezra. 9:13, 14. Sin aggravated by commission directly after experiencing God's chastisements.

2 Sam. 16:22. 1 Sam. 2:22-24. Sin rendered more heinous by reason of it being committed publicly, or in such a manner as to scandalize others.

Questions:

1. Why may circumstances of time and place increase the guilt of people's sins?

There are certain circumstances of time and place which are calculated to impress upon our minds the seriousness of our duty to God and the requirements of His moral law. When these circumstances of time and place are disregarded, and sin committed in spite of them, the sin is flagrant and the guilt aggravated. For Judas to betray Christ would have been wrong at any time, but when it was done so soon after the observance of the Passover and the institution of the Lord's Supper, Judas' guilt was greatly increased.

2. Why does a sin committed on the Lord's day, or other appointed time of divine worship, or immediately before or after such occasions, involve aggravated guilt?

Because such a sin involves not only the guilt of the sin in itself, but the added guilt of profanation of the Lord's day or other ordinances of divine worship. In Matthew 12:9-14 we read that the Pharisees held a meeting on the Sabbath, the purpose of which was to devise a plan for killing Jesus. A meeting the purpose of which is a conspiracy to commit murder is unlawful regardless of time or place; but when it was held on the Sabbath day, the Pharisees' guilt was greatly increased.

3. How is guilt increased by disregard of recently experienced special providences of God?

The special providences of God which enter our lives are intended to make us "stand in awe, and sin not" (Psalm 4:4), that is, they should lead us to stop and think about our moral condition and our relation to God. When we disregard such special providences, we inevitably harden our own hearts and increase the guilt of our sin. To deny Christ is a great sin at any time; when Peter committed it three times in succession, all within a few hours after he had been specially warned by the Lord concerning that very matter, it was an even more serious sin.

4. Why are sins committed publicly, or in such a way as to have a bad influence on others, specially wicked in God's sight?

There is a true sense in which each of us is his brother's keeper. We have a moral responsibility for our neighbor as well as for ourselves. A sin committed privately, or known only to a few persons, is wrong and offensive to God; one committed publicly must inevitably have a bad effect on many persons, and so involves added guilt before God. For a person to use the golden and silver vessels of God's holy Temple for drinking wine would be sinful even if done with the utmost privacy; when king Belshazzar did it publicly, in the presence of a thousand of his lords, accompanied by his princes, wives and concubines, the guilt was necessarily aggravated (Dan. 5:1-4, 23). It would be easy to think of many forms of sin whose guilt is aggravated by commission in a public manner.

LESSON 68**Sin is an Absolute Evil**

Q. 152. What doth every sin deserve at the hands of God?

A. Every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty, goodness, and holiness of God, and against his righteous law, deserveth his wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come; and cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ.

Scripture References:

James 2:10, 11. Ex. 20:1, 2. Hab. 1:13. Lev. 10:3; 11:44, 45. Every sin is committed against the sovereignty, goodness and holiness of God.

1 John 3:4. Rom. 7:12. Every sin is a violation of God's righteous law.

Eph. 5:6. Gal. 3:10. Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse.

Lam. 3:39. Deut. 28:15-19. Matt. 25:41. All sin deserves not only temporal but eternal punishment.

Heb. 9:22. 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. No sin can be cancelled except by the blood of Christ.

Questions:

1. How evil is sin?

The Catechism asserts, and the Scripture references prove, that sin is absolutely evil; that is, that sin possesses an absolute character, and even the least sin shares in that absolute character as a repudiation of the authority of God. Some sins are more heinous than others, but even the least sin is a total rejection of God's authority over us. This principle is well illustrated by the first sin committed by any human being, the sin of Adam and Eve in eating the forbidden fruit. In itself a slight and apparently unimportant action, the eating of the fruit nevertheless involved a total rejection of God's authority over the human race. It involved believing Satan's lie in preference to God's truth, and trusting human reason rather than God's revelation. The same is true, essentially, of every sin; every sin involves believing a lie rather than the truth, and following our own reason or desires rather than the revealed will of God. Thus every sin is absolutely evil, and deserves God's wrath and curse both here and hereafter.

2. How can a finite being, such as man, commit a sin which is absolutely or infinitely evil?

Sin is infinitely evil because it is committed against God, who is infinitely perfect. We must always guard against the modern humanistic way of thinking about sin, which tends to regard sin primarily in relation to its effect on human beings. The primary fact about sin is that it is an offence against God. Since God is infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His sovereignty, goodness and holiness, every sin, even though committed by a finite creature such as man, is infinitely evil.

3. What does the character of God's law show about the wages of sin?

God's law is a perfect law and it demands perfect righteousness of human beings. The moral law of God does not require of us mere "goodness", but absolute moral perfection. Any deviation, even the slightest, from absolute moral perfection, is sin. Since this is true, even the slightest deviation from absolute moral perfection deserves the penalty of the broken law; that is, the penalty of death in its widest sense, physical, spiritual and eternal.

4. What is meant by the "wrath and curse" of God?

God's wrath is His righteous indignation and displeasure against sin and sinners; it is the opposite of love and grace, and means that God cannot regard sinners with favor or complacency (except on the basis of an atonement provided to take away their sin). God's curse is the expression of His wrath in the form of a penalty. God's wrath is an attitude toward sinners; God's curse is the attitude carried into action against them. Thus every sin deserves God's indignation and punishment in this life and the life to come. Read Rom. 1:18; Eph. 2:3.

5. Why does every sin deserve the wrath and curse of God eternally?

Because every sin is a sin against the eternal God. Many people have stumbled over this truth, objecting that it cannot be just for God to punish temporal sin with eternal penalties. But whether men like this doctrine or not, the Bible definitely teaches it. Even though sin is committed in time, it is committed against the God who is above and beyond time, and thus incurs His wrath and curse beyond the limits of time, that is, beyond the present earthly life. Moreover it is the nature of sin, once started, to go on without ceasing (unless the person is redeemed by Christ). The person who is guilty of sin not only cannot remove the guilt of that sin, but goes on and on in rebellion against God, always becoming more and more guilty and more and more evil. Thus in the nature of the case sin deserves eternal punishment.

6. How alone can sin be expiated or canceled?

Sin can be expiated or canceled in no other way than by the blood of Christ who suffered and died as the divinely-provided Substitute for guilty sinners. Every human being deserves God's eternal wrath and curse; that all do not actually suffer His wrath and curse to all eternity, is due only to the free grace and mercy of God in giving His Son to bear the penalty of the broken law as a Substitute. This implies, of course, that all attempted human ways of dealing with sin are wrong and useless. The person who tries to take away his own sin by moral reform, good resolutions, "turning over a new leaf", performing good works, acts of charity, religious observances, forms and ceremonies, Church membership, prayer, ascetic practices, or any other way whatever, is a miserable, self-deceived sinner on the road to eternal frustration in hell. Only the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, can take away the guilt of human sin. There is no other way.

LESSON 69

The Only Way to Escape from Wrath

Q. 153. What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us by reason of the transgression of the law?

A. That we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us by reason of the transgression of the law, he requireth of us repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and the diligent use of the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation.

Scripture References:

Acts 20:21. Matt. 3:7, 8. Luke 13:3, 5. Acts 16:30, 31. John 3:16, 18. That we may escape God's wrath and curse, He requires of us true

repentance accompanied by faith in Jesus Christ as our Saviour.

Prov. 2:1-5; 8:33-36. Besides the spiritual attitudes of repentance and faith, God requires us to use diligently the outward means by which the benefits of Christ's saving work are communicated to us.

Questions:

1. Why did God provide a way by which human beings could escape His wrath and curse for their sin?

Because of God's great love, which led Him, even in eternity before the creation of the world, to decree a plan of salvation by means of which

His elect would in due time be redeemed and saved from their sin.

2. When was the way of escape from God's wrath and curse first revealed to the human race?

Immediately after the Fall, when God promised that at some future day the seed of the woman (Jesus Christ) would crush the head of the serpent (Satan and Satan's kingdom) (Gen 3:15).

3. How are we to take advantage of the way of escape from His wrath and curse which God has provided?

We are to take advantage of this way of escape by complying with God's revealed requirements concerning it, which are outlined in the Catechism as including (a) repentance toward God; (b) faith in Jesus Christ; (c) diligent use of appointed outward means.

4. Why is repentance necessary for escape from God's wrath and curse?

To escape from God's wrath and curse means to be saved from sin. We cannot be saved from sin without recognizing the awful evil of our sin, hating it with our whole soul, and earnestly desiring to be delivered not only from its guilt but also from its power. That is to say, we cannot be saved from sin while we still desire and intend to continue in sin. If we are to escape God's wrath and curse, we must turn from our sins to God.

5. What is meant by "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ", and why is it necessary for salvation from God's wrath and curse?

By "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ", the Catechism means true, saving faith in Christ; that is, (a) Jesus Christ being regarded as the object, and not merely the example, of our faith; we are to have faith *IN* Christ. (b) Our faith is to be faith in the real Christ, as He is revealed to us in the Scriptures; that is, we are to have faith in Him as our Redeemer, prophet, priest and king, the one and only Mediator between God and ourselves, and only way of salvation. (c) We are to put our trust and confidence for salvation and eternal life wholly and only in Christ, not at all in ourselves or anything we can do.

6. Why is diligent use of the outward means of grace necessary if we are to escape God's wrath and curse for our sin?

God has chosen to appoint these outward means of grace (the Word, the sacraments and prayer) as instruments by which the benefits of Christ's saving work are communicated to us. These means of themselves cannot save us; it is only Christ that can save us; but He makes use of these appointed means. Therefore if we would have Christ and make sure of an interest in Him, we must be diligent in our use of the appointed means. The false tendency called "mysticism" despises and neglects the use of these outward means of grace, and is therefore contrary to the Scriptures and spiritually dangerous. Of course God could have made a plan to save sinners without the use of outward means of grace; but He has not chosen to do so, and so we must avail ourselves of the means which God has provided.

The End

Studies in the Epistle to the Ephesians

LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

Authorship of the Epistle

The Epistle claims in 1:1 to have been written by the apostle Paul. This Pauline authorship is accepted by practically all scholars, though a few have questioned it on the ground that though Paul had spent much time in Ephesus, yet the Epistle does not mention any of the Ephesian Christians by name, thus seeming, it is held, to indicate lack of personal familiarity with the Church at Ephesus. This argument, however, is without any real weight. The evidence that Paul wrote the Epistle is overwhelming. As for his not mentioning any of the Ephesian Christians by name, this is easily explained by the fact that this epistle was evidently not intended exclusively for the church at Ephesus, but was to be circulated among other churches also, therefore the author intentionally omitted personal references; compare Col. 4:16.

Place of Composition

It is commonly agreed that Paul wrote this epistle at Rome. The Epistle itself does not state where it was written, though it does mention that at the time of writing Paul was a prisoner (3:1; 4:1; 6:20). This is understood by nearly all scholars to mean Paul's imprisonment at Rome, which is recorded in Acts 28:16-31.

Some few scholars have held that the imprisonment mentioned was not Paul's imprisonment at Rome, but that at Caesarea (Acts 23:33 to 26:32). However, a comparison of the contents of the "prison epistles" (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon) with the history of Paul as we find it in the book of Acts, indicates that the place of composition was not Caesarea but Rome.

A few scholars have also held that the "prison

epistles" were written at Ephesus while Paul was imprisoned there during the stay recorded in Acts 19. But the book of Acts does not say that Paul was imprisoned during this visit to Ephesus, though of course it is still possible that he was. But the theory that these epistles were written at Ephesus is only a speculation and lacks all real evidence. The view that they were written at Rome is far more satisfactory.

Time of Composition

During his imprisonment at Rome Paul spent two full years in that city, living in his own rented dwelling (Acts 28:30). These two years were approximately A.D. 61-63. It was during this period that the "prison epistle"—Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon — were written.

Recipients of the Epistle

The Epistle itself states in 1:1 that it was written "to the saints that are at Ephesus." However the words "at Ephesus" are lacking in the two most important Greek manuscripts (**Codex Vaticanus** and **Codex Sinaiticus**). These two words are also lacking in several other ancient manuscripts. Very little real evidence for the words "at Ephesus" exists. This fact, together with the fact that the Epistle does not mention any Christians at Ephesus by name, has led some scholars to deny that the Epistle was originally sent to the church at Ephesus.

The facts are probably to be explained as follows: Paul wrote the Epistle for the church at Ephesus, but not for that church alone; he also intended that it be circulated among other churches, as is suggested by the Epistle to the Colossians (Col. 4:16) in the case of the latter epistle. Then one copy of the Epistle was sent to Ephesus and either Paul or one of his helpers inserted the words "at Ephesus" in that particular copy which was sent to Ephesus, while these words were left out of other copies that were intended for general circulation among other churches. On this theory, our most reliable Greek manuscripts, the **Codex Vaticanus** and the **Codex Sinaiticus** are derived, not from the copy actually sent to Ephesus, but from an original that lacked the words "at Ephesus."

Occasion for Writing the Epistle

The occasion for writing the Epistle to the Ephesians seems to have been the danger of a division in the church between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. Large numbers of Gentiles had been converted to Christianity at Ephesus, which was predominantly a Greek city. But there were also many Christians with a Jewish background. These two groups of Christians differed widely in their background, customs, former manner of life and general attitudes, so that there came to be a danger not merely of friction, but actually of division. The

apostle Paul endeavored to avert this danger by writing this Epistle, showing that the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians are one body in Christ, so that there cannot be such a thing as a Jewish Church or a Gentile Church, but only the Church of Christ, in which all are one in Him.

Theme and Scope of the Epistle

The Epistle is however broader than would be required by the apparent occasion for writing it. Paul does not by any means limit himself to the danger of a division between Jewish and Gentile Christians. This danger only forms his starting point to present a Christian philosophy of history, showing a majestic panorama of God's dealings with the human race from eternity to eternity. It begins back in the eternity of the past, before the creation of the universe, and it goes on through the history of the world to the completion of the great Plan of Redemption in the eternity of the future.

Chapter 3:9-11 may be regarded as setting forth briefly the scope of the Epistle. These verses show that the Church is intended for a great purpose—to manifest God's glory and His wisdom, not only in this world, but even to the angels, the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. Paul shows that the Church of Jesus Christ possesses cosmic significance. It is important not only for time, but for eternity; not only for this world, but for the entire universe.

An Outline of the Epistle to the Ephesians

I. Salutation and Title. 1:1,2.

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21

1. The Church is the Workmanship of the Triune God. 1:3 to 2:10
 - (a) Predestinated by the Father from eternity. 1:3-6.
 - (b) Redeemed by God the Son. 1:7-12
 - (c) Sealed by the Holy Spirit. 1:13,14
 - (d) Formed into the body of Christ. 1:15-23
 - (e) Saved from sin by God's free grace. 2:1-10
2. Jewish and Gentile Christians are one Body in Christ. 2:11-22
 - (a) The original sinful state of the Gentiles. 2:11-13
 - (b) The wall of partition broken down. 2:14-18
 - (c) The Church a habitation of God through the Spirit. 2:19-22
3. The Mystery of the Church. 3:1-21
 - (a) This mystery was formerly hidden, but is now revealed. 3:1-6

- (b) Paul's own connection with this mystery. 3:7-9
- (c) The divinely intended purpose of the Church. 3:10-12
- (d) Paul's prayer for the Church. 3:13-21

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24

1. The Responsibilities of members of Christ's Church. 4:1-32
 - (a) The duty of maintaining spiritual unity. 4:1-6
 - (b) The gifts of ministry given by Christ to the Church. 4:7-11
 - (c) The intended purpose of these special gifts. 4:12-16
 - (d) The duty of cultivating practical holiness. 4:17-32
2. The Duty of Christians in Personal and Social Matters. 5:1 to 6:9
 - (a) Separation from idolatry and uncleanness. 5:1-17
 - (b) Spiritual worship. 5:18-20
 - (c) Mutual duties of husbands and wives, including a discussion of marriage as an illustration of the relation between Christ and the Church. 5:21-33
 - (d) Mutual duties of parents and children. 6:1-4
 - (e) Mutual duties of masters and servants. 6:5-9
3. The Christian's Equipment for his Conflict with Sin. 6:10-24
 - (a) The true source of the Christian's power. 6:10
 - (b) The Christian's enemies and his spiritual armor. 6:11-17
 - (c) The duty and privilege of prayer. 6:18-20
 - (d) Conclusion and benediction. 6:21-24

Questions:

1. What verse names Paul as the author of the Epistle?
2. What argument has been used to deny that Paul was the author?
3. Why is this argument without any real weight?
4. Where was Paul at the time of writing the Epistle?
5. What ground do we have for holding that he was there?
6. What other theories have been held by some scholars as to the place where the Epistle was written? Why are these theories without value?
7. What was the approximate date of writing Ephesians?
8. What other Epistles of Paul were written at about the same time?
9. On what ground has it been denied by some scholars that this Epistle was addressed to the church at Ephesus?
10. What two words in the first verse of the Epistle are missing in the two most important Greek manuscripts?
11. How is the omission of these two words from the most important Greek manuscripts probably to be explained?
12. What was the occasion for writing the Epistle to the Ephesians?
13. What is the general scope or theme of the Epistle?
14. What verses of the Epistle may be regarded as setting forth briefly its general scope?
15. Into how many main sections may the Epistle be divided?
16. What is the character of each of these sections?

LESSON 2

I. Salutation and Title of Book. 1:1,2

We have already considered verse 1 in the previous lesson. We here note that Paul's apostolic office was by the will of God. This is something that is disregarded by "liberal" scholars who claim that Paul contradicts Jesus Christ, and that we should forget Paul and go "back to Christ." It is also disregarded by some evangelical Christians who take the liberty of setting aside this or that teaching of Paul which they do not like. Paul was an apostle by the will of God. What Paul wrote is the word of God; what he

commanded is the commandment of the Lord. At the Judgment Day men will have to give answer to the Lord for their treatment of the teachings and commands found in Paul's epistles. If Paul was indeed an apostle by the will of God, then Paul's Epistles are of divine authority.

The Epistle is addressed to the saints (at Ephesus) and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. In the New Testament, "saints" is a description of all Christians. A Christian is a saint; a saint is a Christian. "Saint" means **holy person**. A Christian is therefore a holy person. It is not merely

that he **ought** to be a holy person; a Christian is a holy person, and if not a holy person, then he is not really a Christian. The modern usage of the word "saint", meaning a remarkable or eminent Christian in the history of the Church, is unknown in the New Testament.

Since Christians are called saints, there is something terribly wrong with any church whose members are not holy in life. When the general membership of a church is conformed to the world in its manner of life, a state of spiritual backsliding or even of apostasy has set in. Real Christians are saints, and a real church is made up of saints.

Christians are also called "the faithful in Christ Jesus". The word "faithful" here means **believing**. Christians are not only saints; they are believers. The importance of faith is greatly minimized today. On every hand we find people who say that life is more important than faith. This absurd opinion is often found even within church circles. But it is not found in the Bible. Christians are faithful; they are believers; they are committed to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

To the Christians, Paul pronounces grace and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. "Grace" means the special love and favor of God given to the undeserving, who are also the ill-deserving. "Peace" is the state and condition of life which results when a sinner has received grace; it is the condition of a life reconciled to God. Someone has truly remarked that real peace is not the absence of war but the presence of God. That is the life of the Christian, who has received the grace of God in his soul.

Note that grace comes first, and peace second. There can be no real peace except on the basis of grace received from God. Many people are concerned about peace today, who are not in the least concerned about grace. It is one of the sins of ministers to wish people peace when those people cannot possibly have peace, because they do not have grace. When ministers are talking with or praying for people who are still in their sins, they should not wish them peace. Instead

they should pray that God would give them no peace day nor night until they receive His grace in Christ.

Grace and peace come not simply from God the Father, but from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Their source is indeed God the Father, but they are mediated to sinners through the Lord Jesus Christ. The church has no true message except the message of redemption mediated through Christ. The modern tendency to speak only of God and leave Christ out is therefore an anti-Christian tendency. When Christ is left out, what is left is not Christianity.

Questions:

1. What was the source of Paul's authority as an apostle?
2. What mistake is made by those who say we should forget Paul and go "back to Christ"?
3. What sin is committed by Christians who take the liberty of setting aside those teachings of Paul which they do not like?
4. What is the meaning of the word "saint" in the New Testament?
5. What is wrong with a church whose members are not holy?
6. What does the word "faithful" mean in 1:1?
7. What is the importance of faith in the Bible?
8. What is the meaning of "grace" in the Bible?
9. What is the nature of real peace?
10. Why does Paul mention grace first and peace second?
11. Why is it wrong to wish peace to people who are yet in their sins?
12. From whom do we receive grace and peace? Why does Paul mention the Lord Jesus Christ in this connection, in addition to God the Father?

LESSON 3

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21

1. The Church is the Workmanship of the Triune God. 1:3 to 2:10

(a) The Church Predestinated by God the Father from Eternity. 1:3-16

The doctrine of predestination is a difficult one, and it is a doctrine liable to misunderstanding, which requires very reverent and careful handling. However it is a doctrine of God's Word, and we should not be reluctant to study it.

Here we note that the Church has been

predestinated by God the Father. The following particulars should be observed:

1. The time of predestination: before the foundation of the world, 1:4.
2. The cause of predestination: the good pleasure of God's will, 1:5. This means the sovereign choice of God, for which no other reason can be assigned than that it pleased God so to act.
3. The effect of predestination: that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 1:4.
4. The aim of predestination: adoption as

God's sons, 1:5a; the praise of the glory of God's grace, 1:6.

From these verses we note that the Church's and the believer's salvation does not originate in human free will, but in the eternal purpose of God — His eternal love and purpose of grace.

Needless to say, the very idea of election ("chosen us", 1:4) implies the selection of a part of humanity from the whole. Some say that God elected the entire human race to eternal life, but that is contrary to the definite statements of the Bible. If all are elected, then none are really elected. To "choose" implies the selection of some and the non-selection of others. A church may hold an election to choose deacons; but who ever heard of a church of 100 members choosing the entire 100 to serve as deacons?

This passage reveals to us the origin of the Church in the secret counsel of God back in eternity before the universe existed. We may note in passing that the rest of the Bible teaches exactly the same doctrine. Our salvation originates not in ourselves but in the eternal purpose of God. The initiative, the first step, the original purpose, which brings about the salvation of an individual, is of God, not of man.

Many parallel passages might be cited which set forth the same truth, but space would not permit. However, we shall note one passage in each Testament:

Psalm 65:4, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts." (Note that the initiative is with God; God chooses the man and causes him to approach unto Himself).

John 17:1, 2, "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (Note that Christ's commission is to give eternal life, not "to as many as may choose to accept the offer," but "to as many as thou" — God the Father — "hast given him").

Many people object violently to this doctrine. It has perhaps been opposed more than any other single doctrine of the Bible. We are not particularly concerned to answer these objections here, for they are hardly ever based upon a study of the Scriptures; almost invariably objections to the doctrine of predestination arise from human reasoning and an insistent desire to assert man's independence over against God. The objectors are not willing for the eternal issues of life to be determined by God; that is, they are not willing for God to be really God. Such objectors are not in a truly religious relation to God; they are not willing for God to be really God and themselves to be only creatures of God; they demand that God

shall take a subordinate place on the sidelines while the eternal issues of life are decided by the free will of man. Some popular evangelists have gone so far as to say "God's hands are tied; he cannot save you until you yourself make the decision." Others say, "God is helpless; he can only wait for us to accept Christ."

Still others try to escape from the doctrine of predestination by explaining it away. A common representation, sometimes found in evangelistic tracts, runs thus: The doctrine of election is a doctrine of the Bible, but should not be misunderstood. What it really means is that God votes for everyone, the devil votes against everyone, and each person casts the deciding vote in his own case.

This view of the matter only represents God as "voting", not as electing or choosing anyone. Moreover it puts God and the devil on a par as if each had exactly the same power and effect in the world. According to this idea, God does not really elect anyone; each person elects himself for eternal life or eternal perdition. God simply elects those who elect themselves. This is dishonoring to God for it reduces His sovereignty to a mere rubber-stamp ratification of the decisions of His creatures.

Another evasion of the doctrine of predestination is found in the common idea that God has elected people, not to eternal life, but merely to "a chance for salvation", that is, to such external privileges as hearing the Gospel, coming in contact with the Bible, etc. This idea seems very attractive to some people, but the Bible does not sanction it. Note carefully that according to the passage before us, God has chosen individuals not merely to external privileges or "a chance", but to holiness and moral perfection (1:4) and to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself (1:5). This predestination and election is unto actual salvation, not just unto "a chance", for salvation. It does not merely give people "a chance", for them to "take it or leave it"; it results in their being accepted in the beloved (1:6).

Many pages could be devoted to a point-by-point refutation of the common objections to the doctrine of predestination. Those who wish such a refutation are referred to two excellent books, namely: **The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination**, by Loraine Boettner. Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. Co., Box 185, Nutley 10, N.J. \$4.50. **The Sovereignty of God**, by A. W. Pink. Reiner Publications, Swengel, Pa. 17880. \$3.95. It is sufficient for our purpose here to state that the doctrine of predestination is clearly and emphatically taught in Scripture. Whether this doctrine is pleasing to man is not the question; the question is only whether it is true.

Questions:

1. Why should we not hesitate to study the doctrine of predestination?

2. When was God's decree of predestination made?

3. What is the only cause that can be assigned to God's decree of predestination?

4. What is the effect of God's predestination?

5. What is the two-fold aim of God's predestination?

6. Where does the salvation of the church and of the Christian originate?

7. Why is it not correct to say that God has elected everyone to eternal life?

8. What text in the Psalms teaches the doctrine of election?

9. What text in the Gospel of John teaches it?

10. Why do many people object violently to the doctrine of predestination?

11. What can be said about the religious life of those who are opposed to predestination?

12. Why is it wrong to say "God's hands are tied"?

13. Why is it wrong to say: "God votes for you, the devil votes against you, and you yourself cast the deciding vote"?

14. Why is it wrong to say that God has elected people to "a chance for salvation"?

15. Name two books that provide answers to the common objections to predestination.

16. Why is the real question not whether the doctrine of predestination is pleasing to man?

LESSON 4

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

1. The Church is the Workmanship of the Triune God. 1:3 to 2:10, Continued

(b) The Church Redeemed by God the Son. 1:7-12

"Redemption" means the purchase, or buying back, of something by the payment of a ransom price. We should note that there is a close and necessary connection between election and redemption. Those whom God the Father has elected from eternity, Jesus Christ has redeemed by His work of atonement — His sufferings and death on the cross. This connection is clearly brought out by the present passage: "he hath chosen us **in him**", that is, of course, in Christ, 1:4; "In whom we have redemption through his blood" (1:7), meaning, of course, **In Christ** in whom we have redemption through his blood.

Christ's atonement was of infinite value, and would have been sufficient for the redemption of all men, **if such had been its intended purpose**. But the Bible teaches us that its intended purpose was the redemption of the elect, whom God had chosen from eternity unto everlasting life.

From 1:7 we note that the source of our redemption is the grace of God, and the effect of our redemption is the forgiveness of our sins. (Read the verse). We should note, too, that this work of redemption is "through his blood", and is not a mere example as Modernism asserts, but a truly vicarious or substitutionary atonement.

This redemption proceeds from the riches of God's grace. The Scripture idea of grace is that of divine favor bestowed upon those who have no legal claim to it. Grace proceeds from God, and is characteristic of God, while graces may be possessed by man as gifts from God—the grace of prayer, the grace of liberality, etc.

The Christian is saved "according to the riches of his (God's) grace". That is, his salvation is wholly the result of God's unmerited favor, and is not based in any degree on human merit, works or achievements. Salvation is therefore a gift, pure and simple, not an accomplishment or achievement of man.

In 1:9 "wisdom" and "prudence" are mentioned. The former of these terms refers to God's eternal plan for human salvation; the latter to God's manner of executing that plan. According to the unsaved, God's plan is mere foolishness (see 1 Cor. 1:18-30), but in reality it is the wisdom of God.

In 1:9 we find the word "mystery" used for the first time in this Epistle. Compare 3:3. The Bible idea of a "mystery" is something formerly hidden, therefore unknown, but later revealed, and therefore known to the initiated. It does not mean something so profound or obscure as to pass human comprehension, but something which could never be known except by divine revelation. This is different from the modern usage of the word "mystery" to mean something inherently unfathomable or baffling, such as the relation of time to eternity.

The mystery spoken of in 1:9 is the mystery of the salvation of the Church as the spiritual body of Christ. Verse 9 says that this mystery is "made known unto us." No doubt it is the same as the "mystery of the gospel" mentioned in 6:19, the "mystery of Christ" in 3:4, and the "mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God" of 3:9. From 3:6 we learn that this mystery included the truth that the Gentiles should be fellow members in the body of God's covenant people, the Church.

In 1:10 we read of "the dispensation of the fulness of times." Scofield and others take this as designating the millennium, but this interpretation is unwarranted. It means rather the whole

duration of the age of the Gospel, beginning with the coming of Christ in the "fulness of time" (Gal. 4:4), and continuing until all things are fulfilled. The events and conditions of this period, including all arrangements for the preaching of the Gospel and the gathering of the elect into the Church, were ordained in eternity, and are accomplished progressively in time, according to the divine purpose, until all shall have been completed.

1:10 tells us that it was God's purpose to "gather" or sum up all things in Christ, both those in heaven and those on earth. This text implies Christ's present kingship, as Mediator, over the universe, as in Matt. 28:18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth", etc.

In 1:11 we are told that we have obtained an inheritance. There is, however, a question about the translation of this verse. The ARV renders it: "In whom also we were made a heritage", etc. It is true, of course, that we as Christians have obtained an inheritance; but the probable meaning of 1:11 is that we ourselves are Christ's heritage.

Note that according to 1:11 the whole of the Church's salvation depends upon the sovereign free grace and eternal purpose of God: "being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." If God works **all things** after the counsel of His own will, then He works **our salvation** after the counsel of His own will, too, for our salvation is included in the category "all things." To God, not to man, belongs the honor and glory of it.

In 1:11, 12 the pronoun used is "we". Verse 12 says: "we. . . who first trusted in Christ," meaning Jewish Christians, who had lived under both dispensations, and had, formerly, under the Old Testament dispensation, looked forward to or hoped for the promised Messiah. But when we turn to 1:13a we see that the pronoun is changed from "we" to "ye", indicating that a different class of people is being spoken of. As shown by 13:a, the "ye" refers to Gentile Christians who heard the Gospel, believed, and thereupon received salvation. The two together—Jewish and Gentile Christians—constitute Christ's heritage, the "purchased possession" spoken of in 1:14. In these

verses Paul prepares the way for the great doctrine of the unity of the Church in Christ, which he intends to introduce in the next chapter.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the term "redemption"?
2. With what other doctrine is the doctrine of redemption closely connected in the Bible?
3. What was the intended purpose of Christ's atonement?
4. What was the value of Christ's atonement?
5. What is the source of our redemption?
6. What is the effect of our redemption?
7. What phrase in 1:7 shows that Christ's atonement is a substitutionary atonement and not a mere example?
8. What is the difference between "grace" and "graces"?
9. What verse of chapter 1 shows that salvation is purely a gift of God?
10. What is the meaning of the word "mystery" in Scripture?
11. How does the Bible meaning of "mystery" differ from the modern usage of this word?
12. What is the mystery referred to in 1:9?
13. What other verses of the Epistle speak of the mystery?
14. What is "the dispensation of the fulness of times" mentioned in 1:10?
15. What truth concerning Jesus Christ is implied in 1:10?
16. What question exists concerning the translation of 1:11? Which translation is probably correct?
17. How does 1:11 prove that the whole of salvation depends upon the eternal purpose of God?
18. What class of persons is referred to by "we" in 1:11, 12, and what class by "ye" in 1:13?

LESSON 5

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

1. The Church is the Workmanship of the Triune God. 1:3 to 2:10, Continued

(c) The Church Sealed by the Holy Spirit. 1:13, 14

In 1:13b we note that those who believed on Christ were "sealed" with the Holy Spirit of promise. This indicates, first, that every Christian

is indwelt by the Holy Spirit; and second, that the Holy Spirit is received at the time of believing on Christ for salvation; and third, that the Holy Spirit does not depart from those who have thus received Him.

The very meaning of "seal" is a pledge or guarantee of permanence. In common affairs, such as in legal documents, no statement to which an official seal has been affixed can be altered after that. In 1:14 the figure of the seal is further set

forth. It is an "earnest", that is, a payment on account, or a deposit to guarantee the payment of the balance due, "until the redemption of the purchased possession."

The time of this redemption of the purchased possession is the time of the resurrection of the body, as Paul tells us elsewhere, for example in Rom. 8:23, "even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Eph. 4:30 also speaks of the "day of redemption." From this we learn that the Holy Spirit remains in believers and will continue to abide in them until the resurrection—in fact, for ever and ever. Hence for the true believer in Christ to "fall from grace" and be eternally lost is impossible. The Christian's perseverance in grace and ultimate salvation are fully assured by the indwelling Spirit of God. Christ has purchased the Church to be His own possession (or has purchased an eternal possession for the Church, if we prefer that translation); this purchased possession will be fully redeemed at the resurrection; but meantime an "earnest" is given, which guarantees the completion of the transaction at the appointed time.

(d) The Church Formed into the Body of Christ. 1:15-23

In this section, Paul tells how he gave thanks for the faith of the Ephesian Christians, and how he prayed for them, 1:15-18. This is truly a model prayer for all Christians. Paul does not accuse his fellow Christians to the Lord, but on the contrary gives thanks for their faith and love, and in petitioning, he requests for them spiritual and heavenly blessings, that they may know Christ and the hope of His calling, as in 1:18.

From this point Paul goes on to speak of the great power of God by which He raised Christ from the dead. That same power which raised Jesus Christ from the dead is at work in the Christian believer, as we see in 1:19, 20. Following this, Paul speaks of the consequences of the resurrection of Christ, of which he names four, as follows:

1. Christ's being seated at the right hand of God the Father in heaven, 1:20.
2. Christ's supreme authority over all created things, 1:21.
3. Christ's headship over the Church, 1:22.
4. The Church becoming Christ's body, 1:23.

The supreme authority attributed to Christ in 1:21 cannot be limited to the period after His second coming, for two reasons. First, in 1:21b, not only "the world to come", but also "this world", that is, this present age, is included in its scope. Second, verse 20 cannot be arbitrarily separated from verse 21. In verse 20 Christ sits at the right hand of God; in verse 21 He exercises supreme authority. But Christ is seated at the right hand

of God the Father today; therefore it follows that Christ is now, during this present age, supreme ruler over the entire created universe.

In 1:22 we note that Christ is not only Head over the Church, though of course He is that, but that He is **head over all things** for the benefit of the Church. It does not say "head over all things IN the church", but "head over all things TO the church." His purpose in His headship or authority over the universe, the purpose for which all things have been put in subjection under His feet, is **that His Church may receive protection and benefit.**

In 1:23 we read that the Church is Christ's body, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all." These last words present a certain difficulty in interpretation. Perhaps we may best explain them as follows:

1. The Church is Christ's fulness, or is filled with Christ, who is present in every member of the Church by His Holy Spirit. Christ is everywhere present in His Church; the Church is baptized into His Holy Spirit; hence the Church is filled by Christ. Also it is by the Church that the life of Christ is most fully manifested in the world. The Church is the fullest and most complete way by which Christ is connected with any part of the created universe. It is Christ's body, and therefore it has the most intimate and complete connection with Him.

2. But apart from the Church, Christ, because He is divine, fills all in all. He not only fills the Church, in a special way, with His presence; He also fills all created things, in a general way, with His presence. If we may so interpret the text, it is a reference to the omnipresence of Christ's divine nature; that is, it is a reference to the fact that Christ, because He is God, is everywhere. Thus we may say that as the Church is filled with the presence of Christ in a moral and spiritual way, so the entire universe is filled with the presence of Christ in a cosmic way. "Do not I fill heaven and earth? said the Lord" (Jer. 23:24).

Returning to the thought of the Church as Christ's body, and Christ as the Church's head: this of course does not mean that body which in His glorified humanity He personally wears, with which He rose from the tomb. It means His mystical or spiritual body on this earth, that through which His will is done on earth while He is in heaven. The Head partakes of the sufferings of the members on earth, by sympathy; the members partake of the power of the heavenly Head, by faith.

Questions:

1. What persons are indwelt by the Holy Spirit?
2. When is the Holy Spirit received by a Christian?

3. What is the meaning of a seal?
4. What is meant by the statement that the Holy Spirit is an earnest until the redemption of the purchased possession?
5. When will the redemption of the purchased possession take place?
6. What do 1:14 and 4:30 imply as to the possibility of a true believer "falling from grace" and perishing for ever?
7. What special features are found in Paul's prayer for the Christians, 1:15-18?
8. What tremendous power is at work in the Christian believer?
9. What four consequences of Christ's resurrection does Paul name?

10. Why can Christ's supreme authority, mentioned in 1:21, not be limited to the period after His second coming?

11. What is implied in the statement of 1:22 that Christ is head over all things to the Church? How does this differ from His being head over all things in the Church?

12. What is meant by the statement that the Church is the fulness of Christ?

13. Apart from filling the Church, what does Christ fill?

14. Why can Christ be said to fill all things?

15. In what sense is the Church called "the body of Christ"?

LESSON 6

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

1. The Church the Workmanship of the Triune God. 1:3 to 2:10, Continued

(e) The Church Saved from Sin by God's Free Grace. 2:1-10

In Chapter 2 we come to the application of redemption, in which God the Holy Spirit is the most prominent Person of the Trinity.

The need for salvation lies in the lost condition of the "natural" or unsaved man. This condition is described by Paul in five particulars, as follows:

1. A Condition of Spiritual Death. The unsaved person is said to be "dead in trespasses and sins" (2:1) and "dead in sins" (2:5). This means that he is alienated from God. It is a state described as spiritual death; not merely sickness, weakness or imperfection, which could be repaired; not merely incompleteness or deficiency, as the theory of evolution implies; but "death", which implies man's total depravity and his total inability to save himself. Because the state of the unsaved man is a state of death, all reform, good resolutions, self-culture, etc., are sure to fail to save him. Man needs not merely reform, education, guidance, etc., but new life.

2. Characterized by a Sinful Walk. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (2:2). Not only is the unsaved man spiritually dead; he is characterized by a sinful course of conduct. This is true of every person who is without Christ.

Many persons who walk in a sinful course would not admit this fact. The greatest sinners when Christ was on earth were not the publicans and prostitutes, wicked as these were, but the

scribes and Pharisees — the very people who proudly supposed themselves to be righteous.

Paul tells us that walking in trespasses and sins is the same thing as walking according to the course of this world. No wonder, then, that the world does not see anything sinful in such conduct. Paul is speaking from the standpoint of God's standard — His moral law — not from the standpoint of the depraved and darkened opinions of men. We must remember that the Bible states that what is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

The outward form of sin varies, but the essence is always the same — what of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God. God looks on the heart and sees the real condition, while men — even Christians — almost always tend to look on the mere outward appearance. Before we venture to say that we are not walking in trespasses and sins according to the course of this world, we should ask God for light to compare ourselves, not with other people, but with the perfect moral standard found in the Bible.

3. In Bondage of Satan. "According to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (2:2b). This is none other than Satan or the devil. There are some people who are obviously the agents of Satan. Others are really such though they do not appear to be so.

In the Bible we read of persons who were possessed by demons. In demon possession an evil spirit captured and took complete control of the personality of a human being, so that the human being spoke the evil spirit's words and carried out its intentions. But that is not the only way that people are in bondage to Satan.

We should realize that Satan is a very intelligent being. He is described in the Bible as crafty and subtle in accomplishing his evil purposes. Not

only the victims of demon possession, but every unsaved person is really in bondage to Satan. Our Lord called him "the prince of this world." Paul calls him "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." We rightly feel that the afflicted people forced to live under dictator government in communist countries are in a miserable condition of slavery. The fact that many of them believe in those tyrannical governments makes it an even worse form of slavery — slavery not merely of the body but also of the mind and the spirit. But here in Ephesians chapter 2 we see an even more universal and more dreadful form of bondage, the bondage of the unsaved world to Satan, the prince of the power of the air.

The notion that Satan is now in hell is a piece of popular imagination unsupported by the Word of God. The Bible speaks of everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels, but they will not be consigned to it until the Judgment Day (see Rev. 20). Today Satan is intensely active throughout this world. In calling him the prince of the power of the air, Paul perhaps is calling attention to the fact that Satan is a supernatural being, higher than this world, but far beneath God who dwells in the highest heavens. But we should never forget that Satan is active in the world of men today, seeking to accomplish his sinister purposes.

Questions:

1. Which Person of the divine Trinity is the most prominent in the application of redemption?

2. In how many particulars does Paul describe the lost condition of the unsaved man?

3. What is implied by the statement that the unsaved person is dead in trespasses and sins?

4. Why cannot moral reform save the sinner?

5. What kind of conduct characterizes the unsaved person?

6. What classes of people were the greatest sinners, in God's sight, when Jesus Christ was on earth?

7. Why does the world not see anything specially sinful in the conduct of unsaved people?

8. What is there about sin that changes, and what is there about it that always remains the same?

9. What is the essential nature of sin?

10. Whom does Paul call "the prince of the power of the air"?

11. What was the nature of demon possession as described in the Bible?

12. Who is in bondage to Satan?

13. What is the worst form of slavery?

14. Why is it incorrect to say that Satan is now in hell?

15. What may be the reason why Paul speaks of Satan as "the prince of the power of the air"?
(To be continued)

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 limits of 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 local book dealer or direct from the publishers; do not send orders to the publisher of "Blue Banner Faith and Life".

THE SPEAKER'S TREASURY OF 400 QUOTABLE POEMS, by Croft M. Pentz. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506. 1963, pp. 159. \$2.95.

Mr. Pentz has gathered together in one book these 400 poems and has indexed them according to subject matter, and also by title and author. Many of them are new to this reviewer. Some are quite familiar. I have used some of them, and if you like to illustrate a sermon with poetry, you should have this book.

To name just a few subjects, there are poems about the Bible, the Blood, God's care, touch, way, will, the Holy Spirit, Men, Mother, etc.

There are fifty-three subjects in alphabetical order which makes them easy to find.

— Herbert A. Hays

MEN MADE NEW, compiled and edited by David R. Enlow. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506. 1964, pp. 150. \$2.95.

MEN MADE NEW is a book of true stories of lives that have been transformed by the Holy Spirit. Dr. Robert A. Cook, President of King's College, in his foreword, says, "Men Made New presents a factual and fascinating answer to the question, 'Why are Christians different?'"

The stories range from men who from their youth knew nothing but sin and crime as did Pet-

er Katauskas to men like T. E. McCully, father of Edward, one of the five martyrs to the Auca Indians, who had been taught the need for second birth by a godly father and mother.

When you start to read this book, picking one here and another there, you will soon want to read every one. They are stories which reveal the power of God's grace bestowed through Jesus Christ and made effective by the Holy Spirit.

— Herbert A. Hays

LIVING MIRACLES, by James C. Hefley. Zondervan Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506. 1964, pp. 149. \$2.50.

James C. Hefley spent his boyhood in the Ozarks, became a minister and pastored several churches before becoming editor of **Sunday Pix** for David C. Cook Publishing Co.

Twenty-five of the **Living Miracles** stories have appeared in magazines like **Sunday Digest**, **Power**, **Christian Life**, and **Guidepost**.

They are stories of men and women who have been transformed by the power of God's grace, and of others who have found effective ways of serving the Master. The Karlstad family is one of these latter. A Lutheran pastor with five children, coming home from a trip to North Dakota, got the children starting to singing. They liked it so well, they decided to spend their vacation that summer doing sacred concerts in other congregations. The first summer they sang twenty-six times and came home so thrilled with their experiences that they decided to do it again the next year.

You will want to read every single story before passing the book on to someone else to read.

— Herbert A. Hays

A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MODERN SCIENCE, by Robert L. Reymond, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, P. O. Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1964, pp. 30. No price stated.

A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MODERN SCIENCE is dealing with too much material too superficially. It does not give adequate discussion of the views it is criticizing. There are also several unclear statements:

Page 9 — “. . . even though man had become like God, knowing good and evil.”

Page 10 — “No fact is truly known unless its createdness in the Biblical sense is owned by the scientist.”

Reymond uses the term **scientism** which gives the impression of ridicule rather than reasoning with the scientist, and his work is dealing more exactly with the **philosophy** of modern science.

I agree with much of what he says, but find his arguments weak, and judge his presentation unpersuasive.

— Edward A. Robson

THE ORIGIN OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM, by John C. Whitcomb, Jr., International Library of Philosophy and Theology, (**BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES**: J. Marcellus Kik, Editor), Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., P.O. Box 185, Nutley 10, N. J. 1964, pp. 34. 50 cents.

By a series of nine arguments, Whitcomb demonstrates that natural cosmologies do not explain the origin and phenomena of God's solar system.

The “Double-Revelation Theory” attempts to set theology and nature at odds, and corrects theology at such places. For example, the D-R theory says that the naive account of creation in Genesis I must be adjusted to conform to our modern theories about the origin of the solar system.

Whitcomb's work is technical but not obscure. He concludes, “. . . the Christian may have perfect confidence that science can make no ultimate fruitful discoveries that are not in perfect accord with the clear and obvious teachings of God's Word.”

— Edward A. Robson

SUKI AND THE INVISIBLE PEACOCK, by Joyce Blackburn, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506. 1965, pp. 51. \$2.95.

Little Suki wanted a best friend of her very own, but even she was surprised to find her Best Friend to be an invisible peacock. Best Friend proves to be a true best friend in ways that count; like sharing secrets, and sometimes just listening to Suki.

There are so many interesting adventures for the primary-age child in this story, including some sensitive musings from a child's mind. Loneliness and learning to love those who don't love you are big questions for little people to answer.

Joyce Blackburn's writing is sensitive to youngsters and adults alike. As a teacher myself, I highly recommend this book for the primary-age child and his parents.

— Gretchen J. Robson

THE STORY OF THE CHRIST CHILD, by Leon Morris. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. 1960, pp. 128. \$2.50.

This book is subtitled, “A Devotional Study of the Nativity Stories in St. Luke and St. Matthew,” and that is exactly true. Each verse of the gospel account dealing with the birth of Christ is explained carefully, soberly, understandingly, from the viewpoint of consistent Calvinism. It is fabulous. Surely so for the pastor,

but also for the man in the pew. It is scholarly but simple. Morris has the gift of explaining the difficult in simple terms. The teacher who must deal with these passages whether in Sabbath school or in day school will find help here.

And it is easy to find what you are looking for. The passages are dealt with in blocks. To find a specific verse you look at the table of contents to find the chapter in which the verse is found, and then look for the verse, printed indented in the text.

Critical questions are not discussed. This is part of the purpose of the writer. You will not be bogged down in the views of unbelievers. They have their place, but not in this book.

The tone of the book is set in the opening paragraph: "The story of Christmas" . . . (please overlook the word) . . . "is the story of the most stupendous happening in the history of the world, for it is the story of God's sending his Son to earth. It is the story of God's action for man's salvation, for Bethlehem leads right on to Calvary. It is the story of that 'foolishness of God' which is 'wiser than men', of that 'weakness of God' that is 'stronger than men' (1 Cor. 1:25). For who amongst men would have ever dreamed that the Son of God would come to earth as the Babe of Bethlehem? It is the story above all stories which brings home the truth that God does things in his own way, and that his way is not the way of men" (p. 9).

The book is full of insights and gems of truth growing out of a thorough knowledge of the text.

— Jack J. Peterson

BAPTISM NOT FOR INFANTS, by T. E. Watson. Published by the author, the Rev. T. E. Watson, M.A., Ribchester, Lancs, England. 1962, pp. 108. 3s. 6d. (Paperback).

Watson claims to be a modern day puritan. He is the British agent of the "Sovereign Grace Publishers." Yet, he is a vigorous opponent of infant baptism. After a short pilgrimage in the arena of paedobaptism, all his problems were finally solved by reading Alexander Carson's, **Baptism, Its Mode and Subjects** — after that, he says, "the fog was gone" (p. 10).

This is a maddening book. Its method is to use quotations from defenders of infant baptism to disprove the position. The concessions made in the writings of the divines in defending infant baptism are brought together. The greats are quoted: Berkhof, Calvin, Hodge, Murray, J. Vos, Warfield — and many others.

After reading the book, I felt like I have on other occasions, when discussing the truth of Scripture with a Jehovah's Witness — where do you begin? With so many false ideas and misconceptions, just what do you do?

To readers of **Blue Banner**, it will be of interest that J. G. Vos has a whole chapter devoted to him, which, to me, indicates that the arguments hurt Watson.

Perhaps one quote will explain the whole: "apart from fulfilling the condition of the covenant — works under the law, faith under the gospel — the sign of the covenant is utterly worthless" (p. 95). Need we say more? It proves that the great argument against infant baptism is the dispensational wedge between Old and New Testaments, whether in the name of a rigid dispensational theology, or in the name of the puritans.

Watson's closing observation is that we believe "an abomination of untold enormity" (p. 102).

— Jack J. Peterson

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, by John R. Richardson and Knox Chamblin. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506. 1963, pp. 166. \$2.95.

This book is a volume in the set entitled, *Proclaiming the New Testament*. The purpose of this series edited by Ralph G. Turnbull, is "to provide homiletical comments and ideas."

And this book reaches that end. It is not a full commentary. It does not deal in depth with the text. It doesn't cover every text of the book treated. You go to the book with a text in mind and you may not find it treated at all. Yet there is much here. There are suggestions for sermons. There are ideas that set the mind on the pathway of thought.

There are reservations, and questions that arise too. We wonder why 2nd Maccabees is quoted in parallel to the Scriptures. We question the Turnbull cliché, "no pastor can lead his people to a level of thought and spiritual experience higher than the one he occupies" (p. 5), as though the power of the Word were restricted by the experience of the minister.

The conflict pictured in Romans 7:14-25 is on the whole good. It is good to read, "the Old Testament law was administered in the context of God's grace" (p. 76). Romans 9 is called "The Hardest Chapter in the Bible" (p. 92), and is explained in a satisfactory way, consonant with the Reformed faith.

— Jack J. Peterson

PELOUBET'S SELECT NOTES FOR 1966. By Wilbur M. Smith. W. A. Wilde Company, 10 Huron Drive, Natick, Mass. 1966, pp. 447. \$2.95.

These are the old reliable Peloubet's Notes on the International Bible Lessons, edited as they have been for many years by Dr. Wilbur M. Smith. The 1966 Notes are the 92nd annual volume of this publication. Exegetical, expository

and illustrative material is provided on the Biblical text. The material provided is eminently usable and will be found practical for all age groups using the International lessons. An occasional note or comment may be found with which most of our readers will disagree. On the whole, however, this material is eminently satisfactory. It is true to evangelical, Biblical Christianity. The teacher who feels the need of real help will find it here in abundance. That such a splendid book, with substantial cloth binding, can be produced and sold to the public for the modest sum of \$2.95 is remarkable. This work is heartily recommended to our readers.

— J. G. Vos

DAILY MANNA CALENDAR FOR 1966, edited by Martin Monsma. Zondervan Publishing House, 1415 Lake Drive, S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506. Price not stated, but presumably same as last year, \$1.95.

This help to personal and family devotions comes in a neat box, size 4¼ x 6 inches and 1¼ inches thick, which can be hung up in a convenient place in the home. It contains a single sheet for every day in the year, providing a Scripture text, brief meditation on same, and sometimes thoughts for prayer or poetical quotations. The matter is theologically sound and true to the Scriptures, and the manner of presentation is truly edifying. It is a pleasure to recommend this item cordially to our readers.

— J. G. Vos

DAWN OF A NEW ERA, by Johnny Lee. World Literature Crusade, Box 1313, Studio City, Calif.; Box 125, Prince Albert, Sask., Canada. 1962, pp. 54, paper cover. 35 cents or 3 copies for \$1.00.

The author of this little book is a Korean Christian. With intense earnestness he shows how nationalism and other changes in the world situation have necessitated changes in missionary methods and strategy. The old era in which the American or European missionary managed the whole program with unquestioned authority and expected the national Christians simply to accept and obey orders is gone forever. The indigenous church on the mission fields is now the order of the day. This means that the Christians of Asia, Africa and other areas must learn both to propagate Christianity themselves and to finance and govern their own churches. But if the old conventional type of missionary work is becoming a thing of the past in many parts of the world, there is a new opening in the field of Christian literature. Literacy is increasing rapidly in many parts of the world. The Communists are aware of this and are producing a great flood of printed matter, some of it very attractive in appearance, but deadly poisonous in its ideology. In the face of this there is a most urgent need for more and better Christian literature for the masses of the

people in mission lands. The author rightly deplores the extravagant spending of money on luxuries, while the Lord's Great Commission is largely neglected. He pleads for responsible and sacrificial Christian stewardship for the production and distribution of Christian literature wherever needed.

One adverse comment: we are sorry this organization is called a "Crusade." The term is popular today, but it leaves a bad taste in the mouth of anyone who knows something of the history of the medieval crusades — those murderous, lawless, mob-dominated efforts to regain control of the empty tomb of Christ from the Moslems of the Middle Ages. The crusades were a disgrace and scandal to Christianity, and no truly Christian movement should be named after them.

— J. G. Vos

EVANGELICALISM: THE NEW NEUTRALISM, by William E. Ashbrook. Published by the author at 115 W. Weisheimer Road, Columbus 14, Ohio. 1963, pp. 48, paper cover. 35 cents.

"Evangelicalism" ought to be a good name — it properly means that interpretation of Christianity which maintains the Evangel — the Gospel or Good News of the grace of God to sinful man. More precisely, as defined by Benjamin B. Warfield, the term means that view of Christianity which holds that in salvation God deals directly with the soul of the individual person, in distinction from **Sacerdotalism**, which holds that the saving grace of God is mediated exclusively through sacraments in the hands of an official priesthood. In America, in recent years, "Evangelicalism" has been more loosely used, as meaning orthodoxy or Bible-believing Christianity. In Britain, on the other hand, the term "Evangelical" is often used to mean "Calvinistic" or "Reformed." We believe that Dr. Warfield's definition is the correct one, even though it does not correspond to present day usage.

The booklet under review is a severe indictment of contemporary American Evangelicalism, which it considers a reaction against Fundamentalism and a partial compromise with Liberalism and Neo-orthodoxy. The booklet is especially severe in its criticism of Dr. Billy Graham, though several other men and several prominent institutions are severely criticized also.

We do not agree with those who can co-operate with Liberals, Modernists and Neo-orthodox persons in evangelism, missionary work, religious education and ecumenical movements. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that there is a reason why Dr. Billy Graham and others can engage in such co-operative efforts, as they do, without being consciously guilty of unfaithfulness to the Lord and to their Christian commitments. This reason, the reviewer is convinced, lies in the

different views of the Visible Church which are held by Dr. Graham and his critics. These differences were outlined by the present writer in an article entitled "The Visible Church: Its Nature, Unity and Witness", published in *The Westminster Theological Journal*, Volume IX, No. 2 (May, 1947) and reprinted in *Blue Banner Faith and Life*, Volume 6, No. 3 (July-September 1951) and subsequent issues. Because they do not hold what may be called a "high" view of the nature of the Visible Church, many leading Evangelicals feel that they can co-operate with Liberals, Neo-orthodox, etc., without ethical compromise. Regarding the Visible Church as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself, and holding an atomistic rather than an organic view of the relationship of the individual Christian to the Visible Church and the relation of church to church, they do not feel consciously guilty of sinful compromise in their association or co-operation with Liberals, etc.

Holding as we do the "high" view of the Visible Church, we cannot but judge these men

inconsistent in some matters. It comes down to the question: What is orthodoxy? Is a man "sound" who holds and teaches soundly the Scriptural doctrine about God, man and salvation? Or is a Scriptural view of the Visible Church also necessary for a man to be truly "sound"? Is the doctrine of the Visible Church expendable or is it an organic and indispensable part of the system of Christian truth revealed in the Word of God?

Fundamentalism as a movement was, we maintain, wrong in selecting a group of cardinal doctrines and concentrating on the defense of these. The whole body of truth revealed in the Word is to be confessed and defended. On the other hand, present-day American Evangelicalism is not an adequate answer to the shortcomings of Fundamentalism. The real answer lies in a return to the full-orbed Christianity of the Scriptures — Calvinism or the Reformed Faith, which (as Warfield long ago pointed out so clearly) is nothing more nor less than consistent Biblical Christianity.

— J. G. Vos

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:

Does the independence of Congregationalists extend to doctrine?

Answer:

Yes — to everything. In the Congregational system there is no authority (under God, of course) higher than a single local congregation. The only restraint on this is that if a congregation goes too far, other congregations may refuse to have fellowship with it.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

Why are there term elders in Presbyterian Churches today (elders elected not for life but for a limited period of years)?

Answer:

The practice referred to is usually called "rotating" eldership. Perhaps the situation which led to the practice is that some are unwilling to serve if it means for the rest of their life, while they may be willing to serve for three years or some similar limited period. In *some* (not all) Presbyterian denominations the eldership is a sort

of honor rather than an office entailing heavy actual functions. Where this is the case, the rotating system makes it possible to honor more men.

The most obvious difficulty in the way of a system of rotating eldership is the shortage of qualified men. There just do not seem to be enough qualified men to have rotating elders. In some congregations of the Reformed Presbyterian Church there are men who hold the title of elder but have at their own request been relieved of the responsibilities of active service, on account of age, infirmity or other necessary reasons. Where rotating eldership is practiced, the elders are ordained only once. If after a period of non-functioning as elders they are then re-elected to serve another term, they are thereupon installed but not ordained.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

Why do we not have women elders when we have women as deacons?

Answer:

About twenty years ago the Reformed Presbyterian Church considered in its Synod a pro-

posal to permit the ordination of women as elders. It was defeated on the ground of being unscriptural.

In the mind of the present writer, there is also serious doubt about the Scripturalness of women as deacons. The ordination of women as deacons rests upon a debatable interpretation of a single verse (Romans 16:1). A woman, Phoebe, is here spoken of as a **diakonos** of the church in Cenchrea (near Corinth). The question is, is the term **diakonos** here to be understood in its ordinary sense of "servant" or in its specialized sense of "deacon"? Either meaning would fit the context. In the King James version **diakonos** occurs 30 times, being translated "deacon" 3 times, "minister" 20 times, and "servant" 7 times. It may mean "deacon" in Rom. 16:1, but it also may mean simply "servant", i.e., helper in an unofficial but real way.

The practice of the early Church (as reflected in the Book of Acts and the New Testament Epistles) as to all ordained officers was that they were **men**, with the single debatable exception of Phoebe. In Acts 6:5, 6, the Jerusalem church chose seven deacons — all of them men. I Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9 speak only of men.

Women are just as good as men, and much better at some things. But there are psychological differences between men and women, which God has recognized in His Word. No writer of a Bible book (so far as known) was a woman, no apostle, no evangelist. The present-day trend toward setting these distinctions aside (and in many denominations ordaining women as ministers) has arisen from a loose view of Scripture which does not regard the Bible as strictly normative for the practice of the Church.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

What were the main issues of the Protestant Reformation?

Answer:

Volumes have been written on this question. Obviously we cannot attempt more than a capsule answer here. The Reformation came in the 1500's. The pioneer Reformer was Martin Luther. Others were Zwingli, Knox, Calvin. There were two major issues involved in the Protestant reaction against Roman Catholicism. These were:

(1) The question of authority. For Rome the Church was the authority. The Reformers insisted upon the Bible alone as the seat of authority in religion. (**Sola Scriptura**).

(2) The question of salvation. Rome taught a form of **synergism** (salvation partly by the grace of God and partly by the merit of human works).

The Reformers insisted that salvation is wholly by the unmerited grace of God and is received by faith alone (**sola fide**).

There were many subordinate issues, but the Reformation turned on these.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

A pastor of another denomination said that Calvinism and Arminianism are both true. He held that each of them is half of the truth and you have to take them together to get the whole truth. What should be thought of this idea?

Answer:

The type of thinking suggested in the above query is often met with. Those who hold such an idea are obviously unfamiliar with the history of the controversy between Calvinism and Arminianism, and do not have a clear understanding of what the teachings of Calvinism are.

The differences between these two systems were sharply defined at the Synod of Dort in 1618-19. At the points of difference between them, each of these systems is a flat contradiction of the other. It is therefore very foolish and misleading to say that they are BOTH true and must be taken together to get the whole truth. The famous "Five Points of Calvinism" are contradictions of the five Arminian doctrines against which they were framed. When two propositions are mutually contradictory, one or the other must be true, but they cannot both be true. Columbus discovered America in 1492, or he did not discover America in 1492. Who would be so foolish as to hold that these contradictory statements must be combined to get the real truth about Columbus? Similarly. God either is or is not absolutely sovereign over His creatures, man either is or is not totally depraved, Christ's atonement either is or is not intended by God to save every human being that ever lived, the saving grace of God either is or is not irresistible, and those who are truly in Christ either are or are not sure to persevere unto eternal life. Calvinism holds one side of these alternatives, Arminianism holds the other. But who can hold both at the same time?

The person who says that Calvinism and Arminianism are both true — that they are mutually complementary aspects of truth — is always a person who does not have a clear and correct understanding of what the teachings of Calvinism are. The argument is put up in some such form as the following: Calvinism teaches the sovereignty of God, and Arminianism teaches the responsibility (or freedom) of man. We should follow Calvin in his emphasis on God's sovereignty, and Arminius in his stress on man's responsibility.

This type of statement, however, overlooks the fact that Calvinism stresses the responsibility

of man just as strongly as Arminianism does — indeed, more strongly. The Arminian stresses the responsibility of man alone; the Calvinist stresses the sovereignty of God AND the responsibility of man. Everything that is true in Arminianism is also taught by Calvinism. What really distinguishes the Arminian is not his stress on the responsibility of man but his denial of the sovereignty of God.

Arminians can be Christians and be saved only because they are inconsistent and do not really believe in Arminianism all the way. If they followed Arminian principles consistently to the end of the road they would have to believe that man is his own saviour. But by a happy inconsistency they are kept from this. An Arminian will say insistently that everything depends on the sinner. A famous evangelist is quoted as having said, "God's hands are tied. He can only wait for you to make the decision." If consistently believed, this would be faith in autonomous man and a limited God. But the Arminian evangelist does not really believe it. Immediately after finishing his sermon he will pray fervently for the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of the people that they may be saved. We approve of such prayer, but we should realize that it is inconsistent with Arminian principles. If "God's hands are tied" and if everything depends on a decision of man which God does not control, what can be the use of praying to God for the salvation of sinners? It would seem that the prayer should be addressed to the sinners, on whose free will everything is said to depend.

What we are trying to show is that the Arminian does not really believe his Arminian principles. He does not believe them consistently, for however much he may say that everything depends on man's free will, if he is a Christian, he still realizes in the bottom of his heart that after all everything depends on the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Calvinism is simply Biblical Christianity. It accepts the whole teaching of God's Word. It is not guilty of the denial of man's moral responsibility which is often charged against it.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

Who decided what books should be included in the New Testament, and on what basis was the decision made?

Answer:

God the Father gave all authority in heaven and earth to the God-man, His Son Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18-20). Jesus Christ appointed the twelve apostles and delegated authority to them for the establishment and organization of the Visible Church (Matt. 18:18; John 20:21). The apostles and some men associated with them

wrote the books which form the New Testament. These writings were imposed on the Church by the apostles. They are divinely inspired and therefore they are "Scripture" (see Rev. 1:1-3; 22:18, 19; 2 Peter 3:15, 16; 1 Cor. 14:37). The Early Church decided, on the basis of the evidence, which books had been written or sanctioned by the apostles. Because these books were known to be apostolic, the Church recognized them as inspired Scripture.

Because the Church recognized them as inspired Scripture, the Church included them in the "canon" or list of books of the New Testament. The only question that the Church had to answer concerning a particular book was: "Was this book either written or sanctioned by an apostle?"

The 27 books in the New Testament were able to pass this test, and accordingly they were admitted to the canon; a number of other books failed to pass the test, and accordingly were rejected. The Church had no choice of its own in the matter; its function was simply to pass judgment on the evidence for or against the apostolic authorship or sanction of the books.

It should not be supposed, of course, that this function of the Church in connection with the New Testament books was exercised wholly at one definite time and place. Rather, the process of sifting the evidence took place over a period of many years. There was doubt about a few of the books in some sections of the Church for some time. In the course of time, however, the Church as a whole came to agreement as to which books had been written or sanctioned by the apostles, and therefore should be included in the New Testament.

— J. G. Vos

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

TOM M. MALL, Publisher

Acknowledgments and Announcements

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Statistics of circulation will be published in our next issue. As this goes to press many subscriptions have not yet been renewed for 1966, and new ones are also still being received from day to day. 1400 copies of this issue were printed.

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager
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PSALM 121

SANDON. 10, 4, 10, 4, 10, 10.

Charles Purday



1. Un - to the hills do I lift up mine eyes; Whence comes mine
aid? My safe - ty com - eth from the Lord, Who earth And
heav'n hath made. Thy foot from stum - bling He will ev - er
keep; He Who thy life pre - serves shall nev - er sleep.

2. He Who keeps Isr'el is thy keeper true,
Thy changeless shade;
Thy keeper, God the Lord, at thy right hand,
Himself hath made.
And thee no sun by day shall ever smite;
No moon shall harm thee in the silent night.
3. Jehovah shall thy sure protector be
From ev'ry ill.
Thy soul from ev'ry evil most secure
Preserve He will.
In daily going out and in thy door,
The Lord will keep thee henceforth evermore.

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NUMBER 2

Surrender to Evolution: Inevitable or Inexcusable? ..	45
Instrumental Music in Public Worship	52
The Lord's Great Controversy	54
Inspiration	57
Abstain from All Appearance of Evil	57
An Outnumbered Foe	60
Faith's Triumph	61
Studies in the Epistle to the Ephesians	63
Reviews of Religious Books	80

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Friend of All Friends

by Edna Janes Kayser

A friend of Jesus! Think on this. . .
What love can bring such perfect bliss,
A friend of God? Who made the hills
Where mystic, golden sunlight spills!
Just weigh these words with careful touch
O sift them out and know how much —
There is of loveliness and power
To lift your heart each passing hour!
A friend of God? How can it be —
The One who made the land — the sea,
But He wants love and friendship too.
There is no doubt that He wants you. . .
Just think the secrets you may know
While treading pathways here below —
The mind of Christ can be your part —
A home for you within His heart.

A friend of God? O stop and pause
This is more delicate than gauze,
Than fragile blossoms frail as mist
Of silken rose and amethyst —
For His dear heart can surely break
If you should carelessly forsake
His love so tender, yet so strong,
And deeply crush or grieve Him long.
A friend of God? A King is He
What stillness there should ever be,
O softly you must always walk
How tender, pure should be your talk.
A King — a King — how can you stand
Before His gracious, outstretched hand,
O surely you must kneel and cling
To love that only He can bring!

The Cross of Christ

By Esther Belle Heins

Divine, God's love; divine His wrath,
Both met at Calvary;
To lost — the cross is an offense,
A mark of crudity;
But more than this — it cuts the root
Of claim and human pride;
Behind self righteousness man finds
He cannot stand nor hide.
His theories cannot take the blood
Out of salvation's plan,

Nor can evasions make of Christ
Mere teacher, martyr, man.
Those trusting, glory in the cross,
Its might, reality;
Indenting time, it centers grace,
Marks Christianity.

(Suggested by reading tract on "The Offense of
the Cross" by the Editor of Blue Banner Faith
Life)

The Song for Every Land

(Psalm 137)

By Esther Belle Heins

By Babylon's strange rivers they sat down
And wept, remembering Jerusalem;
Though lonely captives, shamed, without renown—
Yet mirth and song were still required of them.
They hung their harps upon the willow trees,
They could not sing in this unfriendly land,
Though Zion was their joy, their memories
Were of revolt against their Lord's command.

Old prison walls one night were made to ring!
Though Paul and Silas were in fetters bound —
They had the Song they could not help but sing;
They had the peace which in the Christ is found.
The Song for every land is in the key
He strikes and holds in hearts eternally!

Shadows

By Esther Belle Heins

Grieve not when shadows grim and cold
Dim joys and cloud your sight,
The shadows cannot be so dark
Save somewhere there is light.

That you may reach and know the crest,
Perhaps the Father wills

You walk the valley that connects
The very highest hills.

Press on, the light is just ahead!
The contour of the land
Is still unchanged; just dimmed awhile,
And Christ holds out His hand.

BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 21

APRIL-JUNE, 1966

NUMBER 2

Surrender to Evolution: Inevitable or Inexcusable?

By J. G. Vos

1. Is Evolution "Proved Fact" and therefore Unchallengeable?

This is certainly the popular impression. It is fostered by constantly repeated assertions in the press and in academic circles. Many who repeat such assertions do not have intelligently held convictions based upon consideration of evidence, but are merely uncritically repeating clichés. Where the statement that evolution is "proved fact" is made by informed scientists, it will too often be found upon investigation that their "proof" does not consist in verifiable scientific evidence, but rather in an *a priori* philosophic bias in favor of naturalism — they regard evolution as "proved" because no other *natural* explanation of the facts is available.

The question is complicated because of the prevalent failure to define terms with precision. "Evolution is used with more than one meaning, and so are the terms "proof" and "proved." If by evolution is meant any kind or degree of progressive genetic change such as that of the common domestic fowl or chicken from the wild jungle fowl of southern Asia (*Gallus Bankiva*), weighing a pound or so, to modern breeds of chickens weighing in some cases up to twelve or fourteen pounds, then certainly evolution, in that limited sense, may properly be called proved fact. An example in the plant kingdom would be maize or Indian corn, which has certainly increased in size and weight tremendously from its earliest known form. If we want to call this evolution, then in this limited sense we may say that evolution is proved fact. But if what is meant by saying that evolution is "proved fact" is that science has proved that all life has developed from simpler, more primitive forms and ultimately from primal cells, then evolution certainly is *not* "proved fact." Again, if by "proved" is meant **demonstrated by experimentally verifiable observation**, then some very limited genetic change which some people call "evolution" may be admitted to be "proved fact." But if the meaning intended is that something is proven to have occurred because any alternative explanation is philosophically unacceptable, then we will have to say that this is not really scientific proof at all, but only a corollary of philosophic faith or dogmatism.

There is further complication by reason of the inability of the scientific world to agree upon a satisfactory definition of the term *species*. Dar-

win's epoch making book was entitled *The Origin of Species*, and classic evolutionary thought has set forth the idea that new species of living things have been produced by the evolutionary process. But for this statement to be meaningful, it is necessary to have a firm definition of *species*. This, unfortunately, does not exist. The father of biological taxonomy was Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778), a Swedish botanist. In his time the modern science of genetics was completely unknown. Linnaeus and his followers classified animals largely on the basis of morphology, especially the structure of the skeleton, and plants largely on the basis of the structure of the seed-producing organs of the plant. It is known today that neither of these criteria is truly adequate, and there are better criteria for biological taxonomy known today, especially inter-fertility and sterility. The compatibility of the germ plasm is a truer test of relationship than bones.

It is generally admitted by biologists today that there is need for a thorough revision of classic taxonomy on the basis of modern knowledge of genetics. But this has not yet been done, and the dispute about the proper connotation of the term *species* continues. Biologists who are inclined to regard many somewhat differing forms of life as merely varieties of the same species are called "lumpers," while those who are inclined to regard most differing forms as separate species are called "splitters." But both are more or less subjective in their judgment, because there is no truly objective criterion of what constitutes a species. Is *species* a term designating an objective reality in nature, like the terms mineral, vegetable, animal, or is it merely a subjective convenience of the scientist, like the terms inches, feet, miles? This is something like the controversy about Realism and Nominalism among the mediaeval schoolmen. Two types of definition of *species* are given. One type is purely formal, as for example, "A species is a unit in biological classification, below a genus and above a sub-species." This is like saying "A quart is a unit of liquid measure smaller than a gallon and greater than a pint." If *species* is to be defined like this, the question of whether evolution has produced new species is a purely academic and indeed an unreal one. Abraham Lincoln once asked some men who came to him with a specious argument, "If you call a dog's tail a leg, how many legs does the dog have?" "Five," they replied, but Lincoln said, "No, only four. Calling

a tail a leg does not make it one." Calling some-thing a species means nothing until there is a positive content in the term **species**. The other type of definition attempts to be substantive, but here they immediately run into difficulties. Some say, in substance, that a species is a group of individuals resembling each other to a degree regarded as specific. Other definitions attempt to be more objective but there is no general agreement. Dr. John Klotz in his book **Genes, Genesis and Evolution** devotes some 40 pages to a discussion of the problem of the defining of the term species. He says that there are probably as many definitions of the term **species** as there are competent systematists.

It is the production, in nature or under human manipulation, of what are called new species that has led many people to concede that evolution is "proved fact." But in view of the lack of unanimity as to what constitutes a species, this is really a question-begging situation. The African Violet is one of America's most popular house plants. It was discovered about 75 years ago in what was then German East Africa — now Tanzania. About twenty wild forms of this plant have been discovered in that part of the world. These differ somewhat in size, growth habit, color of leaves, size and shape of seed pod, and some other characteristics. On the other hand, there is an unmistakable resemblance between them all which is obviously more basic than the differences. Botanists have classified the African Violet as a **genus**, called **Saintpaulia**, and the twenty or so wild forms are all classified as species. There have been produced in 75 years over 3000 cultivars or cultivated varieties from the wild species. The wild species are freely inter-fertile. It is so easy to cross one wild species of **Saintpaulia** with another that it is done all the time by amateur hybridizers who have a few plants on a window shelf in their home. Now, an evolutionist would claim that the existence of twenty distinct species of African Violets is evidence of evolution. A hypothetical wild original type has developed into twenty distinct species. But is this really evolution? Or is it merely segregating out the various genetic possibilities which were latent in the original wild form? The differences between the species of African Violets are inherited as dominant or recessive, according to Mendel's laws. I see no necessary reason to hold that God created twenty different varieties of African Violets; it seems to me perfectly legitimate to suppose that these are all descended from a single wild form. If this is to be called "evolution," then I am an evolutionist and evolution in this strictly limited sense may properly be spoken of as "proved fact."

The confusion about terminology and what constitutes proof is the fault of the scientists and especially of popular writers on science. If Christians have sometimes gone too far in opposing solidly everything that can possibly be called "evolution" by anyone, the blame for this lies with

the scientists and the popularizers of science — men like Haldane, Julian Huxley and H. G. Wells — to whom evolution was virtually a religion, a faith to be promoted, a magic word to explain everything, a key to a comprehensive philosophy of life, man and the universe. This is the popular "image" of evolution, and it is scientists and their publicizers that are responsible for it. If religious believers have sometimes attacked evolution somewhat indiscriminately and even ignorantly, they should not be too harshly censured for this, for after all evolution has been publicized and promoted as the master principle which unlocks the mysteries of everything. Since evolution has been regarded as a gospel by many of its most vocal advocates, it is no wonder that believers in the true Gospel of Jesus Christ have opposed it as a manifestation of anti-Christian unbelief. When they are asked to give a home to what is said to be a harmless kitten, they very naturally react in fear that the animal may turn out after all to be a potentially dangerous tiger cub.

The kind of genetic change for which real scientific proof exists is not damaging to the Christian faith, nor really contrary to sound exegesis of the Scriptures. It is not, however, this very strictly limited kind of genetic change that is commonly meant when scientists, educators and the general public speak of evolution as "proved fact." What they mean is evolution in the broad sense, what Kerkut calls a "general theory of evolution" which is held to be a comprehensive principle explaining the origin and development of all living things, from viruses and bacteria to sequoia trees and mankind. All are held to have developed naturally from a single source, which itself came by spontaneous generation from inorganic matter. For this grandiose scheme, as Kerkut points out, there is not sufficient evidence to regard it as anything more than a working hypothesis (**Implications of Evolution**, N. Y., 1960, p. 157).

"A careful perusal of the heresies will also indicate the fact in favour of the currently accepted doctrines, and if the evidence against a theory is overwhelming and if there is no other satisfactory theory to take its place we shall just have to say that we do not yet know the answer.

"There is a theory which states that many living animals can be observed over the course of time to undergo changes so that new species are formed. This can be called the 'Special Theory of Evolution' and can be demonstrated in certain cases by experiments. On the other hand there is the theory that all living forms in the world have arisen from a single source which itself came from an inorganic form. This theory can be called the 'General Theory of Evolution' and the evidence that supports it is not sufficiently strong to allow us to consider it as anything more than a working hypothesis. It is not clear whether the changes that bring about speciation are of the same

nature as those that brought about the development of new phyla. The answer will be found by future experimental work and not by dogmatic assertions that the General Theory of Evolution must be correct because there is nothing else that will satisfactorily take its place."

II. The General Theory of Evolution Rests on Unproved Assumptions

The seven basic assumptions on which the general theory of evolution rests are listed by Kerkut on page 6 of his book **Implications of Evolution**.

"(1) The first assumption is that non-living things gave rise to living material, i.e., spontaneous generation occurred.

(2) The second assumption is that spontaneous generation occurred only once.

The other assumptions all follow from the second one.

(3) The third assumption is that viruses, bacteria, plants and animals are all interrelated.

(4) The fourth assumption is that the Protozoa gave rise to the Metazoa.

(5) The fifth assumption is that the various invertebrate phyla are interrelated.

(6) The sixth assumption is that the invertebrates gave rise to the vertebrates.

(7) The seventh assumption is that within the vertebrates the fish gave rise to the amphibia, the amphibia to the reptiles, and the reptiles to the birds and mammals. Sometimes this is expressed in other words, i.e., that the modern amphibia and reptiles had a common ancestral stock, and so on."

In the nature of the case these assumptions are not experimentally verifiable. Therefore the general theory of evolution is not fact but **faith**, and how tenable a faith depends upon the validity of the assumptions. Since they cannot be tested by experiment, their validity can only be decided in terms of an **a priori** philosophic postulate. The scientist who holds the general theory of evolution accepts these seven assumptions because of his **a priori** commitment to the philosophy of naturalism, which involves maintaining that the **origin** of nature can be discovered by studying the **functioning** of nature. The Christian believer who studies science will reject these assumptions because of his **a priori** commitment to the Biblical world-view of supernaturalism.

Thus it appears that evolutionism, as commonly understood, in its broad sense, is a philosophic faith which arises, ultimately, from a bias in favor of naturalism and against supernaturalism. In the language of the apostle Paul, "And even as they did

not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (Romans 1:28).

At least one of these seven assumptions is held by evolutionists, not only in the absence of experimental verification, but actually **in the face of experimental verification of the contrary**. This is the assumption of spontaneous generation.

"The beginning of the evolutionary process raises a question which is as yet unanswerable. What was the origin of life on this planet? Until fairly recent times there was a pretty general belief in the occurrence of 'spontaneous generation.' It was supposed that lowly forms of life developed spontaneously from, for example, putrefying meat. But careful experiments, notably those of Pasteur, showed that this conclusion was due to imperfect observation, and it became an accepted doctrine that life never arises except from life. So far as actual evidence goes, this is still the only possible conclusion. But since it is a conclusion that seems to lead back to some supernatural creative act, it is a conclusion that scientific men find very difficult of acceptance. It carries with it what are felt to be, in the present mental climate, undesirable philosophic implications, and it is opposed to the scientific desire for continuity. It introduces an unaccountable break in the chain of causation, and therefore cannot be admitted as part of science unless it is quite impossible to reject it. For that reason most scientific men prefer to believe that life arose, in some way not yet understood, from inorganic matter in accordance with the laws of physics and chemistry" (J. W. N. Sullivan, **Limitations of Science**, N. Y.; reprint, 1949, p. 94).

A scientist with a Ph.D. degree in biology told me that the odds against this happening by chance are comparable to the odds involved if a dynamite bomb were to explode in a modern newspaper plant, scattering printer's type all over the city, and it would be found that by sheer chance the type had just happened to form the exact order of all the letters in all the pages of the 24-volume **Encyclopaedia Britannica**. This is the length some people will go to in order to avoid believing in direct creation by God.

It is also often stated that science will soon create life in the laboratory from non-living matter. This has not been done, and until it is done, it is not science — it is a scientist's dream, not scientific fact. Even if done in a laboratory, this still would not prove that life originated in this way. The cases are not parallel — life originating **of itself** in some primeval pond or ocean, spontaneously, is one thing, and life originating in a multi-million dollar laboratory as a result of the thinking and manipulations of a scientist is something else again. In the one case **chance** would be at work, in the other case **mind** would be at work.

We may recall here the wise statement of Ahab king of Israel to Benhadad king of Syria: "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off" (I Kings 20:11).

III. The General Theory of Evolution Proceeds from a False Philosophy of Science

Science has accomplished so much and its achievements are so truly impressive that some people have become drunk on the wine of scientism. When we think of the discovery of penicillin and the vaccines to prevent polio, of atomic fission and fusion, and of the amazing feats of photographing the moon and even the planet Mars from a space capsule and transmitting the pictures back to this earth by television, it may seem as if there is almost no limit to what science can do. It is often forgotten that science has nothing to say in the whole field of religious and moral truth and values. But apart from these, even in the field of the physical universe, there is a limit beyond which science cannot legitimately go, and if it does transgress that limit, it no longer deserves to be called science — it will have to be called something else — either, at the lowest, science fiction; or, somewhat higher, speculation; or at the highest, a philosophic dogma held by faith.

The legitimate field of science is **phenomena**, that is, observable facts which can be recorded and measured in some way, repeated and tested by experiment. What is outside the sphere of phenomena is not in the proper field of science, but belongs to some other sphere — philosophy, theology or perhaps even imagination and fantasy.

Only one side of the moon is observable from this earth. Science can deal with this side of the moon, and properly. Until recently, however, the other side of the moon was unknown. Consequently, there were no really valid scientific statements about the other side of the moon. What might be said about the other side of the moon was **speculation**, having perhaps some degree of probability, but being inherently incapable of scientific proof. More recently, the Russians claim to have photographed the other side of the moon. To the extent that this has been effectively accomplished, the other side of the moon has been brought into the sphere of phenomena where the scientific method is truly applicable.

When scientists make positive statements about matters outside the sphere of phenomena, they are speaking either as laymen, or as philosophers — they are not speaking as scientists. Because of the tremendous prestige enjoyed by scientists in our day, they have often come to have a public "image" of quasi-omniscience, which has led the uncritical public to accept as "proved scientific fact" some things which after all are only opinions or speculations. We must insist on this point — the scientist who makes statements where the scientific method of observation, hypothesis and experimental verification is not applicable, is not making

scientific statements and has no right to demand acceptance of his statements as "scientific fact."

The whole problem area of **origins** is outside the field of phenomena. This includes the origin of the physical universe, the origin of life and the origin of mankind. None of these are phenomena that have been observed, and in the nature of the case none of them can be observed or tested by experiment. Therefore the scientist or the popular writer on science who issues pronouncements in these fields is **out of bounds**. There were no scientists around to observe and record what happened when the physical universe came into being, nor when life originated, nor when mankind first appeared on this planet. The question which the Lord, speaking from the whirlwind, addressed to Job is still relevant today: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" (Job 38:4).

In the whole area of origins, statements can only be based on **faith**. This may be the Biblical faith of the Christian, or it may be the philosophic faith of a scientific rationalist like Julian Huxley, but faith it is. We have as much right to our **a priori** faith as they have to theirs — indeed, we have much more right, but at any rate, we have as much right as they to base our belief about origins on an unprovable assumption held by faith. Too long have Christian people been afraid to challenge the confident claim of scientists to know "fact" about origins. We should get over our inferiority complex and come out boldly and insist that things be called by their right names — that philosophic faith be distinguished from scientific proof.

Not only is the whole area of origins known only by faith — the same is true of many parts of the alleged evolutionary tree. There are glaring gaps in the evidence. The important thing about all missing links is and always has been that they are **missing**. As long as they are missing they do not prove anything except that the evidence for a theory is weak and inconclusive. The convinced evolutionist will of course reply that these missing evidences either still await discovery at some future time, or the fossils once existed but have been destroyed before our time. Here again he is making statements based on an **a priori** faith, not on fact or observed phenomena.

IV. The General Theory of Evolution Contradicts Vital Biblical Truth

According to Scripture teaching, man **at his origin** existed in the image of God (Gen. 1:27; Col. 3:10). The image of God is what makes man human — however we may define it as to detailed significance, at any rate the image of God is something that marks mankind off as unique in God's creation, as in some true sense similar to God and different from the animals. This image of God characterized mankind at the very beginning: it is not a goal to be reached by achievement.

but the starting point from which human history began. This image of God certainly involved a mind, personality, character, moral uprightness. One analysis is that it consisted in a rational nature, a moral nature and a spiritual nature with a capacity for religious communion with God. The first people, according to Scripture, were truly human, in mind and soul as well as in body. They were civilized and in moral uprightness, though completely untechnological. Adam was a gentleman, Eve was a lady, and their first home was a garden, not a jungle. This whole idea of the original condition of humanity is explicitly or implicitly denied by the common form of evolutionary teaching, which holds that at his origin and for ages thereafter man was little better than a savage brute. The common type of evolutionary teaching thus contradicts the Scriptural idea that man at his origin was a being existing in the image of God.

Scripture also clearly teaches that man fell from his original moral uprightness into sin and selfishness (Rom. 5:12). Scripture represents this as a definite historical event which happened once for all at a particular time. Some Christian scholars hold that the story of the Fall of man as told in Genesis is given in symbolic terms. This is possible, but at the same time it must be remembered that Scripture represents the Fall as a definite event which really happened. It is perhaps permissible to say that the Fall was a real event which is described in symbolic language; it is not permissible to say, as many do today, that the Fall was not a real event. But this idea of morally upright man at a definite time falling into sin and evil is just the opposite of the evolutionary scheme. Evolution is the idea of age-long constant progress toward higher and better things, as Tennyson suggested in his poem *In Memoriam*,

"Move Upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die."

Evolution has no room for the idea of progress in reverse gear so that man, from a morally perfect origin, became evil and anti-social. There is no more room for a Fall of man in a consistent scheme of evolution than there is room for a malignant tumor in a healthy human body.

It is not without reason that Christians who accept a consistent or general theory of evolution almost invariably reject the historical character of the early chapters of Genesis, and reject the Biblical account of human origins by regarding it as mythical. The inherent incompatibility between a consistent scheme of evolution and acceptance of the Genesis account of origins as historical drives these persons relentlessly to acceptance of the mythical view.

So there appears the Barthian notion that every man is Adam and every woman is Eve, that the Fall was not a once-for-all historical event at the dawn of history, but an event repeated end-

lessly whenever a moral decision is made and evil yielded to. So Adam comes to be regarded, not as the first man and covenant head of humanity, who represents us all in the Covenant of Works, but as a symbol of man as faced with moral alternatives and prone to yield to evil.

According to Scripture teaching, a historical Adam parallels the historical Christ (Romans 5:12-21). The Bible treats both Adam and Christ as real, historical, individual persons. The apostle Paul in Romans 5:12-21 sets up an elaborate parallel and contrast between Adam and Christ. From the one came sin, from the other came redemption. This argument of Paul in Romans 5 depends absolutely for its validity on the fact that as Jesus was a historical person so Adam was a historical person. There cannot be a proper parallel between a mythical Adam and a historical Christ. Adam is as essential to the Christian system of theology as Jesus Christ is. Christ is, indeed, called in Scripture "the second Adam" or "the last Adam." Any theory which tends, as the common form of evolution does, to eliminate Adam as a real historical person, is destructive of Christianity. Yet this very thing is done by the common form of evolutionary theory. It has no more room for a real Adam than it has for a real fall of mankind into sin. And if Christ as the second Adam came to undo the harm done by the first Adam, then we must needs continue to believe in the reality of the first Adam.

V. Even Theistic Evolution is Unacceptable from the Standpoint of Biblical Christianity

Consistent evolution as it is commonly held by materialistic scientists is atheistic and is based on faith in chance rather than on faith in God. It is held that living things originated and developed by inherent forces, without divine planning or control. There is, however, a form of evolutionary theory known as **theistic evolution** which includes belief in God. This form of evolutionary theory holds that evolution was God's method of creating living things. Theistic evolution is held by some scientists and by a great many religious scholars who are embarrassed by the confident claims of unbelieving scientists. If one is going to be an evolutionist, no doubt it is better to be a theistic one than an atheistic one. But it is questionable whether theistic evolution can be regarded as a consistent form of the evolution hypothesis, and whether it can really be reconciled with the divine truth of the first three chapters of Genesis.

One form of theistic evolution that seems plausible to many Christian believers holds that man's bodily organism was produced gradually by an evolutionary process of development through ages of time until something physically similar to man had appeared. All this was a **natural** process and the organisms were non-human or sub-human. Then at a certain point God intervened by His supernatural or creative power and implanted a mind

or soul in some of these evolving organisms, with the result that they came to be **persons**, after which they are properly regarded as **human**, or **homo sapiens**, man in the image of God. This way of putting the matter, it is thought, on the one hand recognizes the facts of science and on the other hand safeguards the truth of the Bible.

The difficulty with this construction is that it has to abandon evolution at the crucial point and bring in direct, supernatural creation by God to account for the existence of the human race. For it is precisely **personality** — the possession of a mind or soul — that makes man **human** and sets him apart from the lower creation. If we have to bring in supernatural creation to account for the one thing which above all else makes man human, then we have really admitted that evolution cannot explain the origin of the human race. Needless to say, man's bodily organism resembles that of the higher animals, but in the matter of personality he differs radically from them. Thus the person who holds the view we have been examining may be an evolutionist, but he is not a **consistent** evolutionist, for he has to believe in supernatural intervention at the most important point. Really consistent evolution holds that man as a **whole** (both body and mind) was produced entirely by natural forces operating from within. It cannot admit external intervention at any point and still be thoroughly consistent in affirming evolution. The very word **evolution** means **unfolding** of what is already within something.

Theistic evolution is further shown to be unbiblical by the fact that it breaks down and destroys the distinction between **creation** and **providence**. God's work of creation is His work of originating new things — new as to form, new as to matter, or new as to both form and matter. This is spoken of in the Bible by the Hebrew verb **bara**, a word with a very specific meaning, which occurs only 55 times in the Hebrew Old Testament, and almost always means **create** in the strict sense of the direct origination of something new. On the other hand, the ordinary word for **make** in the Old Testament is **asah**, which occurs over 2600 times and is translated in various ways, corresponding to the English verbs **do**, **make**, **work**. The term **asah** can be used to describe God's providential working which operates through second causes and forces of nature, and produces changes without producing anything truly new.

Theistic evolution, however, cannot account for the unique use of the verb **bara** in describing God's work of creation as distinguished from his work of providence. For according to theistic evolution, a long natural process operating through second causes was God's **method** of creation. Because this was a **natural process** it would have to be classified as a part of God's work of providence — that is what providence is — a work of God which takes the form of a natural process indirectly controlled by God. Thus theistic evolution holds that God's work of creation operated

by means of, and formed a part of, His work of providence. This is an unbiblical idea. If theistic evolution were true, there would be no reason for the use of the special term **bara** in Genesis 1 and 2. **Asah** would fit all the way through.

Moreover, the Bible in Genesis 1 and 2 itself marks off creation as separated from providential processes by a very clear and definite boundary line. On the seventh day God "rested from all his work which God created and made" (Gen. 2:3). This point marks the boundary between creation in the strict sense, and providence in the sense of process, although in later times the creative power of God was sometimes exerted in miracles.

It is true that **asah** occurs 10 times in the first two chapters of Genesis. This, however, is not contrary to the usage which has just been outlined. Where **asah** occurs prior to Genesis 2:3 it is used inclusively, including all forms of the divine activity. **Asah** means "do" or "make" and is the broader term; **bara** meaning "create" is the narrower and more specific term. All creation is a doing or making, but not all doing or making is creation. **Asah** could thus be used in its inclusive or generic sense to designate a work of creation, but **bara**, being specific in meaning, could not be used to describe the providential working of God. All this precise distinction of terminology, so clear in the Bible, is violated by the doctrine of theistic evolution which holds that **God created living things by means of a providential process**.

VI. Some Suggestions for a Practical Program to Resist Creeping Evolutionism

1. **Get over our sinful timidity.** Are we so afraid of being thought ignorant, or called "Fundamentalists", or accused of being unscientific or old-fashioned, that we remain silent when we should issue a trumpet call to the Lord's people to resist this destructive evolutionistic philosophy? Our opponents have no magic armor that is impervious to the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. If we must be called fools, so be it. Are we not to be willing to be called fools for Christ's sake?

2. **Read and Circulate truly Relevant Literature.** Most "Fundamentalist" books on evolution are comparatively worthless because they betray ignorance of current scientific thought, make overstatements and blunders, and beg the questions at issue. We cannot resist present-day evolutionary theory by repeating the cliches of a generation ago. Slogans about "monkey business" will not get us anywhere. We cannot guard our youth by corny jokes and wisecracks. The remedy for ignorance and science falsely-so-called is not to retreat into anti-intellectualism, but rather to seek more and better knowledge.

3. **Criticize Evolutionary Theory where it is most vulnerable.** Attack the basic assumptions on which the whole structure rests. It may not al-

ways be wise for us as religious scholars to cross swords with biologists and anthropologists about the details of the alleged evidences for evolution. There is always the likelihood that what we have to say will be brushed off with the comment that we are laymen and cannot dispute with the experts. This may not always be a fair charge, but it is not an easy one to repel. And after all, it is more effective to blast out the philosophical foundation on which the whole imposing structure has been erected, than it is to take pot-shots at details of the architecture in the superstructure.

Where we are strongest and cannot be called amateurs is in our criticism of the philosophic assumptions of evolution and in the field of Biblical exegesis. Therefore we can insist with confidence on the following four points, and I suggest that we ought to do it with force, emphasis and continual repetition:

- (a) That a general theory of evolution rests upon seven assumptions which have not been proved by evidence and which in the nature of the case cannot be proved. It is therefore a dogmatic faith held on philosophic grounds, and is not to be considered "proved fact."
- (b) That the whole problem of origins — the origin of the universe, of life and of man — lies outside the sphere of phenomena and is therefore not amenable to the scientific method. We can insist, therefore, that pronouncements about origins by scientists are not "scientific facts" but opinions of probability concerning matters which the scientific method cannot really reach. Thus, again, statements about origins are the expression, in every case, of a faith, and in no case are they statements of proved scientific fact.
- (c) That the concept of theistic evolution, as held by many religious teachers of our day, does violence to the terminology and usage of Genesis 1 and 2, and therefore theistic evolution, as commonly held, is a false theory which is contrary to Scripture.
- (d) That the integrity of the system of Christian truth requires absolutely that we retain belief in the reality of Adam as an individual person created in the image of God, and in the reality of the Fall of mankind as a definite event which happened once for all at the dawn of human history.

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The above article entitled **Surrender to Evolution: Inevitable or Inexcusable?** has been reprinted as a pocket-size booklet. Copies can be obtained at 10 cents each from The Reformed Fellowship, Inc., Breton Village, Breton and Burton Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502 and from Blue Banner Faith and Life, 3408 Seventh Ave., Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania 15010. It is suggested that this booklet be placed in the hands of high school and college students who are being taught that evolution is "proved fact" and must therefore be accepted by educated persons. — Editor.

Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church

By John L. Girardeau

(Continued from last issue)

VII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The foregoing argument has proceeded principally by two steps. The first is: Whatsoever, in connection with the public worship of the church, is not commanded by Christ, either expressly or by good and necessary consequence, in his Word, is forbidden. The second is: Instrumental music, in connection with the public worship of the church is not so commanded by Christ. The conclusion is: Instrumental music, in connection with the public worship of the church, is forbidden. If the premises are materially true, and if they are logically connected in the argument, the conclusion is irresistible. The first premise, which is denied by Romanists, Prelatists, and Latitudinarians, has been established by proofs derived from the Scriptures. The position that the church has power to decree rites connected with the worship of God's house, rites not prescribed in the divine Word, is confessedly a doctrine of men, making a substantive addition to the only sufficient, complete and infallible rule of faith and practice. Of those who contend for this principle, the Romanist alone is consistent. It is plain that such a discretionary power in the church could only be grounded in her possession of continued inspiration. If she have that gift her authority is equal to that of the inspired organizers and instructors of the church themselves. She can supplement the Scriptures. But the claim to inspiration can only be substantiated by the working of miracles. This Rome admits, and meets the requirement by appealing to *her* miracles. These professed miracles are, however, of such a character as not to be placed above impeachment. They may be accounted for upon natural principles. They never rise to the point of creative power, nor of the power that restores life to the dead. The Protestant church, therefore, rejects the claim of Rome to inspiration and infallibility, and is consequently bound to deny the authority of that church, or any other, to decree rites and ceremonies not prescribed in the Word of God. For a church theoretically to make such a claim is to confess itself, to that extent, apostate. It is in flagrant rebellion against the sole authority of Christ as expressed in his Word. The past history of the church is a comment upon the correctness of this indictment.

The second premise, namely, that instrumental music is, in connection with the public worship of the church, not commanded by Christ, either ex-

pressly or by good and necessary consequence in his Word, is acknowledged to be true by all consistent Presbyterians. One would, therefore, argue that they would exclude it from the public worship of the church; and so, indeed, they have done until a comparatively recent period. On that very ground they have justly refused to employ it. How is the amazing change to its employment to be accounted for? How is it that in Scotland such a revolution against the historic position of the Presbyterian Church is now in full progress? How is it that in the conservative Scotch-Irish Church so formidable an effort is making to upset its testimony and its practice in relation to this subject? How is it that such men as Breckinridge and Thornwell, in the American Presbyterian Church, were hardly cold in their graves before, in the very places where they had thundered forth their contentions for the mighty principle which demands a divine warrant for every element of doctrine, government and worship, and where they had, in obedience to that principle, utterly refused to admit instrumental music into the church, the organ pealed forth its triumphs over their views? How is this state of things to be explained?

There is a class who look with indifference upon the question, who are willing that human opinions shall prevail and human tastes shall be gratified in the arrangements of public worship. It is needless to say that, as they disregard alike the teachings of God's Word and the testimonies of their forefathers, they are countenancing a course which must, if not interrupted by the extraordinary interposition of divine providence or divine grace, land the church in open apostasy from the gospel.

There is a second class who maintain the prelatistical theory, that whatsoever is not expressly — that is, in explicit terms — forbidden in the New Testament Scriptures is permitted. Those who hold this view break with the Westminster standards, play into the hands of Ritualists, and convert the ordinances of the Presbyterian Church, as the maintainers of the same principle have those of the Anglican, into propaedeutics for the *cultus* of Rome.

There is a third class who hold that, as instrumental music was commanded of God in the Old Testament church, it is justifiable in that of the New Testament. It is one of the things which God himself has prescribed. This is very extraordinary ground for Christians to take. It is hard to believe that they would contend for the following positions, logically validated by their view: That every positive enactment of the divine will under the old

dispensation passes over unchanged in its authority to the new; that the Christian church is the Jewish temple, or even modelled in conformity with it; that the types of the Old Testament are continued in the new; that what was not warrantable to the Jew in the worship of the synagogue is justifiable to the Christian in that of the church; that all the external elements of worship authorized in the Psalms are allowable in the Christian church, for, upon that ground, animal sacrifices would also be proper; and that the whole nominal church, from the apostles to Thomas Aquinas, in 1250, was mistaken in regard to this matter. Still, carrying with it these consequences as it does, this view is supported by some in the Presbyterian Church.

There is a fourth class — and it is believed to be the largest — who hold theoretically to the great principle, that whatsoever is not commanded is forbidden, but deny its applicability to instrumental music in connection with the public worship of the church. They contend that it is one of the circumstances which the Confession of Faith assigns to the discretionary control of the church. This is probably the chief explanation of the wonderful change that is passing over the Presbyterian Church in the sphere of worship. It is to be feared that very few of her ministers and ruling elders have ever thoroughly studied the **Doctrine of Circumstances**. How many of them have ever expounded it to the people over whom the Holy Ghost has made them overseers? Nothing is more common than to hear it said that this question is one concerning a "circumstantial detail" of subordinate value, and that the issue, as one of minor importance, must give way to others of more commanding interest which are pressing upon the church. This confusion of thought would be surprising were it not so general. What a profound mistake is couched in such remarks! Instead of the circumstances relegated by the Confession to the discretion of the church being circumstantial details of worship, they are not details of worship at all. Instead of their being of secondary importance, they are indispensable — not as parts of worship, but as natural conditions of its performance. Without them there would be, there could be, no joint worship. The assemblies of the saints would be a dream.

The change which is taking place more and more in the worship of the Presbyterian Church is due to the combined influence of the views held by all these classes, but the chief peril results from that maintained by the last which has been named. It is almost inconceivable that the majority of the officers and members of the Presbyterian Church can have abandoned the consecrated principle that a divine warrant is needed for every element which enters into the worship of God's house. Were that so, open apostasy in the department of worship would be acknowledged. But of what avail is the professed acceptance of the principle, if its application be refused? How it happens

that this principle, which was construed by the Presbyterian reformers and the framers of the Westminster standards as excluding instrumental music from public worship, and was so applied by the Presbyterian Church almost universally for centuries after the Reformation, is now interpreted in such a way as to admit this Popish innovation into the once simple and evangelical services of that church, defies comprehension except upon one supposition. It is, that the Presbyterian Church is slackening her grasp upon her ancient testimonies, broadening her practice in conformity with the demands of worldly taste, and is therefore more and more treading the path of defection from the scriptural principles which she professes. The revolution in her practice began in the American Church scarcely beyond the recollection of some now living, and certainly in the Scottish Churches within that of those who are not yet fifty years of age. But once begun, what rapid progress it made! What would Gillespie and Calderwood now say, what Chalmers and Candlish, Cunningham and Begg, what Mason, Breckinridge and Thornwell — what would they say, were they permitted to rise from their graves, and revisit the scenes of their labors — the churches for which they toiled and prayed?

It is evident that a great change has taken place. Now, either it has been for the better or for the worse. If it be contended that it is for the better, these great men, and thousands who thought as they did, are pronounced to have been ignorant of the Scriptures and the principles of the Presbyterian system. Who are they that will assume such a censorship? Let them by argument prove their claim to this arrogated superiority. If they cannot — and they certainly have not yet done it — let them abandon the unwarrantable attempt to revolutionize the long-standing and scriptural practice of their church, and, ere it be too late, return to the good old paths trodden by their fathers. We are not bound to wear the yoke of human authority, it will be said. No. But these men wore the yoke of divine authority, and we ought to do the same. This is your own human assertion, it will be replied. Yes. But it is an assertion proved by irrefragable argument, founded on the Scriptures, the Presbyterian standards and the history of the true Church of Christ. The burden of proof rests upon those who have made, or who countenance, this change. They offer proof derived from the principles of nature and from human taste. What argument from Scripture is presented is such as would make us turn Jews and worship at the temple. It would not even convert us into Jews who worshipped at the synagogue. It is an argument which would take the Christian church over the ruins of the synagogue back to the temple, and in effect re-enact the madness of Julian by an attempt to construct again that abrogated institute.

But whatever may be the want of satisfactory argument to ground this wide-spread and as-

tounding defection from the old, conservative position of the Presbyterian Church, the mournful fact is patent, that the congregations which that church embraces are more and more succumbing to its baleful influence. The ministers who are opposed to the unscriptural movement are, many of them at least, indisposed to throw themselves into opposition to its onward rush. They are unwilling to make an issue with their people upon this question. They are reluctant to characterize the employment of instrumental music in public worship as a sin. But a sin it is, if there be any force in the argument which opposes it. The people ought to be taught that in using it they rebel against the law of Christ, their King.

It bodes ill for the church that this subject is now so often treated in a flippant and even jocular manner. The question of the use of instrumental music in the public worship of God's house is, for example, sometimes placed upon the same foot with that in regard to the use of tobacco. Both questions are scouted as equally illegitimate and equally trivial. Is tobacco ever mentioned in the Word of God? Is it forgotten that a private habit of an individual is a vastly different thing from an action which modifies the public, solemn singing of God's praise by a congregation of professed worshippers? Such levity partakes of profanity. It makes a mock of holy things. The indulgence of this temper by our church courts will betoken the departure of our glory. It is not less than shocking to suppose that the church can make light of a subject about which God's jealousy has smoked, and his anger has broken out into a consuming flame. If she will employ instruments of music, let her at least refrain from fiddling while many of her children are mourning over what they feel to be the corruption of her worship and the decay of her spirituality. Nero fiddled while Rome was burning, and Belshazzar was desecrating the vessels of God's sanctuary in the midst of revelry when the mystic hand wrote on the wall of his palace the sentence of doom.

Those of us who protest against this revolution in Presbyterian worship are by some pitied, by others ridiculed, and by others still denounced as fanatics. If we are, we share the company of an innumerable host of fanatics extending from the day of Pentecost to the middle of the nineteenth century. We refuse not to be classed, although consciously unworthy of the honor, with apostles, martyrs and reformers. But neither were they mad, nor are we. We "speak the words of truth and soberness." Mindful of the apostolic injunction, "Prove all things," we submit arguments derived from Scripture, from the formularies of our church and from the **consensus** of Christ's people, and respectfully invoke for them the attention of our brethren. We call upon them to examine these arguments, and either disprove or adopt them. But should they be dismissed without notice, and our faithful remonstrances be unheeded, we humbly, but earnestly, warn the church of the evil and bitter consequences which will, we verily believe, be entailed by that corruption of public worship which has been pointed out; and against it, in the name of the framers of our venerable standards, in the name of the reformers, divines and martyrs of the Presbyterian Church, in the name of Christ's true witnesses in the centuries of the past, in the name of the inspired apostles, and, above all, in the name of our glorious King and Head, we erect our solemn PROTEST.

Note: This concludes our reproduction of Dr. Girardeau's classic work on instrumental music in the worship of the church, which was originally published in 1888 and which has been running in **Blue Banner Faith and Life** since our October-December 1960 issue. Dr. Girardeau's solid Scriptural arguments have never been answered — they have only been by-passed and ignored. Committing the issue to the great Head of the Church, whose judgment is according to truth (Romans 2:2), we shall continue our witness for a Scriptural purity of worship. — Editor.

The Lord's Great Controversy

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

IV. God's Great Division

(Continued from last issue)

The list could be continued, but we proceed to the consideration of one matter in particular; that is the apparent contradiction between law and grace, the justice and the love of God.

Of supreme moment for the understanding of the conflict of the ages and God's work as a divider is the relationship between love and justice in God. We are considering God's great division among men which follows from his own action of division. But God's divisive action orig-

inates in and arises out of the depths of His own moral nature. Justice and love in God stand in what can only be regarded as apparent contradiction. And it is from these two that the great division flows.

As a matter of fact, of course, there is no real conflict here or anywhere in any of the attributes of God, one of which is His perfect unity. He is "righteous in all his ways," and "all his works are done in truth." He is indeed a God of love,

"the Lord, merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in goodness and truth." But He is also a God of holiness and justice.

Now love and justice differ in their essential nature. Justice is one thing and love another. Each exists and operates according to its nature, each in its own distinctive character. There is no disharmony either in these attributes themselves or in their respective modes of operation. "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85:10). These glorious perfections of God's moral nature unite to cooperate with and supplement each other. There may be radical differentiation in their nature but no disunity in their exercise.

We pause to note that the crowning exhibition and achievement of their union was attained at Calvary where the satisfaction of the justice of God is the very action in which His great love is revealed.

While still upon this theme we are happy to observe that the love of God dominates the scene and rules supreme both in the counsel of eternity and in the life of men. Love, God's love, has the right of way. It takes what it rightly can and may, and leaves to justice what remains.

The love of God, that very love that God is, has the pre-eminence. It is selective and takes the lead. Especially is this true of the special love of God. It singles out the particular objects of its choice and claims them as its own. The justice of God as applied to individual men and nations, great as it is, defers to the love of God and waits upon it. It stands aside and bows to the prior rights and claims of love. On the other hand the justice of God has a certain power of limitation which it brings to bear upon His love.

No one has discussed this any better than Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield in his little volume on **The Plan of Salvation** (1935, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502). The author speaks of the totality of the justice and love of God as it takes effect in the election of some and not of others. He sees men as "divided into two classes, the one the recipients of God's undeserved favor, the other the objects of his just displeasure" (p. 29). He says that God "intervenes to rescue from their ruin and misery an innumerable multitude which no man can number — as many as under the pressure of his sense of right he can obtain the consent of his whole nature to relieve from the just penalties of their sins" (p. 29). Again: "The old answer is after all the only sufficient one: God in his love saves as many of the guilty race of men as he can get the consent of his whole nature to save. Being God and all that God is, he will not permit even his ineffable love to betray him into any action which is not right" (p. 93).

The point is that God cannot save all for it would not be right, and God can do no wrong.

So the love of God leads the way but does not contravene the limitation laid upon it by the justice of God. Who then can be saved? is the question. And from God Himself the answer comes: His own elect; all who in the counsel of eternity have been predestined unto life. These are they who in time have been and are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ which was shed for many for the remission of sins. These are the objects of God's choice, chosen to be the objects of His grace, these, each and every one of these and none other.

Here then is the very root and foundation of God's great division. In the midst of all the multitudinous differentiations and divergences among men is the one great basic cleavage resulting from the eternal election of some and the reprobation of others. Here in the mutual relationship of God's justice and love is the underlying principle of His salvation of some and the exclusion of others from His special grace. Here is God's own fundamental principle of division and separation. On the one hand "grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." On the one side all is everlasting reconciliation and salvation, peace and union; on the other only alienation and final, never-ending separation. Those of one set or group or class are on one side, the others on the other. They stand arrayed in deep and radical division one from another, the one against the other.

Let no one say that we underestimate the riches of God's grace in the redemption of the world through our Lord Jesus Christ. Magnify the justice of God as we must, we can only forever exalt the wonder and greatness of His love. For God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance, to the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Christ. For us men and our salvation God drew upon all of the resources of His own being and life when He came down from heaven into the world and sent His Son to save. God, let us reverently observe, has done His best in the inclusion of as many as He could rightly bring Himself to include in that great company of the redeemed. Which being so, what more is there that we could ask for or desire?

The Human Analogy

All consideration of justice and love in God proceeds on the analogy of what these are and mean in human relations. What, for example, is to be understood by justice as it obtains among men?

Let us think of various aspects of justice in human relations.

(1) First there is the common, ordinary, everyday variety of justice. In this sense it is tantamount to what we call purity, honesty, veracity and personal integrity in all our dealings with our

fellow men. The underlying principle is that of equity, that is to say, the things that are equal; a just balance, a willingness to share and share alike, a fair exchange, a fair return for goods and services. Business is not a game of "give-away." No matter what or whose it is, it is not charity. But if the basic principle is not benevolence, then it must be justice, from which it follows, as everyone engaged in business knows, that it is and must be more or less "hard-boiled." The just man is concerned not to deceive or defraud as also not to be deceived or defrauded. "Tribute to whom tribute is due," etc., is a working principle of life applicable not only to himself but also to everyone else. This is one aspect of the meaning of justice.

(2) Another aspect is that of retributive justice which men are naturally disposed to take upon themselves in the form of revenge and retaliation. Such a conception of justice, however, is forbidden, for God has reserved it to Himself as His own prerogative. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink," etc. (Romans 12:17-21).

(3) There are, however, exceptions to this general rule of non-retaliation. One is the exercise of retributive justice as delegated to the State. Government among men is a divine institution. "The powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). And all the rights and duties of these powers are somewhere stated and prescribed in Holy Scripture. Man's dominion over man has been ordained by God for the protection of human society against itself, for the maintenance of law and order in human relations. The natural tendency of the sinful nature and evil heart of man to explode in acts of violence is the reason for this. The heavy hand of the law, "the power of the sword," is needed for the suppression of crimes and misdemeanors and the punishment of evildoers. Again, the principle is that of equity — the exercise of "even-handed" justice. What does the offender deserve? is the question. The basic principle laid down as the rule in all cases is that of *quid pro quo* ("so much for so much"). The expression given to this in God's prescription for the ruler and the judge in the life of His people of old was "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot" and "a life for a life." It was not a principle, however, to be applied in ordinary human relations, but was reserved to the civil magistrate and judge in the conduct of his office.

From all of which the fact appears that in all legal cases what is right for the officers of the State would not be so for the ordinary citizen of the State. By virtue of his position the civil magistrate can and may do things which would be wrong for others not in his position. Such also as is the situation and the case among men is it as between God and man. Because it may be wrong

for a man to chastise his neighbor's child or to punish his fellow men for sin and to hold every man to strict account for his wrongdoing does not mean that it is wrong for God to do so.

So we come to an important distinction as between what justice is and means for God and what it is for man. For God is the high and holy One, the King and Judge. Retributive justice, in the last analysis, belongs to God and to no other. Whatever of this He may delegate at any time, in any way, in any part to man is for man's administration of it under Him. Generally speaking, men are required and the people of God are strictly enjoined to "recompense to no man evil for evil" but rather to "provide things honest in the sight of all men." Personal retaliation and revenge are forbidden.

Love and Justice in Actual Operation

A final consideration in our analysis concerns the quality of justice as compared with that of love. Love is kind: but not so justice, which in its very nature is hard, severe and unrelenting. Love, on the other hand, is tender, gentle and forgiving. They are not the same. However, a judicious mixture of the two is often in order, as when a child says he is sorry, and an offender "throws himself upon the mercy of the court." The very justice of the eternal God Himself is in this life tempered with the grateful effusions of His mercy and grace. At the same time the visitations of His justice are not wanting. For God is just. He chastens His own and visits the inflictions of His wrath upon men and nations as they deserve. And yet the Lord is merciful. "He is kind to the unthankful and the evil." "He makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." He gives seasons of spiritual refreshing and renewal. From time to time He visits this sorry world of ours with great outpourings of His grace. Generally speaking, periods of wrath and judgment alternate and are interspersed with seasons of mercy. At such times God turns the hearts of men by the power of His Spirit working with the Word and makes us turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. For while there is one great division with two opposing sides, the line that divides is passable in this life as those who have stood in opposition are brought over to God's own standpoint and position.

Only let the unbeliever repent and believe and come to Christ and at once he will begin to discover how different it is on the one side from what it is on the other. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

But let no one suppose that the conditions which obtain in this life with their combinations

of mingled goodness and severity carry over into the hereafter. There is no mixture of love and justice in that realm beyond the grave. Love claims its own and moves on to its own consummation. And the same with the justice of God. The gates swing wide to welcome those for whom

the heavenly home has been prepared, and the doors of hell close forever on those who despise the goodness of the Lord and do despite to the Spirit of His grace.

(To be continued)

Inspiration

By the Rev. Robert More, Jr.

"I just received some inspiration from a certain spiritual activity." How often we hear words to this effect. However, they are a horrifying perversion of that excellent but severely restricted word.

The word "inspiration" is only used twice in the King James. In II Tim. 3:16, the Greek very literally reads, "all Scripture (is) God-spirited or breathed." Thus inspiration is here attributed only to the Scripture and means that it gives a quality of infallible authority and inerrancy to the Bible. This was the conclusion which B. B. Warfield so ably presented in the liberal trials of the Presbyterian Church around the turn of this century.

The word again occurs in Job 32:8, "and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." This is much better translated, "and the breath of the Almighty causes them to discern."

The newer translations also occasionally use the word. The New English Bible, in their interpretation, not translation, of I Thess. 5:19 writes, "do not strifle inspiration." The word in the original can ONLY be properly translated, "the Spirit."

Thus we see that the word "inspiration" is used validly only in one passage, and there refers solely to the Scripture.

There is, however, another Greek word which closely approximates our liberal, but degrading, use of the word. The word is *enthousiasmos* from which we get "enthusiasm." This word never is recorded in the New Testament. In pagan literature it means "possessed of the gods" while in

other literature it carries the sense of "spiritual frenzy."

This is, in many regards, the genius we are seeking by using the word "inspiration." We enter a spiritual plane and are borne along in a spiritual ecstasy. We go to camp and receive "enthusiasm." We are stimulated; our soul is stirred; our hearts flow over (Ps. 45:1); our wills are activated and energized.

This word also explains the results of the Christian's possession of the Holy Spirit. Assuredly the Spirit indwells the Christian (II Cor. 1:22) and positively it is He who generates this vigor.

This vivication however dare not be called "inspiration" for these reasons. If a musician, while under this spell, were to compose a song with words, would that be created under "inspiration?" This is not begging the question either, for if a concept is to be Scriptural, it must stand in harmony with Scripture.

Then secondly, if this is "inspiration," it is of radical essence, for no one would claim to write canonical Scripture while in this state, and II Tim. 3:16 states that this is the purpose of inspiration.

Even though common parlance approves the glib use of the word "inspiration," still it seems wise to refrain from that inadequate, yea, destructive, mode of speaking when other, far more accurate and valid, words are at our disposal.

"Were you 'inspired' by this presentation?" God forbid. "Were you stimulated or made enthusiastic by it?" May it ever be so.

What Does It Mean to Abstain from All Appearance of Evil?

By J. G. Vos

Note: This article is reproduced from our January-March 1961 issue because there is reason to believe that the error of Biblical interpretation which the article seeks to point out and correct is still uncritically and widely held. — Ed.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil"—1 Thess. 5:21, 22. How often this text has been quoted by someone in an effort to prove that it is a Christian's duty to abstain from some particular form of

conduct which cannot be definitely proved to be wrong. This verse affords a classic example of the harm done by an incorrect translation of a text of Scripture — an incorrect translation which has led countless people into a false idea.

This text, in the form in which it is translated in the King James Version, has been quoted times without number in confident support of the notion that it is a Christian's duty to abstain, not only from what is really evil, but also from whatever may have the mere semblance or superficial appearance of being evil, even though not really evil. According to this idea, the text is a divine command to abstain from whatever may in any way **resemble** evil, or **seem like** evil.

This interpretation of the text is frequently used in the effort to prove that it is the Christian's duty to abstain from various pleasures and recreations which are not really sinful or evil, but which may in some respect resemble other actions which are really evil, and thus may have the "appearance" or semblance of evil to some people.

It has been seriously stated that Christians should refrain from drinking the common soft drink called root beer, because it has the word "beer" in its name. It was stated that root beer is not really evil, but it has the **appearance** of evil, therefore the Christian should let it alone.

A minister once refused to allow pictures of the foreign missionary work of his own church to be shown on the screen on a weekday evening in the church building of the congregation of which he was pastor. He admitted that to show pictures of the church's missionary work was not evil, but he held that it was "a show," therefore it had the appearance of evil, and should be avoided.

In Pennsylvania there exists an old-fashioned sect of Christians called the Amish Mennonites. These folk will not use automobiles, but stick to their old horse buggies instead. Of course an automobile is not sinful any more than a horse and buggy is sinful. But many wicked and worldly people drive automobiles, so to the Amish this has the appearance of evil, and they abstain from cars and use buggies. There have been sects that held that it is wrong for men to wear neckties because this involves the appearance of evil. Many other examples might be cited.

The error involved in the wrong interpretation of this text is not a slight or unimportant one. Though the things the Christian is urged to avoid are often trivial, the error involved is not trivial. For this error clouds and obscures the clear distinction between good and evil — it blurs the basic distinction between right and wrong.

The Bible plainly and emphatically teaches that it is the Christian's duty to abstain from evil, that is, from what is wrong, from what is forbidden by the moral law of God. But according to the interpretation of 1 Thess. 5:22 which is under discussion, it is also the Christian's duty to abstain from innumerable things which are not really evil, wrong or sinful, but which may have the mere semblance or superficial appearance of being evil. This must inevitably entangle the conscience in a net from which escape will be all but impossible. The natural result will be one or the other of two things.

Either the conscience will become hardened to all moral questions, since the real evil and the merely seeming evil have been lumped together as equally to be avoided; or the conscience will become morbidly sensitive, so that the person will come to have conscientious scruples about a great host of matters which are not really moral problems at all, and he will forfeit all his peace of mind, become tense and inhibited, and lose most of his usefulness for service in God's Kingdom.

The Reformer John Calvin in his classic chapter on Christian Liberty in the **Institutes of the Christian Religion** (Book III Chapter XIX) illustrates this latter tendency by a man who feels that a Christian should not indulge in the luxury of having fine linen napkins on his table, so he substitutes cheaper cotton ones. But his mind is still not easy, and he wonders whether he should allow himself this extravagance. Finally he decides that the true path of Christian duty is to avoid the use of any kind of napkins whatever. Calvin rightly describes this state of mind as the conscience becoming entangled in maze or labyrinth from which escape will be all but impossible. He adds that Christ's redemption is intended to set the Christian free from endless preoccupation with such doubts and scruples.

There is a story of a man who wondered whether his white shirt, which had been worn one day, was still clean enough to wear a second day. Accordingly he asked his wife to look it over and decide. She however declined to examine the garment, merely saying "If it is doubtful it is dirty." This maxim, "If it is doubtful it is dirty," has been applied to the Christian's moral decisions in a very improper way. It has been alleged that anything about which one has a doubt is therefore to be regarded as sinful and to be abstained from. This is an improper conclusion because it fails to recognize that the feeling of doubt may come from either of two different sources. It may come from something about the "shirt" — the matter or practice under consideration — or it may come from the inhibited state of mind of the person concerned; he may be a person of a doubting temperament who tends to have scruples about all sorts of

things which the normal Christian regards as innocent.

It is true that Scripture teaches that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23), and it is always wrong to act against conscience by doing something about which we have a doubt. But the question we are discussing concerns how the Christian who has doubts or scruples should deal with them. As long as he has doubts he should not embolden himself to do that which he questions. But this does not mean that he is simply to say "This is doubtful, therefore it is dirty" and thereupon drop the matter. Rather, the serious Christian will strive to think more deeply in the light of God's Word, asking himself "Are my doubts about this matter occasioned by something inherent in the matter itself, or do they perhaps rise from my own spiritual immaturity which prevents me from discerning clearly between good and evil?" (Hebrews 5:14). Even in the case of the mooted shirt, instead of taking the easy way of saying "If it is doubtful it is dirty," one should rather take the shirt to a window or under a good electric light and have a closer look at it. It may be that the shirt is not really dirty at all, and will be perfectly satisfactory for another day's wear. It is even possible that it is my sinful vanity about my personal appearance that causes me to toss a really clean shirt into the laundry basket. On the other hand, close inspection in a good light may show that the shirt is indeed dirty and I should be ashamed to wear it. In other words, the Scriptural admonition to avoid that concerning which we have doubts does not at all imply that we are to rest in our doubts or scruples without any serious investigation of them or effort to have them resolved.

The error of the King James Version's translation of 1 Thess. 5:22 consists in two points.

(1) Verse 22 is made a new and separate sentence, whereas it should be regarded as a part of the same sentence as verse 21.

(2) The Greek noun *eidōs* should not be translated by the English word "appearance," for this English word is ambiguous and may mean the mere semblance or superficial resemblance to something.

Nestle's Greek text and practically all modern translations punctuate the text so as to make verse 22 part of the same sentence as verse 21. In the ancient Greek manuscripts there are no punctuation marks and not even any spaces between the words. Parchment was costly and they economized by running all the words together. So modern editors in preparing the Greek text for printing have to figure out as best they can where one sentence stops and the next one begins. Of the translations I have checked, only the King James Version makes verse 22 a new and separate sentence. The others

make verse 22 a continuation of the same sentence as verse 21.

The second mistake of the King James Version concerns the translation of a Greek word. This word is a noun, *eidōs*, which occurs five times in the Greek New Testament. It is translated once by "appearance," once by "fashion," once by "sight," and twice by "shape." The references are as follows. The words printed in bold-faced type are the words used to translate the Greek noun *eidōs*:

1 Thess. 5:22, "Abstain from all **appearance** of evil."

Luke 9:29, "And as he prayed, the **fashion** of his countenance was altered."

2 Cor. 5:7; "For we walk by faith, not by **sight**."

Luke 3:22, "And the Holy Ghost descended in a **bodily shape** like a dove."

John 5:27, "Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his **shape**."

According to Thayer's **Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**, which is a standard authority on the meaning of Greek words, the noun *eidōs* means, first, the external appearance, form, figure, shape, of something; secondly, form or kind. Thayer adds that in Greek writers the word *eidōs* means *species* as distinguished from *genus*.

Henry Alford comments on 1 Thess. 5:22 that this verse cannot possibly be translated as it is in the King James Version, for the word *eidōs* never has the meaning of the mere semblance of something. Alford adds that Paul is only cautioning his readers to distinguish and hold fast that which is good, and to reject what is evil.

Here are some of the modern translations of this text:

American Revised Version (1901), "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil."

Revised Standard Version, "Test everything; hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil."

Twentieth Century New Testament, "Bring everything to the test; cling to what is good; shun every form of evil."

Henry Alford in his commentary suggests as the best translation, "Abstain from every species of evil," with a possible alternative translation of "Abstain from every form of evil."

It will be noted that all of these recent translations use the word "form" instead of "appearance" as the translation of the Greek word *eidōs*.

It is clear that verses 21 and 22 are a unit

and properly constitute a single sentence. First there is a general command: "Prove all things" or "Bring everything to the test." The result of bringing everything to the test will be the division of things into two classes, namely, good and evil.

Therefore the command to "Prove all things" is followed by a specific command concerning the Christian's duty with regard to each of these two classes. With regard to what is found to be good, the Christian is to hold it fast. With regard to every form of evil, the Christian is to abstain from it.

The interpretation of 1 Thess. 5:22 as a divine command to abstain from whatever has the mere semblance of evil is often put forward in the interests of what is represented as a superior type of piety or holiness. In reality, however, it is not a better piety or higher holiness, **and it will lead to the opposite of piety and holiness in the end.** True piety does not handle the Word of God in a slipshod or inaccurate manner. And the incorrect translation or interpretation of a text of Scripture is sure to produce evil results in the end.

It may be remarked that our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles certainly did not seek to avoid the appearance of evil as this expression is often understood today. Jesus wrought miracles of healing on the Sabbath which certainly had the appearance of evil to the Pharisees. His disciples ate the ears of grain as they passed through the fields on the Sabbath day which had the appearance of evil to the Jews, but Jesus defended their action as legitimate. Jesus' dis-

ciples were criticized for eating a meal without having washed their hands thus violating the tradition of the rabbis. This had the appearance of evil to the Jews. But Jesus rejected this claim and said that to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a person. Instead of deferring to people's erroneous ideas of evil, Jesus said, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

Finally, we should take the most conscientious care to avoid whatever is **really** evil, as the text commands us to do: "Abstain from every form of evil." On the other hand, we should never judge or criticize our fellow Christians because they do something which seems to us to have the mere semblance or superficial "appearance" of evil. If what they are doing is really evil, and can be demonstrated to be such, we should talk seriously with them about it and show them from God's Word that what they are doing is wrong. But if it is a case of the mere semblance of evil, we should strictly avoid meddling with the conscience of our fellow Christians. They are responsible to God, not to us. And 1 Thess. 5:22, rightly understood, gives no support whatever to the common notion that Christians are required to avoid the mere semblance of evil.

Criticism of fellow Christians for doing something which is not really evil, and concerning which they are acting in good conscience, is really a grievous wrong. "Who are thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand" (Romans 14:4).

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!"

— The Banner of Truth

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."

— The Banner of Truth

Religious Terms Defined

CONGREGATION. A body of Christian people of common faith, united under the same officers, and assembling together for public worship.

CONGREGATIONALISM. That system of church government which recognizes no authority having jurisdiction over more than a single local congregation. (Held by Congregationalists, Baptists and some others; opposed to the Papal, Presbyterian and Episcopal forms of church government).

CONSCIENCE: That function of the human soul which registers approval when a person's actions are in accordance with what he believes to be right, and disapproval when his actions are not in accordance with what he believes to be right.

CONSISTENCY. Agreement or harmony between a person's vows, or profession of faith, and his words and deeds.

COVENANT. A Covenant of God with man is an arrangement made by God and imposed on man, for the purpose of bringing man into religious communion with God, involving certain promises on God's part and certain obligations on man's part.

CREATION. The origination, by the direct, almighty power of God, of what which is truly new as to form, as to matter, or as to both form and matter. "The work of creation is, God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his pow-

er, in the space of six days, and all very good" (S.C.9). Creation is sharply distinguished from **Providence**, in which God works without originating anything truly new. The common view known as Theistic Evolution stands condemned because it confuses Creation and Providence, as well as on other grounds.

CUSTOMS. Religious practices sanctioned by long usage; may be either good, bad or indifferent. (Customs based on long usage are often confused with practices based on **principles** having divine authority. It is a sign of religious decadence when customs are treated as unalterable, while principles are regarded as mere human customs).

DECALOGUE. The Ten Commandments, Ex. 20:1-17.

DECREEES OF GOD. "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" (S. C. 7).

DEMONISM, DEMON POSSESSION. An activity of demons or evil spirits described in the New Testament, by which one or more of them gained control of a human personality and dominated it for Satanic purposes. In the New Testament this is clearly distinguished (a) from ordinary insanity or mental disease; and (b) from bodily disease; Matt. 4:24. The common notion that those described in Scripture as demon-possessed were in reality only mentally ill is therefore wrong. The symptoms may have been similar, but the **cause** was different.

Some Noteworthy Quotations

ORDINARY POLITICS sometimes has its sordid side; politics in church affairs always has.
— Herman Bavinck

THE CLEARER SIGHT we have of the sovereignty and power of heaven, the less we shall fear the calamities of this earth.
— Matthew Henry

GIVE ME THE PLENARY VERBAL THEORY with all its difficulties, rather than the doubt. I accept the difficulties, and humbly wait for their solution; but while I wait I am standing on a rock.
— J. C. Ryle

WE ARE INDEBTED TO GOD for the good works we do, and not He to us.
— Belgic Confession

HE THAT WILL GO as near the ditch as he can, will at some time or other fall in; so he that will take all liberty that possibly he may lawfully, cannot but fall into many unlawful things.
— Augustine of Hippo

IF YOU FIND YOURSELF loving any pleasure better than your prayers, and any book better than the Bible, any house better than the house of God, any table better than the Lord's table, any person better than Christ, any indulgence better than the hope of heaven — TAKE ALARM.
— Thomas Guthrie

IT REQUIRES MUCH COURAGE to be alone with God. It is then that all of self, all subtle egotism, is searched and hunted out of the soul. It cannot live in His presence. The praise of men becomes as dust beneath the feet, and the soul trembles even to receive any honor of men, or to be recognized in this world as of any worth.
— Amy Carmichael

NO PHILOSOPHER has ever been able to solve the riddle of the universe, nor has any been able to find a remedy for sin.
— Loraine Boettner

TRAMPLE on thine own credit and reputation, and sacrifice it, if need be, to God's honor.
— Thomas Boston

Studies in the Epistle to the Ephesians

(Continued from last issue)

LESSON 7

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

1. The Church the Workmanship of the Triune God. 1:3 to 2:10, Continued

(e) The Church Saved from Sin by God's Free Grace. 2:1-10, Continued

We have been considering Paul's description of the lost condition of the unsaved person. Paul describes this condition in five particulars. We have already considered the first three of these, namely, 1. It is a condition of spiritual death. 2. It is characterized by a sinful walk. 3. It is a condition of being in bondage to Satan. We shall now continue, and take up the remaining two particulars.

4. The Objects of God's Wrath. "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others", 2:3b. The unsaved person has a positively sinful nature. His nature has a stubborn, determined bent away from God and toward evil. So Paul says that he is by nature a child of God's wrath.

This term "wrath" should not be misunderstood. It does not mean the same as human anger or ill temper. When the Bible speaks of God's wrath it means God's righteous moral indignation, God's absolute disapproval of sin. In Rom. 1:18 Paul tells us that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold (down) the truth in unrighteousness." Many people today speak as if God were nothing but mildness and love. The Bible does indeed say that "God is love," but it does not say that "God is only love." Love is one of God's attributes, one phase of God's character. But there is another side. Another of God's attributes is His wrath, His moral disapproval of sin.

The natural or unsaved man is **by nature** the object of God's wrath. He is not just "by conduct" or "by habits" the object of God's wrath, but **BY HIS NATURE** the object of God's wrath. That is to say, man's nature, the permanent state and inclination of his heart, considered entirely apart from his conduct, is the object of God's righteous indignation and disapproval because of sin. If it were merely a question of conduct or outward

habits, someone might try to argue that we could reform by turning over a new leaf. But we cannot change our nature. It is our nature that is contrary to God.

5. **Totally Unable to Save Himself.** "Even when we were dead in sins. . .", 2:5a. It is when we are dead in sins that we need salvation. But a dead person cannot do anything for himself. Lazarus had been in the tomb four days when Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth". And if the Son of God had not spoken those words, Lazarus would be there to this present day. If some person had come and urged the dead Lazarus to use his free will and try, at least, to arise from the dead, everyone would have realized the absurdity of such a course. It is the same with the person who is spiritually dead in sin. He cannot raise himself from the dead. It is indeed his duty to repent and turn to God, but he cannot do it of himself, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit in his heart to make him want to believe, repent and be saved.

There is a story of a professor who was asked to give a lecture on the subject of "Free Will." Those who invited him to lecture on this subject did not believe that man is spiritually helpless to save himself; they believed that the sinner by using his free will can turn to God at any time. The professor accepted the invitation, and to the surprise of his audience announced his subject as "The Free Will of a Corpse." Thus he brought out strikingly the Biblical truth that man, who is dead in trespasses and sins, cannot raise himself to spiritual life by his free will.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not good advice but good news. This is because man is utterly unable to save himself. The liberal churches of our day never cease to preach various schemes of self-salvation, such as salvation by character-building, salvation by education, salvation by religion, etc. But the Word of God shows that all these are vain and useless. Man is dead in sin. He needs more than reform or culture; he needs new life from God.

To summarize: the need for salvation arises from the condition of natural man, in its five-fold aspect. He is in a state of spiritual death, he is characterized by a sinful walk, he is in bondage to Satan, he is the object of God's wrath, and he is totally unable to save himself from this deplorable condition.

Conviction of sin is fundamental to real Chris-

tian experience. Such conviction is the **work of the Holy Spirit**. We may preach both the law and the Gospel, but only the Holy Spirit can convince people that they are really lost sinners in need of a Saviour.

The free recognition of these various truths is one of the signs of the real work of the Holy Spirit in a person's life. On the other hand, the person who stubbornly denies that he is dead in trespasses and sins, who denies that he is in bondage to Satan, who denies that he is the object of God's wrath, is the very person who is a total stranger to the real saving work of the Holy Spirit. These truths are neither pleasant nor popular, but they are **TRUE**, they are revealed to us in God's Holy Word.

Questions:

1. What is meant by God's wrath?
2. Why is it wrong to say that God is nothing but love?
3. What is meant by the statement that the unsaved person is **by nature** a child of God's wrath?
4. What does the fact that we are by nature children of wrath imply concerning the possibility of saving ourselves by moral reform?
5. What does the fact that we are dead in sins imply concerning the possibility of turning to God by our free will?
6. What is meant by saying that the Gospel of Christ is not good advice but good news?
7. What are some of the futile schemes of self-salvation which are being advocated by the liberal churches of our day?
8. What is the place of conviction of sin in Christian experience?
9. Who alone can produce real conviction of sin in a person?
10. What does the free recognition of these truths imply concerning a person's life?
11. What kind of persons stubbornly deny that they are dead in sins, in bondage to Satan, objects to God's wrath, etc.?
12. How can we know that a doctrine is true, even though it may be unpleasant and unpopular?

LESSON 8

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

1. The Church the Workmanship of the Triune God. 1:3 to 2:10, Continued

(e) The Church Saved from Sin by God's Free Grace. 2:1-10, Continued

God's Way of Salvation

Having considered the subject of the condition

of the unsaved person, we shall now turn to the other side of the matter, and discuss God's way of salvation. We shall consider four things about it, namely, its origin, its basis, its methods, and its end.

1. The Origin of God's Way of Salvation. The plan of salvation originated in the fathomless love of God. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)", 2:4, 5. We learn here of God's great love, of His rich mercy (love for those in distress), and of His grace (love for those who have offended against Him).

Note that the way of salvation did not originate with man, but with God; it is not rooted in man's worthiness, but in God's great love and mercy. Moreover, God's grace is the first step in the actual experiencing of His salvation, for He quickens us (makes us alive) when we are still dead in trespasses and sins. He does not do this after we have turned over a new leaf, have repented and turned to Him, or any such thing on our part, but when we are dead in trespasses and sins. A work of God comes first, before any experience of salvation on man's part — not only a work of God for us, but a work of God in us.

2. The Basis of God's Way of Salvation. Its basis is the work of Jesus Christ. In these ten verses Jesus Christ is repeatedly mentioned: "with Christ" (verse 5); "in Christ Jesus" (verse 6); "through Christ Jesus" (verse 7); "in Christ Jesus" (verse 10).

Christ's work is set forth fully in the Bible. It included all of His life on earth, His perfect obedience to God's law, and especially His sufferings and death and resurrection as the Substitute for sinners. All of this taken together forms the basis of God's way of salvation. This is the foundation on which the house of salvation has been built. And the Bible tells us that this is the only adequate foundation, for "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

The work of the Holy Spirit is never divorced from the finished work of Jesus Christ. Christ purchased redemption for the elect; the Holy Spirit applies that redemption to the elect. His office is to apply the redemption purchased by Christ. Where the Gospel of Jesus Christ is rightly proclaimed, there the Holy Spirit will be at work, making alive people who were dead in trespasses and sins. Those who exalt Christ most are most led by the Holy Spirit. He did not come to glorify Himself; it is His office to glorify Christ by applying Christ's redemption to men.

3. The Methods of God's Way of Salvation. We now must consider the means or methods by which God works out His way of salvation in our lives. These are included in what the Shorter

Catechism calls "effectual calling". "Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offering to us in the gospel" (S.C. 31). In connection with this we shall consider two things, Regeneration and Faith.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Regeneration is called by various names in the Bible, such as being born anew, being a new creature or a new creation, the washing of regeneration, receiving a new heart, and other expressions. In our passage we find it described as being "quickened" or made alive. This is just another way of saying that we must be born of the Holy Spirit.

Note that this great change is represented as being entirely an act of God. It is not something we can accomplish for ourselves, nor even something that we can cooperate with God in doing; it is wholly the work of God's Spirit.

We see, too, that it is a creative work, for it gives new life to those who were spiritually dead. This shows why the new birth is indispensable, as our Lord said to Nicodemus. A person might be a leader in Israel and have the law of God on the tip of his tongue, but if he had not experienced the new birth, he was just a poor lost sinner, dead in trespasses and sins.

The new birth is a fundamental change of a person's inner character — what the Bible calls "the heart." It is not a change of our personal identity; the person who is born again is still the same individual, but his character has been changed by the almighty power of God. By divine power the person's character, the governing moral disposition of his soul, is changed from evil to good. This change is an act, not a process; it takes place in an instant of time. Consciousness of it may come gradually to the person concerned, but the new birth itself is always instantaneous.

The new birth is mysterious because it does not take place in our mind, where we would be conscious of it, but in our heart, where we are unconscious of it except as we come to see its effects in a changed life and changed attitudes and desires. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). This spiritual change takes place once only in any person's life, and never can nor need be repeated. The new life is planted in the soul but once, and lives on forever.

Questions:

1. What is the origin of God's way of salvation?

2. What is meant by God's mercy?
3. What is meant by God's grace?
4. What is the first step in a person's actual experiencing of salvation?
5. What is the basis of God's way of salvation?
6. What is included in the work of Jesus Christ as our Saviour?
7. How is the work of the Holy Spirit related to the work of Jesus Christ?
8. What is effectual calling?

9. What are some of the terms used in the Bible to designate the change called Regeneration?

10. Whose work is regeneration? What is man's part in it?

11. What is meant by saying that regeneration is a creative act?

12. What is the nature of the change wrought in a person by regeneration?

13. Why is the new birth mysterious?

14. How many times can a person experience the new birth?

LESSON 9

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

1. The Church the Workmanship of the Triune God. 1:3 to 2:10, Continued

(e) The Church Saved from Sin by God's Free Grace. 2:1-10, Continued

God's Way of Salvation, Continued

We shall now consider the subject of Faith. This is mentioned in 2:8, 9. The person who is born again begins to exercise faith in Jesus Christ. He believes on Christ as his Saviour.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (2:8, 9). Note that in verse 8 faith is said to be a gift of God. If anyone is a believer in Christ, this is not something that he can claim any credit for; it is something he should thank God for. It is not that we made up our minds to accept Christ, but that God set His love on us and sent His Spirit to work faith in us.

Christ is the object of faith. We are not saved just by believing, nor just by believing in the Bible, nor even just by believing in God. The true object of saving faith is Christ as Saviour. It makes a tremendous difference in **whom** we believe, and **how** we believe in Him.

There are various kinds of faith described in the Bible. Not all faith is real saving faith. There is historical faith, the kind that the demons have, and tremble. When a person believes in Jesus Christ in the same way that he believes in Abraham Lincoln or Napoleon, that is mere historical faith. Then there is temporary faith, the faith of those that believe for a while, but having no root in themselves, later fade away, as illustrated in the parable of the Sower. And there is true saving faith that really embraces Christ for salvation, as described in Ephesians 2:8, 9.

The Bible speaks of strong faith and weak faith. No doubt strong faith is better than weak

faith. But there is one thing even the weakest faith will do, provided it is indeed faith in Christ — even the weakest faith lays hold of an almighty Saviour and unites us to Him so that we can never perish but shall certainly inherit eternal life. We may or may not have faith that removes trees and mountains, but it is a great thing if we have the faith that lays hold on Jesus Christ and Him crucified as our Saviour from sin and eternal death.

4. The End of God's Way of Salvation. We shall now consider the purpose of God's way of salvation, the great end for which the whole arrangement was intended by God. Two such ends or intentions are mentioned in the passage we are studying.

The first is mentioned in 2:7, "That in the ages to come he might show forth the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Thus the plan of salvation is intended to manifest God's glory.

When we say that man's chief end is to glorify God, we do not mean that man can add anything to God's glory, for that is impossible. We mean rather that God created man as a way of manifesting forth the glory which God already had in Himself. And this is the great end of the plan of salvation. Through the endless ages of eternity, the redeemed of earth will be the living monument of God's grace and mercy. In the ages to come God will show the whole universe what He did for our salvation when we were lost in sin and far away from Him.

The second intention of the plan of salvation is mentioned in 2:10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." We are not saved by good works, but we are saved **unto** good works. God did not provide a way of salvation merely for our selfish enjoyment. He saved us for service to Himself. We should never trust in our good works as any part of the ground of our salvation, but we cer-

tainly ought to cultivate good works as the proper fruit of our salvation. That is what God intended when He provided salvation for His people.

God is the source, power and end of man's salvation. Do we know this infinite, eternal, sovereign, gracious God? Is our Christian experience a reality, or is it just a formality, as it is in the case of many who have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof by their manner of life? Paul had personally experienced the things he wrote about. Multitudes of Christians have experienced them in our own day. If we lack these things, we should seek them at once from Him who alone is the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Questions:

1. What does a person begin to do after he is born again?
2. What is meant by saying that faith is a gift of God?
3. What is the true object of saving faith?

4. Besides saving faith, what other kinds of faith are described in the Bible?

5. What is meant by historical faith?

6. What is temporary faith, and what parable of Jesus illustrates this kind of faith?

7. Do we have to have strong faith in order to be saved?

8. What will even the weakest faith do?

9. What is the first end or purpose of salvation, as shown by 2:7?

10. What do we mean by saying that man's chief end is to glorify God? If God is a perfect being, can we add anything to His glory? How do we glorify Him?

11. What is the second intention of the plan of salvation, as shown by 2:10?

12. What is the true relation between good works and salvation?

LESSON 10

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

2. Jewish and Gentile Christians are one Body in Christ. 2:11-22

(a) The Original Sinful State of the Gentiles. 2:11-13

Concerning the position or status of the unsaved Gentile, we are here given five particulars: 1. He is separate from Christ. 2. He is alienated from the commonwealth of Israel. 3. He is a stranger from the covenants of promise which God has made with His people. 4. He is without hope in the world. 5. He is without God in the world. Since the unsaved Gentile lacks these benefits, he is described as being "afar off" from God, 2:13. We may compare Christ's statement to the Samaritan woman, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22).

Note that according to 2:12, the Gentile who is saved thereby becomes a member or citizen of "the commonwealth of Israel," the spiritual people of God. In the Old Testament dispensation, the commonwealth of Israel was limited to the descendants of Abraham. In the New Testament dispensation, it is the Christian Church. Both the Old Testament Israel and the New Testament Church constitute one single, continuous, uninterrupted "commonwealth of Israel," or visible society of people in covenant with God. So long as the Gentile remains outside the commonwealth of Israel, he is far from God. Therefore, when the Gentile becomes near to God, we may proper-

ly conclude that he has become a member of the commonwealth of Israel. And in the case of both Jew and Gentile, whoever obtains such benefits, obtains them solely through the blood of Jesus Christ, as is shown by 2:13.

We see how far the apostle Paul was from teaching the popular modern doctrines of the universal Fatherhood of God and the universal Brotherhood of Man. Paul did not teach that all men are God's children. On the contrary, he insisted emphatically that the person who is without Jesus Christ is far off from God, and without God and without hope in the world.

(b) The Middle Wall of Partition Broken Down. 2:14-18

The original relation between Jews and Gentiles was a relation of enmity, but in the Church they are reconciled to each other through the work of Christ. The "middle wall of partition" spoken of in verse 14 is the wall dividing Jew from Gentile. The "twain" mentioned in verse 15 are the Jew and the Gentile.

The "law of commandments contained in ordinances" (2:15) includes the various laws given by God to Israel. The ceremonial law which in many ways made Israel a strictly separate people, caused great enmity between Jew and Gentile. We get a glimpse of this enmity here and there in the pages of the New Testament. For example, note John 4:9, "Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Then in John 18:28 we read: "Then led they Jesus

from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. . . ". They would not enter Pilate's judgment hall, lest they be defiled. Needless to say, a Roman might easily regard such an attitude as a great insult to himself and his nation.

In Acts 10:28, Peter tells the people assembled in the house of Cornelius, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation."

The law made Israel a special, separated people. It set them apart from all other nations and races. This very fact tended to cause friction and enmity, hatred between Jews and people of other races.

But the law not only caused enmity between Jew and Gentile; it also caused both Jew and Gentile to be at enmity with God, for both had violated the law of God. Thus Christ's atonement had a double result: (1) It caused Jew and Gentile to be reconciled to each other in the Church through Christ; (2) It reconciled the sinner, whether Jew or Gentile, to God through Christ's cross.

How are we to understand the statement of 2:15 that Christ had abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances? How has Christ abolished the law? In the first place, the law can no longer condemn the believer. It has been abolished as a condemning power, so far as the believer in Christ is concerned. Compare Gal. 3:13.

As for the ceremonial law, it has been completely abolished, and forever. Even the Jew is emancipated from its requirements; therefore the ceremonial law can no longer act as a barrier between the Jew and the Gentile who are in Christ.

2:16 takes up the wider reconciliation, and affirms that Christ has reconciled both Jew and Gentile to God. Christ has done this by making both Jew and Gentile into a **new man**. After this the Jew is no longer a Jew, but a new creature in Christ Jesus; and the Gentile is no longer a Gentile, but a new creature in Christ Jesus. These two classes of people have been (1) reconciled to each other by the cross of Christ; (2) both reconciled to God by the cross of Christ.

2:17 informs us that Christ came and preached peace to those that were afar off, and peace to those that were near. This preaching was necessarily done after Christ's crucifixion, and therefore it was done through the apostles and the Church, with the power of the Holy Spirit making it effectual.

2:18 summarizes by stating the fundamental unity between the redeemed Jew and the redeemed Gentile. Both have access to the same heavenly Father; both have access through the atonement

of the same Saviour; both have access through the applying work of the same Holy Spirit. Their experience being thus identical, there can remain no more occasion for enmity, but only a happy unity.

The only real remedy for the enmity between Jew and Gentile is Christ. As long as both Jew and Gentile are without Christ, there is no real hope for peace and harmony between the two. All organizations and committees that work for "tolerance" along lines that do not include bringing Jew and Gentile to the crucified Christ, are necessarily futile and superficial.

Questions:

1. What is the religious conditions of the unsaved Gentile, according to 2:11-13?
2. What is the "commonwealth of Israel" mentioned in 2:12?
3. Does this commonwealth of Israel exist at the present day? Where is it found?
4. How do Gentiles become members of the commonwealth of Israel?
5. What would the apostle Paul have thought of the modern liberal doctrines of the Universal Fatherhood of God and the Universal Brotherhood of man?
6. What was the original relation between Jews and Gentiles?
7. What body of law especially caused friction between Jew and Gentile?
8. Give some examples from the Bible of enmity between Jew and Gentile.
9. Besides separating Jew from Gentile, what separation was effected by the law of God?
10. What double reconciliation was brought about by the work of Christ?
11. In what sense has Christ abolished the law?
12. When was the ceremonial law abolished?
13. How has Christ reconciled both Jew and Gentile to God?
14. When and how did Christ preach peace to those that were afar off and to those that were near?
15. What is the only real remedy for the enmity between Jew and Gentile?
16. Why are efforts to bring about "tolerance" between Jews and Gentiles, without bringing them to Christ, bound to fail?

LESSON 11

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued**2. Jewish and Gentile Christians are one Body in Christ. 2:11-22, Continued****(c) The Church a Habitation of God through the Spirit. 2:19-22**

Verses 11-13 gave the Gentile position by nature; verses 19-22 give the Gentile position by grace. The Gentile who is a Christian has become a fellow-citizen with the saints and a member of the household of God.

There is but one household of God, and it includes God's people in both the Old and the New Dispensation. This chapter recognizes only one commonwealth, one household, one foundation. It does not recognize one foundation of the prophets, and another of the apostles, but only the one foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Christ Himself is the chief corner stone. The external form of "Israel", the commonwealth of God's covenant people, has changed from the Old Testament form of the nation of Israel to the New Testament form of the Christian Church; but it is still Israel, the covenant people of God.

2:20-22 presents a beautiful figure, the figure of a temple. Christ is the chief corner stone. Apostles and prophets are the foundation stones. Upon this foundation is erected the edifice; both Jewish and Gentile Christians are built into its structure. Every believer, every child of God, is a living stone in the temple.

The purpose of this temple is to provide a **habitation for God**. God dwells in it, by His Holy Spirit, who dwells in every believer, both Jew and Gentile. Since both Jewish and Gentile Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, they are both, by that same Spirit, constituted the habitation of God. This same truth is set forth in 1:23, where the Church is called Christ's body; here in 2:22 it is called a temple or habitation of God through the Holy Spirit.

Where do we stand in relation to the truths of Ephesians 2? Have we experienced the salvation by grace described in verses 1-10? Do we know that we, who once were dead in trespasses and sins, have been made alive by Jesus Christ? We who were Gentiles, far off from God, have we really been "made nigh by the blood of Christ"? Are we still strangers and foreigners, or do we know ourselves to be fellow-citizens of the saints, and members of the household of God? Can we say that we are living stones, built by the Holy Spirit into that spiritual temple which is the habitation of the living God? Are we standing on that one solid, firm foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone? The study of this chapter may

add something to our understanding of the Bible, but it will be in vain unless we apply its truths to our own lives, and measure ourselves by its teachings. It was not meant merely for the people of Ephesus, but also for us.

3. The Mystery of the Church. 3:1-21**(a) This Mystery was Formerly Hidden, but is Now Revealed. 3:1-6**

Chapter 3 of the Epistle opens with the expression "For this cause", which connects the thought that is to come up with the closing words of chapter 2. The idea is: "Because the Jewish and Gentile Christians are in Christ built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, therefore I Paul . . . (do certain particular things)." But there is a break in the grammar of the passage, and several verses are inserted as a parenthesis. Look at 3:14 where the words "For this cause" are repeated. Paul starts out in 3:1 by saying "For this cause" but he does not immediately inform the reader as to what he is doing for this cause, until he comes to verse 14, where we finally learn what it is: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

We take 3:2-13, then, as a parenthesis inserted at this point for a special purpose, and we find that the main thought of verse 1 is resumed at verse 14. The structure of the chapter would then appear to be somewhat as follows:

1. Verse 1, Introduction, linked with chapter 2.
2. Verses 2-13, Parenthesis, stating Paul's relation to the Church.
3. Verses 14-21, Main thought resumed, setting forth the aim of the Christian life in the form of a prayer.

We shall consider each of these parts of the chapter in turn.

1. The Introduction, 3:1 "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles." For this cause — because they were built together in Christ for a habitation of God through the Spirit; because they have such a standing in God's Church — Paul is going to offer a special prayer for their progress and growth in grace.

Paul calls himself "the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles." Remember that this is one of the "prison epistles", written while Paul was a prisoner at Rome. But how was he a prisoner **for the Gentiles**? Paul's preaching and evangelistic effort among the Gentiles, in obedience to the Lord's command, aroused the anger of the Jews, who arrested Paul and turned him over to the

Romans; so it really was because of his work for the salvation of the Gentiles that Paul was a prisoner. He does not refer to himself as "the prisoner of Caesar" or "the prisoner of the Roman Empire," though he was indeed such, but "the prisoner of Jesus Christ," because it was really on account of the Lord's will that he was suffering imprisonment in Rome. Back of it all was the Lord's will and purpose.

Questions:

1. Is there only one household of God, or two? What verse shows this?
2. In what respect has the commonwealth of Israel changed, and in what respect is it still the same?
3. Who is the chief corner stone of God's spiritual temple?

4. What is the place of apostles and prophets in the temple?

5. What is the purpose of the spiritual temple?

6. How can the teachings of this chapter benefit us?

7. What is the force of the opening words of chapter 3?

8. What is the nature of the passage 3:2-13?

9. What idea is repeated in verse 14?

10. Why does Paul speak of himself as "the prisoner of Jesus Christ"?

11. What was the connection between Paul's imprisonment and the spiritual welfare of the Gentiles?

LESSON 12

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21 Continued

3. The Mystery of the Church. 3:1-21, Continued

(a) This Mystery was Formerly Hidden, but is Now Revealed. 3:1-6, Continued

2. The Parenthesis, 3:2-13. First, Paul tells us that it was the **grace of God** that caused him to have any connection at all with the Christian Church. It was the grace and mercy of God that changed Paul from the persecuting, blind Pharisee to the apostle, the missionary, the preacher of the Gospel to the Gentiles. He speaks of this in verse 2: "the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward."

Then in 3:3, 4, he tells us how he got his knowledge of Christian truth, and especially that truth which is the special theme of this Epistle, the mystery of the Christian Church. It was not by research, or study, or speculation, or profound investigation of the Scriptures — it was "by revelation." We will do well to pause and consider what this expression means. In the Bible "revelation" or "to reveal" is a technical term. It means the communication of truth by God to the human mind.

We could not know anything at all about God and His will except by revelation. Man cannot by searching find out God, but God has been pleased to reveal Himself to man. We find a triple revelation of God: in nature, in human nature, and in Scripture. The revelation in nature and in human nature is sufficient to leave men without excuse, but it is not sufficient for salvation. So God has provided the third form of revelation, called "special revelation." This special revelation is now a completed whole and we have it in

written form in the Holy Bible. In Paul's time it was still in process, still incomplete. So we are told that it was "by revelation" that he attained his knowledge of these truths.

It is important to realize that Paul's knowledge was derived from special divine revelation, because it is common today to represent Paul as a kind of thinker or philosopher who invented it himself or took it over from some ancient pagan source. In fact it is quite common in our day to say that the original Christianity as taught by Jesus was a very simple thing — just that we should love God and our neighbor — and that Paul later spoiled it all by adding a lot of complicated doctrines about the Deity of Christ, the substitutionary atonement, and so forth. But this idea is far from the real truth. Paul claimed to have received the truths he teaches by special revelation. The "simple gospel" of Jesus is only a figment of the imagination of liberal preachers and theologians; it never really existed. Between the teachings of Jesus Christ and those of the apostle Paul there is not only no real contradiction; there is actually perfect harmony and organic continuity. It is a common and cheap practice today to set Scripture against Scripture as if the Bible were full of contradictions. But it is perfectly clear that the Biblical writers themselves were not conscious of any such contradictions, but believed themselves to be in harmony with each other and with the whole (compare 2 Peter 3:15, 16).

Questions:

1. How did Paul come to have a connection with the Church?

2. How did Paul gain his special knowledge of divine truth?

3. What is the meaning of the term "revelation" in the Bible?

4. In what three ways has God revealed Himself to man?

5. What kind of revelation is necessary for salvation?

6. What is the difference between God's special revelation in Paul's day and at the present day?

7. Why is it important today to realize that Paul's knowledge of divine truth was derived from special revelation?

8. What wrong idea exists concerning the relation of Paul's Epistles to the teachings of Jesus?

9. What do some liberal preachers mean by "the simple gospel of Jesus"?

10. Does Scripture contradict itself? What verses in 2 Peter bear on this question?

LESSON 13

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

3. The Mystery of the Church. 3:1-21, Continued

(a) This Mystery was Formerly Hidden, but is Now Revealed. 3:1-6, Continued

The Mystery Summarized, 3:4-6. Remember the Bible idea of a mystery — not something that is inherently obscure, profound or baffling, but something which could not be known except by special divine revelation. A mystery, in the Bible, is not an incomprehensible truth, but a **secret fact, later revealed**. For ages it was hidden in the mind of God; then there came a time when it was revealed to men, and so became known.

What is the mystery that Paul is discussing? In the broadest terms, Christ Himself is the mystery — the great truth once hidden but now revealed — as we see from 3:4, "the mystery of Christ." But is this chapter Paul intends to deal with a narrower, more specific part of the mystery, namely, the Church. Of course the apostle is not speaking of any single congregation, nor of any one denomination, but of the true Church in its completeness, which is Christ's spiritual body.

3:5 tells us that this mystery was formerly concealed, but later revealed: "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." Verse 6 then goes on to tell us just what the mystery was that Paul is speaking about: it was the great truth that the Gentiles should be incorporated into the same body with believing Jews, becoming with them the spiritual Israel by partaking of the Gospel salvation.

But, we may ask, how was that a mystery? Did not the Old Testament over and over again predict the salvation of the Gentiles? Did not God tell Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed? Did not Paul in Romans 9-11 explain in great detail how the Old Testament predicted the rejection of the Jews and the salvation of the Gentiles? All this is certainly true. How then could the salvation of the Gentiles, and their incorporation into the body of

God's covenant people, have been a mystery, something hidden but later revealed?

There are total mysteries and partial mysteries. The doctrine of the Trinity is rightly called a mystery; only by God's revelation in the New Testament do we know it; yet there are some hints and suggestions of it in the Old Testament. In the same way, the Old Testament predicted the salvation of the Gentiles. Peter was a student of the Old Testament, yet when he was called by God to preach to the household of Cornelius, he would have been hesitant to do so except for the special preparation of the vision on the housetop at Joppa; and when he returned from Cornelius, the Jerusalem church criticized him for having preached to Gentiles.

The resurrection of Christ from the dead was quite clearly predicted in the Old Testament, yet when it really took place, it was very difficult for the disciples to believe that it was really true. The fact that the Christ must suffer, and be despised and rejected of men, and be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and be killed — all this was revealed in the Old Testament, yet the disciples had the greatest difficulty in grasping these truths.

Similarly, the salvation of the Gentiles was predicted in the Old Testament, so it was not a total mystery nor a complete secret. But that was not enough. So there came a time, after Jesus was crucified and had ascended into heaven, when the full truth was revealed plainly, that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs, of the same body with the spiritual Israel, and partakers of the same salvation. This revelation was made first to the apostle Peter, and later, more fully, to the apostle Paul.

If we look closely at the text, we will see that Paul does not assert that this truth had previously been something completely unknown; he says in 3:5 "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed . . .". The Old Testament revelation of this truth had been like the light of a candle, a ray of hope, to be sure, but nothing like the blaze of the noonday sun of the New Testament revelation.

With 1900 years of Gentile Christianity behind us, it may not strike us as strange at all that Gentiles should be saved and made members of the same body with the Jews. But remember that in Paul's day this was a new thing, a strange thing, an almost unbelievable thing, both for Jews and for Gentiles. It was almost unbelievable — but it was taking place before their very eyes in the cities where Paul preached.

Questions:

1. What is the Bible idea of a mystery?
2. What, in the broadest sense, is the mystery Paul is dealing with?
3. What is the specific mystery discussed in Ephesians 3?

4. Show that the Old Testament predicted the salvation of the Gentiles.

5. Show how some truths revealed in the Old Testament were not adequately grasped by Jesus' disciples and the early Christians.

6. What words in 3:5 imply that the salvation of the Gentiles and their incorporation in one body with the Jews was not something previously completely unknown?

7. Why does this truth, which seemed so strange and new in Paul's day, not cause us any special difficulty at the present day?

8. To which of the apostles was this truth made clear before it was revealed to Paul?

LESSON 14

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle. 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

3. The Mystery of the Church. 3:1-21, Continued

(b) Paul's Own Connection with this Mystery. 3:7-9

Paul was made a minister, that is, a servant, of this mystery by the grace and power of God (3:7). He calls himself "less than the least of all saints," perhaps because he had formerly persecuted the Christian Church; compare 1 Cor. 15:9, "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."

Paul was the special apostle to the Gentiles (3:8). Hence it was his special work to make "all men" — not merely the Jews, but the Gentiles also — see what is the fellowship of the mystery, that is, the fellowship of the Christian Gospel and Church. This great truth, hidden in the secret plans of God from eternity, slightly revealed in the Old Testament, now burst upon the world in its fulness through the apostle Paul.

Note the truth concerning God's work of creation which is stated in verse 9: "God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." The emphasis is on the words "all things"; the words "by Jesus Christ" are not found in the most ancient and reliable Greek manuscripts. It is certainly true, of course, that all things were created by Jesus Christ, as is proved by John 1:3. But the evidence indicates that the phrase "by Jesus Christ" is not a part of the genuine text of Eph. 3:9. Alford states the meaning of the clause as follows: "The stress is on **all things** — this concealment was nothing to be wondered at — for God of His own will and power created **ALL THINGS**, a fact which involves His perfect right to adjust all things as He will." Being the sovereign Creator of all things, God had an

absolute right to keep the "mystery" a secret until it was His will to reveal it in its fulness through His servant the apostle Paul.

(c) The Divinely intended Purpose of the Church. 3:10-12

The real purpose of the Church, composed as it is of redeemed Jews and Gentiles, is to manifest the wisdom and glory of God, as we see in 3:10. The wisdom and glory of God are to be manifested by the Church, not merely to men, but also "unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places," that is, to the angelic beings.

This manifestation of God's wisdom to the angels by the Church is not merely something that will take place in eternity; it is to be done "now", as is plainly stated in verse 10. Right now, in this present age, the Church is to manifest God's wisdom to the angels in the heavenly places. From this we gather that the Church on earth is seen and noted by the angels, and watched over by them with care. Compare Hebrews 1:14, which says concerning the angels: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Note also 1 Peter 1:12b, ". . . have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."

We should realize that this manifesting of God's power and glory and wisdom was purposed in Christ Jesus from all eternity, for verse 11 says: "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." God does not work by changeable, hit or miss methods, nor is He "an experimenting God" as some people say. He has one single, consistent, unchanging plan from eternity to eternity. Scripture teaches clearly the doctrine that God has foreordained all things that shall come to pass — the fall of a sparrow, the redemption of the Church, the end of the world, the new heavens and the new earth.

Those who attempt to deny the doctrine of predestination or foreordination are greatly embarrassed by some of Paul's statements — which are really, of course, statements of the Holy Spirit — and have great difficulty in their effort to explain them away. How much better it is not to try to explain them away; how much better it is to accept them as they are!

Verse 12 concludes this sub-section by stating that it is in Christ that we have access with boldness and confidence. We have become so accustomed to this that we do not feel its full force any more. But those just converted from paganism, as the Ephesians were, must have felt it as a strange and new experience; and the same is true on foreign mission fields today. To be able to approach into the presence of the infinite, eternal, holy God through a crucified and risen Mediator, with "boldness", that is, without hesitation on account of our creaturehood or our sinfulness, and with "confidence", that is, with full confidence of being accepted by God — what marvellous spiritual privileges and blessings have been given to Christians! How different from attempting to approach God indirectly and afar off through an earthly human priesthood! We may be sure that Paul and the Ephesian Christians felt the wonder of their free access to God's presence in Christ.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the word "minister" in 3:7?
2. What may be the reason why Paul calls himself "less than the least of all saints"?

3. What three words in 3:9 are not found in the best Greek manuscripts?

4. What verse in the Gospel of John proves that all things were created by Jesus Christ?

5. What is the connection between the clause "God, who created all things" and the rest of verse 9?

6. What is the real purpose of the Church?

7. What is meant by "the principalities and powers in the heavenly places"?

8. When is God's wisdom to be manifested to the angels by the Church?

9. What verse in Hebrews shows the connection of the angels with the salvation of Christians?

10. What verse in 1 Peter speaks of the interest shown by the angels in the Gospel preached on earth?

11. Why is it wrong to speak of God as "an experimenting God"?

12. To whom are some of Paul's statements embarrassing?

13. Why do not we modern Christians feel the truth stated in verse 12 as something wonderful?

14. How must the truth stated in 3:12 have impressed the Ephesian Christians?

LESSON 15

II. Doctrinal Section of the Epistle 1:3 to 3:21, Continued

3. The Mystery of the Church. 3:1-21, Continued

(d) Paul's Prayer for the Church. 3:13-21

"Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory" (3:13). Paul is thinking of the glorious things which he has spoken of in verses 1-12, and especially he is thinking of his own connection with those glorious things — he had been made a "minister" of them. The last phrase of verse 13 should be translated "which are your glory", as it is in the ARV. The meaning is that Paul's afflictions are the glory of the Ephesian Christians. Through Paul's sufferings it became possible for them to receive the Gospel and be saved. Therefore, he says, he does not want them to "faint" at his sufferings for them. By "faint" he means "be disheartened." He does not want them to feel that he had suffered far too much, or that God should not have permitted such great sufferings to befall him, for,

after all, these sufferings had accomplished a glorious purpose. Paul himself felt that this purpose was worth all it cost, and he wanted the Ephesians to feel the same way about the matter.

We have seen that verses 2-13 of chapter 3 form a parenthesis (see Lesson 11, pages 69-70). Chapter 3 starts out with the words "For this cause. . ." but Paul does not tell what it is that he does "for this cause". Instead, he inserts a long parenthetical statement, verses 2-13. Then with verse 14 he resumes the main thought, and again says "For this cause. . .". We now learn what it is that Paul does "for this cause."

Because the Ephesian Christians had such a noble standing — being builded together in Christ for a habitation of God through the Holy Spirit (2:22) — Paul bows his knees and offers prayer for them.

Note that he says "I bow my knees." Posture in prayer is not a matter of no importance. It affects the mental attitude of the person praying and so affects the prayer. The **Directory for**

Worship of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (II. 7) says: "The posture in prayer is not a matter of indifference. Kneeling or standing are Scriptural and are expressive of the spirit of reverence and devotion." Many people who habitually remain seated in prayer to Almighty God would immediately rise to their feet if the President of the United States were to enter any public assembly where they were present. Except in the case of very brief prayers, the present-day tendency to maintain a sitting posture during prayer would seem to be one sign of the increasing irreverence of the age. Of course, exceptions must be made in the case of those who by reason of sickness or bodily infirmity are unable to stand or kneel.

The Person to whom Paul prays is not a vague force or influence, as some people hold today, but the living God, "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and on earth is named" (3:14, 15). This is a personal God, a God who can and does love us, a God who can and does hear and answer prayer.

"The whole family in heaven and on earth" includes the redeemed on earth and in heaven, and also the angels. All God's servants who willingly love and serve Him, are described in the Bible, sometimes as the "kingdom" of God, and sometimes, more intimately, as the "family" or "household" of God. God is not only our Ruler, of whose Kingdom we are made citizens, but also our Father, into whose family we are adopted as His children.

This is Paul's prayer for the Ephesians, and therefore also for all Christians, since the Epistle was not written for the Ephesians alone. It is a prayer that all Christians may have a full Christian experience and a full Christian knowledge.

Paul prays that the Christians may have more inward spiritual strength, which comes from the Holy Spirit (verse 16) and from a vital union with Christ by faith (verse 17), and that they may be "rooted and grounded in love," that is, in love to God and to the people of God (verse 17b). We have here two figures, those of a tree (being "rooted") and of a building (being "grounded"). The one figure suggests growth, the other suggests stability. And these two things, growth and stability, must be in every Christian life that is to amount to anything. Some Christians have emotional experiences, they have what they call "inspiration," they perhaps "just feel they are saved," yet they show no growth and they possess no stability. They make no real progress, but just stand still or go round and round in a little circle. They are no different — certainly no better — than they were a year ago, or ten years ago. And as they lack stability, they may be carried off their feet by any new religious fad or fancy. Every new religious movement or program impresses them for a little while, then they forget it and turn to something else.

The truly spiritual Christian — the kind of Christian Paul wanted the Ephesians to be — on the other hand, is both a growing Christian and a stable one. He is rooted and grounded in love. Love is the climate in which the Christian life thrives. Read 1 John 4:7-11.

Next, Paul prays that the Christians may be full in knowledge. Note that Paul was free from the anti-intellectual spirit which is the blight of the modern Protestant Church — the idea that knowledge, truth, doctrine, are unimportant, while "life" is the thing that matters. Paul would have had no sympathy for the modern notion that "Christianity is not doctrine but life." He knew nothing of an antagonism between piety and knowledge. Nor did he emphasize spirituality and disparage knowledge of the truth as some do today. Of course, what Paul speaks of is a real **spiritual** knowledge, not a mere "head knowledge" of the truth (though we must have that first of all, to be Christians).

What Paul speaks about transcends human thought: "to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge" (verse 19). The love of Christ — not our love to Christ, but His love for us. But how can we know something which passes knowledge? We now know in part. We come to know more and more fully as we make progress in the Christian life. We shall know still more fully in heavenly glory when we see the Lord face to face. **But we shall never know it all.** We shall never get to a point where we can draw a circle around the love of Christ and say, "I know it all now." There will always be more beyond, and more beyond, and more beyond. To all eternity we shall be learning more, and more, and still more, of the love of Christ which passes knowledge.

This is not a mere mystical experience or emotion, but a matter of knowledge, though it can be known only by those who have the experience. Paul's prayer ends in a burst of praise (verses 20, 21), giving all the glory to God by Jesus Christ. How different this is from the modern spirit of glorifying man which is so common today! Paul believed in a great God and a great Christ. And if we are true believers, then Paul's Christ is our Christ too.

Questions:

1. What was the glory of the Ephesian Christians?
2. What did Paul mean by the word "faint"?
3. Why did he not want the Ephesian Christians to "faint" at his sufferings for the Gospel's sake?
4. What change in the line of thought takes place in verse 14?
5. What was it that Paul did "for this cause"?

6. What is the importance of posture in prayer?

7. Is the common custom of remaining seated in prayer a sign of irreverence?

8. How does Paul describe the God to whom he prays?

9. What is included in "the whole family in heaven and on earth"?

10. What is the difference between the "family" of God and the "kingdom" of God?

11. What idea is suggested by the word "rooted" in verse 17?

12. What idea is suggested by the word "grounded" in verse 17?

13. What will a Christian be like if he lacks growth and stability?

14. How does Paul's appraisal of the value of knowledge differ from that of many present-day Christians?

15. If the love of Christ passes knowledge, how can the Christian know it?

LESSON 16

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24

I. The Responsibilities of Members of Christ's Church. 4:1-32

(a) The Duty of Maintaining Spiritual Unity 4:1-6

In verses 1 and 2 Paul calls upon his readers to live worthily of the calling wherewith they were called, that is, the calling of the Gospel, and God's call to faith in Christ. They should walk in a spirit of meekness, longsuffering, forbearance and love. Then he urges them to preserve what he calls "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

What is meant by "the unity of the Spirit"? Think back to the situation in the church at Ephesus and other similar churches of Paul's day. The members were partly Jews and partly Gentiles. Their background, traditions, manner of life, customs and education had been very diverse. These different kinds of people have been incorporated into one body. They are in fellowship with each other in one organism. In spite of the great differences of their background, education, and the like, there is a real sense in which they are one. But what kind of unity is this, and how did it originate? It is not the unity of human programs or organizations. It is **the unity of the Spirit**. This means, of course, the unity of the Holy Spirit. It was God the Holy Spirit that took all these diverse people and made them one. Whatever their differences, they had all had one and the same experience of salvation through faith in Christ. This experience was produced in them by the operation of the Holy Spirit, applying Christ's redemption to them. So their unity was "the unity of the Spirit."

Now this unity of the Spirit must be preserved; it must not be broken by factions and disputes arising from their past differences. "Peace" is to be the bond that preserves the unity of the one body, the Church. Note that Paul says "endeavoring," that is, trying or attempting, to keep the unity undamaged. Circumstances may

arise making it difficult or even impossible to do this, but still the ideal is to preserve the Spirit-constituted unity in the bond of peace.

We know that in the Bible the number seven often symbolizes perfection. Here we have mentioned seven aspects of Christian unity. Let us note them one by one.

1. There is one body. This we take to be not any one denomination, but the true Church as a whole. It is the body of those who profess the true religion, and of their children with them. In its invisible aspect, it is the body of the elect of God, who are redeemed by Christ.

2. There is one Spirit, the Holy Spirit whom Christ sent, who gathers people from the world into the membership of the body, the Church.

3. There is one hope of our calling, the hope of salvation and eternal life, both now and forever.

4. There is one Lord, namely, Jesus Christ, the Head of the body.

5. There is one faith, by which all the members believe on Christ.

6. There is one baptism. This is not the baptism of the Spirit, for the Holy Spirit is mentioned separately in verse 4. The baptism spoken of is water baptism, the sacrament of baptism, which is a sign and seal of membership in the Church of Jesus Christ.

7. There is one God and Father. Here is the sum of it all — one God and Father, who is above all, through all, and in all.

Most of the items of this Christian unity specified by Paul are quite clear and do not raise any special problems. However, we may consider one or two of them in more detail.

The "one body" is of course the true Church. As an invisible organism, seen only by God, of which all the redeemed are members, the unity of the church cannot be broken. Denominational divisions do not affect the unity of the Church

as an invisible organism. It includes all true believers of all denominations. All who have been born again are members of it.

As a visible body the Church is divided by denominational distinctions. These denominations, such as Lutherans, Presbyterians, Baptists and Covenanters, actually exist and they break up the unity of the Church as a visible body. We maintain that these divisions are sinful and ought not to exist. Every such division is a product of sin, and involves an infringement of the ideal unity prescribed by Scripture. These divisions originated in sin. Wherever such a division has taken place, either the separating church or the church separated from is guilty of the sin of schism, which means an unjustifiable division in the body of Christ. In some cases, indeed, both parties may be involved in the sin of schism, and one party may be more guilty than the other. As in the case of divorce suits in our civil law courts, the party suing for divorce is not necessarily free of the guilt of wrecking the marriage. Both parties may be guilty, and yet one may be more guilty than the other. Wherever denominational division has taken place there has been a departure from truth, and whichever party has deviated from the truth is guilty of the sin of schism.

But the sin of denominationalism did not stop with the original acts of separation between churches, most of which took place long ago. Christian people are guilty of this sin today if they complacently allow these sinful divisions to continue to exist, without making any serious effort to provide a remedy. "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (Jer. 8:22). Denominationalism is not an incurable disease; it continues because the churches do not value truth highly enough to make the necessary sacrifices to cure the disease; they are unwilling to pay the price in money, manpower, crucifixion of stubbornness and pride, and patient effort. It is a high price, the price of real church union on the basis of Scriptural truth and order — and very few today are interested in buying it at that price. The historic Westminster Assembly of Divines, 300 years ago, was willing to pay the price. But today those who are concerned about church union are mostly seeking it on the bargain counter — by a shortcut which regards truth as unimportant.

In seeking and preserving unity, truth is the most important factor. Those who seek truth first, will attain unity eventually, for the truth is one — it is not divided. But those who seek

union as the most urgent matter, usually seek it at the sacrifice of truth, and so they attain neither truth nor unity. Denominationalism is certainly a great evil, but after all it is not the greatest possible evil. There are even worse conditions, and church union attained by the sacrifice of truth is one of them.

It is remarkable that while baptism is mentioned in Eph. 4:1-6, the Lord's Supper is not mentioned. Why this should be the case, we cannot say. Possibly the reason is because baptism is the initiatory rite of church membership, a sign and seal of our membership in the body of Christ.

Questions:

1. What is meant by "the unity of the Spirit"?
2. Why was it specially necessary for the churches to which Paul wrote to maintain the unity of the Spirit?
3. How may the unity of the Spirit be broken?
4. What is implied by Paul's use of the word "endeavoring" in 4:3?
5. What does the number seven often symbolize in Scripture?
6. What is the "one body" that Paul speaks of?
7. What is the baptism mentioned in verse 5? How do we know that it is not the baptism of the Holy Spirit?
8. How is the origin of separate denominations to be explained?
9. What is the sin of schism, and who is guilty of it?
10. Where denominational division has taken place, how may the guilt be divided?
11. Apart from the sin of the original acts of separation between churches, how are Christian people involved in the sin of denominationalism?
12. Is denominationalism an incurable disease?
13. Why do denominational divisions continue without being healed?
14. What historic body of 300 years ago was willing to pay the price for real unity on the basis of Scripture?
15. How are people trying to gain church union at a bargain price today?
16. What evil is even greater than denominational division?

LESSON 17

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

1. The Responsibility of Members of Christ's Church. 4:1-32, continued

(b) The gifts of ministry given by Christ to the Church. 4:7-11

The apostle goes on, in verses 7 to 16, to speak of the members and officers of the church and their various functions. In verse 7 we see that **grace** is given to every Christian, while in verse 11 we see that **special gifts for service** are given to some. Verse 8 is quoted from Psalm 68:18, properly regarded as a prophecy of Christ's ascension. It is the ascended Christ who sends the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit imparts spiritual gifts to members of Christ's body.

Verse 9 explains that Christ first descended (that is, at His incarnation), and then ascended "far above all heavens" (that is, to the presence of God), "that he might fill all things." These last words, "that he might fill all things," necessarily refer to Christ's divine nature, not to His glorified human nature, which, though glorified, is still finite, and therefore necessarily localized in some particular place. "As God, Christ is everywhere present; as glorified man, He can be present anywhere." But as glorified man He cannot be present everywhere at once.

Grace and spiritual gifts of some kind are given to every Christian (verse 7), but not all Christians receive any particular gift. The **official gifts** here mentioned are five in number, namely: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers.

The meaning of verse 11 is that the men who filled the offices, as well as the offices themselves, were the gifts of Christ to the Church. When a church recognizes a lack of any of these, they should be sought from Christ, who is the Head of the body and the Lord of the harvest. It is a great sin for anyone to take such work upon himself when he has no reason to believe he has been called to it by Christ.

Of the five offices that are mentioned, two (apostles and prophets) were temporary in nature, and have passed away with the close of the apostolic age. The other three (evangelists, pastors, teachers) are permanent, continuing in the Church until the present day. The grammar of the Greek text indicates that "pastors and teachers" are not two classes, but one office with two functions, just as we sometimes say, for example, "Dr. Blank, Physician and Surgeon." We believe, too, that the office of "evangelists" is not **essentially** different from that of "pastors and teachers"; the difference is one of function rather than of essential nature. A minister who is ordained to labor as a missionary in the home or foreign field is properly an **evangelist**; a minister who is ordained and installed in the pastoral charge of an established congregation, is properly a **pastor and teacher**. The qualifications and authority are the same; the differences are in function.

We may be surprised that the office of deacon is not mentioned here, and that there is no dis-

tinction made between "pastors and teachers" and what are called "ruling elders." But we should realize that Paul's purpose in this passage is not to outline the structure of church government, but to emphasize that spiritual gifts come from Christ to the Church. In the Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus) Paul takes up the matter of church government and specifies the various kinds of church officers, including deacons.

At the present day there is a tendency to regard church office from a worldly viewpoint, as if the officers were simply elected by the people, just like the officers of any social club or business organization. But in reality the officers of the Church are Christ's gift to the Church, and to be so regarded. In choosing a pastor, or elders or deacons, we are to ask ourselves whether there is reason to believe that Christ has called particular persons to these offices. Has Christ, by the Holy Spirit, given them the qualifications needed for the offices? Has He put in their hearts a deep and earnest concern about the welfare of Zion? Has He led them to sacrifice some worldly interests for the sake of the Church? An election of church officers should not be regarded as a popularity contest. The real question is what does the Head of the Church want us to do.

Questions:

1. What is given to every Christian?
2. From what Psalm is verse 8 quoted, and of what is it a prophecy?
3. Does the clause "that he might fill all things" refer to Christ's divine nature or to His human nature? Why?
4. How many official gifts does Paul mention in this passage?
5. What should a church do when a lack of proper officers is felt?
6. When is it a sin for a person to take the work of a church officer upon himself?
7. Which of the offices mentioned by Paul were temporary?
8. Does "pastors and teachers" refer to two offices, or to two functions of a single office?
9. What is the difference between "evangelists" and "pastors and teachers"?
10. How can we explain the fact that Paul does not say anything here about the office of deacon?
11. In which of Paul's Epistles does he deal specially with matters concerning church government? What are these Epistles called?
12. What wrong attitude toward church office sometimes exists?

13. What is meant by the statement that "an election of church officers should not be regarded as a popularity contest"?

14. What are some of the evidences that may show that Christ has called a man to office in the Church?

LESSON 18

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

1. The Responsibilities of Members of Christ's Church. 4:1-32, continued

(c) The intended purpose of these special gifts. 4:12-16

In verses 12 to 16 Paul discusses the purpose of these gifts to the Church. Their purpose, in brief, is for the work of the ministry, the building up of the body of Christ, verse 12. The verses which follow expand this idea and explain just what is necessary.

The first aim in "the work of the ministry" is that all Christians shall become perfect — that they shall attain perfection as measured by the perfection of Christ Himself (verse 13). In the Bible, absolute perfection is the goal. Moreover, absolute perfection is the destiny of each and every Christian (Jude 24). This goal will not be attained in the present life, but only when we enter the state of glory. Yet we may never lower the ideal of absolute perfection. Every Christian must strive toward it; the ministry of the Church is intended to promote and further it. We should remember that the Bible never tells us to "be good", but it always commands us to be **perfect**. It is one of the evidences that Christianity is the true religion, that it is the one and only religion which places before man an ideal so high that it cannot possibly be attained in the present life — it requires of man not mere "goodness" but absolute moral perfection.

This perfection, of which Christ's own perfection is the measure and standard, is to be sought "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." Many people today seem to think that moral character has no connection with what a man believes, nor any connection with a man's relation to Jesus Christ. But real moral perfection comes in no other way than "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." It is those who are walking on this highway that shall be presented faultless before the presence of God's glory in the end (Jude 24). Those who only sell the Christian faith for a mess of pottage will not be among those who reach that goal.

Another feature of the purpose of the gifts of ministry to the Church, is the aim that Christian people shall be able to discern between true and false doctrine (verse 14). Some modern Christians exactly fit Paul's description; they are "carried about with every wind of doctrine," and so are

influenced by every new fad and fancy in religion. Their theology is that of the last book they have read; when they read a different book, they will have a different theology. Or, perhaps they do not read any books at all, in which case they are even more open to the perils mentioned by Paul in the last part of verse 14.

Many people at the present day cannot discern between false doctrine and true, except in cases where the difference is completely obvious on the surface. If a man says, "I am an atheist", they will readily admit that he is not a Christian, and that atheism is not Christianity. But the difference between the true doctrine of the substitutionary atonement and the false doctrine of the "moral influence view" of the atonement baffles them completely, and they will take refuge in some remark about "theological hair-splitting" as an excuse for their inability to discern truth from error.

We should realize that this inability to discern between truth and error is sinful; it is, as Paul implies, an evidence of spiritual immaturity and childishness (verse 14a). The true aim is such a degree of spiritual maturity and stability that false doctrine will be instantly discerned and rejected. This aim is to be promoted by the offices which Christ has given to the Church "for the perfecting of the saints." In particular, the regular, faithful, systematic preaching of the Word of God enables Christian people to attain the maturity and stability spoken of in verse 14. Those Christians who attend the preaching of God's Word irregularly are not only breaking their own vows and placing a stumblingblock in the path of others; they are also shortchanging themselves religiously. Those who attend on the preaching of the Word only occasionally will to their dying day be like "children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine."

Another feature of the goal in view is "speaking the truth in love," something which is very different from merely speaking the truth. The **Larger Catechism** of the Westminster Assembly, Q. 144 and 145, is most instructive concerning this Christian duty of "speaking the truth in love." We note the emphasis in verse 15 on both truth and love. Some people are strong on speaking the truth, but they forget about love. Others stress love, and forget about the obligation to speak the truth. But the real Christian's aim is to speak the truth in love — and when a Christian does that he has made great progress in the Christian life.

Finally, the aim is increasing growth in vital

union with the living Christ (verses 15b, 16). Christ is the source of all spiritual life, growth and power. Both in these two verses, and in the whole section, verses 12-16, note the spiritual character of the things spoken of. How different Paul's emphasis is from the emphasis on programs and organization which exists in many churches of the present day. According to Paul, both the individual Christian and the Church as a body grow spiritually through vital union with Christ. This is something that cannot be measured by "standards of efficiency" nor can it be tabulated in columns of statistics. It is the real spiritual growth of the Church.

Questions:

1. What is the purpose of Christ's gifts of ministry to the Church?
2. What is the goal of the Christian, in the Bible?
3. How is the Christian's perfection to be measured?
4. When will the goal of absolute perfection be attained?
5. What is the relation between the goal of perfection and our daily life?
6. Instead of commanding us to "be good", what does the Bible command us?
7. What does the obligation of moral perfection imply concerning the truth of the Christian religion?
8. How is the goal of moral perfection to be sought?
9. What is our duty with regard to true doctrine and false doctrine?
10. If Christian people are unable to discern between true and false doctrine, what does this indicate concerning their religious attainments?
11. How can the ability to discern between true and false doctrine be strengthened and increased?
12. What is the difference between "speaking the truth" and "speaking the truth in love"?
13. What is the secret of the real spiritual growth of the Christian and the Church? Why can such spiritual growth not be measured by "standards of efficiency" or statistics?

LESSON 19

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

1. The Responsibilities of Members of Christ's Church. 4:1-32, continued

(d) The duty of cultivating practical holiness. 4:17-32

Lest anyone suppose that all that is required is a purely "spiritual" or mystical holiness, Paul makes it very clear that real holiness is an intensely practical matter, which extends to all phases of life. Hence he counsels Christians, first, to be different from the unsaved Gentiles (verses 17-20), saying, "ye have not so learned Christ." In verses 17-19 Paul tells us how people that are not Christians live. He describes both their character and their conduct, both the root of their lives and the fruit of their lives. Their character is a condition of spiritual blindness and therefore of spiritual darkness. Their heart is blind, their understanding is darkened, they are grossly ignorant of the things of God. So much for the character of the person who is not a Christian. But what about the conduct of such people?

Their conduct, of course, is not all the same. Some are worse than others. But taking non-Christians as a class, we find their conduct described in verse 19: lasciviousness, uncleanness, greediness. Who can deny that this picture fits the condition of the world today? Our moving pictures, our magazines, our newspapers, the whole life of our modern world shows that verse 19 is the plain

truth about human life when Christ is left out. But Paul adds, "Ye have not so learned Christ." Christian people are expected to be different from the world.

In verse 21 the apostle continues, "If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus." That is to say, if the Christian really knows Jesus Christ, if Christ has really touched and changed his life — if he is really a Christian — his life will be very different from the life of the worldly person. Paul assumes his readers to be saved and Spirit-taught people. From this starting point he goes on to explain in detail what the difference ought to be between them and the world.

Therefore Christians must put off the old man (verse 22), that is, their old sinful nature, their original corruption. When a person becomes a Christian the Holy Spirit imparts to him a new heart or a new nature, called in the Bible by such terms as "the new man", "the new creature," etc. This new nature is good and holy. It loves and serves God. But the old, sinful nature is still there. In the Bible it is called by such terms as "the old man", "the flesh," "the body of sin," and others. This old nature is just the opposite of the new nature. It is set against God, against the law of God, against holiness, against all that is pure and good and unselfish and lovely.

This sinful nature is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (verse 22b). It will actively in-

fluence the Christian toward committing sin. What is the Christian to do about his sinful nature?

We cannot make a negotiated peace with the sinful nature. If we give it an inch it will take a mile, and be in danger of dominating our lives. Paul tells us, rather, to **put it off**. By a figure of speech he is comparing the sinful nature to a garment. He commands, "Put it off!" But what does this mean? It is a very simple matter to take off a coat or a shirt. But how does a person take off his old sinful nature?

In another place, Paul commands us to crucify the old nature. To crucify it means to nail the old nature to a cross. But a man that is crucified is not necessarily dead. He may continue to live for a considerable time. But he is no longer in control of things. And this illustrates what Paul means by "putting off" the old man. It means to put the old nature off the throne of our life; we are no longer to allow the old nature to dictate how we are going to live.

If we may think of our life as an automobile, we might say that we cannot get rid of the old nature completely in this life, but at any rate we are to put the old nature out of the driver's seat and make it ride in the back seat of the car. It will still be with us during our earthly life, but it is not to be allowed to control our decisions and actions.

We should realize that putting off the old man is not something that we can do once for all and get it over with. A person can become a Christian only once, but he has to keep on "putting off" the old man every day of his life until at last he enters the state of glory.

To continue the illustration of the automobile, we may say that the old nature has a remarkable way of climbing back into the driver's seat, so that we have to keep on putting him

out of the driver's seat and into the back seat of the car. Only when we enter heaven will we be entirely rid of the sinful nature.

Questions:

1. What do we mean by saying that holiness is a practical matter?
2. How does Paul describe the character of people who are not Christians?
3. In what terms does Paul describe the common conduct of people who are not Christians?
4. How does Paul's description of the character and conduct of non-Christians fit the world of today?
5. Why does Paul expect Christian people to be different from the world?
6. What are some of the terms by which the Christian's new nature is designated in the Bible?
7. What are some of the terms used in the Bible to designate the old, sinful nature?
8. What is the real character of the old nature?
9. What effect will the old nature have on the Christian?
10. Why can we not negotiate a peace with our old nature?
11. What does Paul mean by "putting off" our old nature?
12. How often must a Christian put off the old nature?
13. When will we be completely rid of the sinful nature?

(To be continued)

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 limits of 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 to the Manager of "Blue Banner Faith and Life."

CHRIST AND ARCHITECTURE, by Donald J. Bruggink and Carl H. Droppers. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 49502. 1965, pp. 708. \$20.00.

"A church that is interested in proclaiming the gospel must also be interested in architecture, for year after year the architecture of the church proclaims a message that either augments the preached Word or conflicts with it." The impli-

cations of this thesis are forcefully set forth by Mr. Bruggink (a minister in the Reformed Church of America) in the first two-thirds of this attractive volume. He argues that churches holding to the Reformed faith must allow their architecture to be determined by their theology. Drawing his evidence from the Bible, Reformed standards, and Institutes, he concludes that the pulpit, communion table, and baptismal font ought to be the fo-

cal points. This leads him to attack both altars and "choirolatry."

Mr. Droppers (an architectural engineer who belongs to the Reformed Church of America) relates these principles to the work of an architect and building committee. This book should be purchased by any congregation planning to construct a new building.

— David R. Armstrong

SPECIAL DAYS AND OCCASIONS, by Billy Apostolon. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 49506. 1959, pp. 104. \$1.00.

This is Volume III in **True to the Bible Sermon Outline Series** and is a minister's work book, although a layman could find much help for Bible Study, or Devotional Messages. Although there are 104 pages, 49 of them are clear for notes or however you wish to use them. This reviewer would rather have entitled the book, **Bible Study Outlines** as each outline has seven main topics with three sub-points under each one. Each sub-topic is given a Scripture reference. Sometimes the point made seems a bit far-fetched, but every one is certainly a thought stimulator.

— Herbert A. Hays

FATHERS OF THE BIBLE, by Clarence P. Dame. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506. 1964, pp., 112. \$1.95.

This Dame is a man and writes from a man's view point. He writes an excellent book setting forth the wonderful privileges and responsibilities of fatherhood. In his first chapter he deals with the subject of fatherhood in general, basing his thoughts on Eph. 6:4. He then enters into detail pointing out the various phases of fatherhood using different characters of the Bible to illustrate.

Isaac is an easy-going father. Solomon is a busy father, too busy to train his son. Joshua is an old-fashioned father: head of the family; making decisions for the family; setting an example worth following.

This is another in the **Minister's Handbook Series**. A good book to read and study.

— Herbert A. Hays

PREACHING AND TEACHING FROM EPHESIANS, by Fred D. Howard. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506. 1963, pp. 106. \$1.95.

This is another volume in the **Minister's Handbook Series**. It is a verse by verse, paragraph by paragraph commentary on Ephesians written in narrative style, which makes it very readable.

Concerning the doctrine of election, he says, "With Paul, divine election was an unquestioned reality and the sole ground of the Christian's salvation."

This salvation which is mediated through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit must be appropri-

ated by the individual. The doctrine of divine election does not operate apart from the individual's responsibility of choice. Howard calls these two truths a paradox; Packer in his book **The Sovereignty of God and Evangelism** calls them an 'antinomy.' This is an interesting thought and worthy of careful consideration and study.

The book is written in such a way as to provoke much thought and this reviewer has found it very helpful.

— Herbert A. Hays

PARABLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, by Rudolph F. Norden. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506. 1964, pp. 101. \$1.95.

This is another volume in the **Minister's Handbook Series**. The author, Mr. Norden, is at present Editorial Assistant and Editor of the **Lutheran Campus Pastor** and is on the Commission staff.

He opens his book with a discussion of the Old Testament parables presenting the different views of what they are, and how many there are. He touches on the use of poetry amidst the prose; he discusses the use of symbolic language, similes, fable, metaphor, allegory and proverbs throughout the Bible. He calls symbolic actions such as "Jeremiah's wearing of bands and a yoke about his neck to signify the rule of Babylon over conquered states" enacted parables.

After a chapter on the appreciation and use of Old Testament parables, he takes them up one by one. While some say there are no Old Testament parables; Miller in **Harper's Bible Dictionary**, lists only two; Hastings in **A Dictionary of the Bible** lists five; and Thompson in **The New Chain Reference Bible** mentions seven; Mr. Norden deals with fourteen presenting the textual setting, the parable and the lesson from each one.

I have enjoyed reading several of his treatises and recommend the book as valuable in Old Testament studies.

— Herbert A. Hays

Commentary on Hebrews & I, II Peter, by John Calvin, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. 1963, pp. xiv-378. \$6.00.

Calvin's Commentaries need virtually no comment other than an expression of thanks to the publisher for issuing them in current readable editions. Alone in his field, the timeless insights of Calvin are as fresh today as in the days of the Reformation. Many laymen misconceive of Calvin's works and think them too scholarly for ordinary usage. A few minutes reading will soon dispel this error, each page is replete with simple, direct, personal applications of God's Word. The present day critic's skepticism over the authorship of Hebrews and II Peter is not, of course, even considered here; but we must remember the

day and purpose for which Calvin wrote. Line by line, word by word, he brings the Scripture to bear upon God's people in every age. Skillful exegeses match any of today's; particularly useful is the discussion of Christ's priesthood after the order of Melchizedek in Hebrews 7. For a better understanding of the concept of the covenant in Hebrews, however, the reviewer recommends Geerhardus Vos' "Teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews." The remarks of Calvin on I and II Peter are pertinent, valuable and surprisingly readable. To neglect this volume for modern commentaries alone would be a great shame.

— R. W. Nickerson

Commentary on II Corinthians, by P. E. Hughes, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. 1962, pp. 508. \$6.00.

This commentary volume is definitely on the same high level as the others in the series. The introduction is particularly valuable for its refutation of the theory held by some higher critics that II Corinthians is not a unified letter by the one author Paul. Throughout the commentary the orthodox viewpoint is carefully and intelligently maintained coupled with helpful applications of doctrine to life. In the sections in which Paul makes personal references the author skillfully portrays the apostle's life and goals.

The recent bantering about of the word reconciliation, particularly in the proposed confession of 1967 of the UPCUSA, makes the study of 5:11-6:10 of great value. Here the proper view of reconciliation is set forth over against the false teaching so prevalent today. The remarks on 6:15-18 are valuable in understanding the relationship to be maintained between belief and unbelief, but one regrets the fact that these statements are not more specifically applied to current issues such as ecumenicity. Helpful also are the insights into the matters of stewardship (8:1-9:15), the experience of Paul in the "third heaven" (12:1-6) and Paul's thorn in the flesh (12:7-10). By itself, II Corinthians is a rich and practical epistle, but Mr. Hughes has made it all the more so. Charles Hodge's 19th century classic, though certainly useful, becomes pedantic and out-of-date along-side of this modern treatment.

— R. W. Nickerson

WE'RE NEVER ALONE, by Eileen Guder. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506. pp. 150. \$2.95.

This is a book for the modern woman. In the author's own words, she "defines a point from which we can take our bearings." The points she discusses are common to us all: mundane household routines, getting along with family and friends, gossip, bearing one another's burdens, etc. She ably directs our hearts and minds to the final destination in life as we walk along, not alone but with HIM.

— Marian M. Vos

THE CASE FOR CALVINISM, by Cornelius Van Til. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, P.O. Box 185, Nutley 10, N.J. 1964, pp. 154. \$3.75.

In this book the author brings out the true basics of Christianity, wherein is found Calvinism. The author has superb intelligence and treats the subject with precise conciseness.

The book draws heavily from other sources. There are three main ones: **The Case for a New Reformation Theology** by William Hordern; **The Case for Theology In Liberal Theology** by L. Harold DeWolf; **The Case for Orthodox Theology** by Edward John Carnell. He also refers on numerous occasions to the writings of Imanuel Kant. Of course, **The Case for Calvinism** was written at a more recent date than the others and it is, to a large extent, a critique of the works of Hordern, DeWolf and Carnell. The author deals with each of these separately and yet also together. A chapter is devoted to each of the four "Cases". In the three of Hordern, DeWolf and Carnell, the author first of all presents the position of each of these men. But at once he goes on to compare and contrast each of these with another one. The message of Hordern and DeWolf is untrue to the true Biblical Christian Story. In the "Christian" Story as put forward by Carnell, his message is true, but he betrays his message by his method of presenting it. But, of course, basically these "three" all put forward the philosophy of Kant in that they all present man as being self autonomous. Thus, the fourth chapter presents the philosophy of Calvin and contrasts it with that of Kant, showing how the Christian Story as told by Calvin is the true Biblical Christian Story.

The book has been of inestimable value to me. It was quite difficult to understand because almost every sentence is loaded with thought — it is concise; yet, the author makes the position very clear, basically, all modernism and non-reformed churches hold to the position of Kant in that they present man as autonomous whereas Calvin presents God as the Controller of man and the universe. It is "either God or man; Calvin or Kant."

— Raymond E. Morton

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS, by Menahem Mansoor. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. 1964, pp. 210. \$4.00.

The author, Menahem Mansoor, is of the Department of Hebrew and Semetic Studies, University of Wisconsin. As the title page says, "A College Textbook and a Study Guide", for so it is. The book is written with extensive recommended reading of other works on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Community. The author begins with the first finding of the cave in 1947 and continues to describe the scrolls found in the caves following.

A more detailed account is given of Jewish Sects and Bar Kochba's Revolt. Bar Kochba's Revolt took place against Roman rule in A.D. 132-135.

The author has this to say of the Jewish Sects: "The religious controversy evolved around two main issues: One (Sadducees) held that the Scriptures without further rabbinical interpretation constituted Judaism; the other (Pharisees, who were destined to become the preservers and transmitters of Jewish religion), insisted that the

traditional Oral Law, as interpreted by the rabbis, was a necessary supplement to the Mosaic Written Law. A third sect, the Essenes, constituted an ascetic group of dissident Jews who lived communally, repudiated Temple worship and animal sacrifices, and emphasized Messianic expectation. The Essenes have been identified by many scholars as the sect of the Dead Sea Scrolls." The author then goes on to discuss the sects in considerable detail.

— Raymond E. Morton

Brief Notices of Recent Books

Published by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

DWIGHT L. MOODY'S DAILY MEDITATIONS, selected by Emma Moody Fitt. 1964, pp. 234. \$2.50. A brief daily meditation for every day in the year. Contains much edifying material. — J.G.V.

CHRISTIAN HEROES OF TODAY, by Don Mainprize. 1964, pp. 81. \$1.95. Suitable for Junior and Senior high school age youth.—J.G.V.

THE SHOEMAKER WHO GAVE INDIA THE BIBLE, by James S. and Velma B. Kiefer. 1964, pp. 63. \$1.95. The story of the pioneer Protestant missionary to India well told for children and young people. — J.G.V.

Published by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

CHURCH GROWTH IN MEXICO, by Donald McGavran. 1963, pp. 136, paper cover. \$1.95. A good account of the problems and achievements of Evangelical churches in Mexico. — J.G.V.

DAVID BRAINERD: BELOVED YANKEE, by David Wynbeek. 1964, pp. 256, paper cover. \$2.25. The earlier (clothbound) edition of this book was reviewed in our April-June 1964 issue, page 107, to which readers wishing more information are referred. David Brainerd was a pioneer missionary to the American Indians in the 1700's, who suffered many hardships and was greatly used of the Lord. — J.G.V.

CROWDED TO CHRIST, by L. E. Maxwell. 1965, pp. 354, paper cover. \$2.25. By the well-known Principal of the Prairie Bible Institute, Alberta, Canada. Over against the all too popular "believism" of the present day, Dr. Maxwell shows that without the Law of God the Gospel misses the mark. The Law crowds men to Christ, convinces them of their sin and need. A much-needed emphasis today. — J.G.V.

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH, by Dale Moody. 1963, pp. 153, paper cover. \$1.45. This is a popular type exposition of Ephesians "with special application to some present issues." The author

is a professor of theology in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. Not completely clear on the doctrine of election, the author, in our opinion, unfairly criticizes Augustine, Calvin and Spurgeon. On the other hand he rightly questions the universalism of Barth. The treatment of Eph. 5:18 ("Psalms and hymns and Spiritual songs") is unsatisfactory. Still, the book contains much of truth and value. — J.G.V.

NEW PATTERNS OF CHURCH GROWTH IN BRAZIL, by William R. Read. 1965, pp. 240, paper cover. \$2.45. A readable and informative account of the growth of Protestant Christianity in South America's largest country. — J.G.V.

Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

PICTURES OF JESUS WITH SIMPLE STORIES, by Al Bryant. 1964, pp. 50, 8½ x 11 inches, plastic-coated hard cover. \$2.95. This is a beautifully gotten up book for small children. As we are opposed on principle to "pictures of Jesus" we cannot endorse the art work, which is reproduced in color from various originals. The story material is good, and suited to very small children. — J.G.V.

BUT GOD! by V. Raymond Edman. 1962, pp. 152. \$2.50. By the former president of Wheaton College. The sub-title is "Little Lessons of Large Importance Learned from the Holy Scriptures." The book also contains some poems by Annie Johnson Flint. There are many beautiful full-page photographs of some of the grandest natural scenery in America, provided by the Union Pacific Railroad. The themes discussed are very practical, dealing largely with the goodness, mercy and faithfulness of God to His children. — J.G.V.

A BIT OF HONEY, by W. E. Thorn. 1964, pp. 120. \$2.50. The sub-title describes this book as "After-dinner addresses of inspiration, wit and humor." Some material here could be used as sermon illustrations and in other Christian messages. There are many interesting anecdotes in the book. — J.G.V.

CRY TO THE WIND, by Esther L. Vogt. 1965, pp. 150. \$2.50. Christian fiction for teen-age young people. — J.G.V.

A PIECE OF BLUE SKY: THE DYNAMICS OF FAITH, by Darrel E. Berg. 1965, pp. 148. \$2.95. Meditations on faith based on studies of Bible characters. The statement on page 79 that "if God predicts something, it will probably happen" is misleading and wrong. If God predicts something, it will certainly happen. — J.G.V.

CHRIST ABOVE ALL, AND OTHER MESSAGES, by Robert G. Lee. 1963, pp. 154. \$2.50. The author is a Southern Baptist pastor. A clear-cut presentation of Scriptural teaching about Christ. — J.G.V.

I BELIEVE IN THE AMERICAN WAY, by James H. Jauncey. 1962, pp. 128. \$1.95. The author is a native of Australia who is now a U.S. citizen and pastor of the First Christian Church of El Paso, Texas. He believes in American freedom and warns of threats to its continuance, especially Communism. — J.G.V.

PENTECOST AND AFTER, by M. R. De Haan. 1964, pp. 184. \$2.50. Twenty-six meditations in the Book of Acts. Contains a timely warning about the Unscriptural features of the contemporary Tongues movement. The author — incorrectly we believe — calls Paul's circumcizing of Timothy "Paul's first mistake". — J.G.V.

BOUNDLESS HORIZONS, by Oliver G. Wilson. 1960, pp. 111. \$2.00. Meditations on the Christian life. Not profound, but practical and helpful. The author is a Wesleyan Methodist who received his academic training at Miltonvale Wesleyan College, Kansas. — J.G.V.

HOW TO TEACH ONE AND WIN ONE FOR CHRIST, by Frank C. Laubach. 1964, pp. 90. \$1.95. The author is the well-known expert on world problems of literacy and illiteracy. In the reviewer's opinion Dr. Laubach is a better authority on literacy than on evangelism. The author seems to have a rather superficial view of human sin and of what is really involved in salvation, and along with this he is, we believe, too optimistic about what literacy can do in bringing men into a saving relationship with Christ. Illiteracy is of course a barrier to evangelism, but removing this barrier will not of itself change people's spiritual deadness. There are thousands of people in the Orient who have been well educated in Christian schools and colleges and who are today enemies of Christianity. Dr. Laubach has much to say about the love of God, little about human sin and bondage to Satan. — J.G.V.

MANUAL ON MANAGEMENT FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS, by George L. Ford. 1964, pp. 152. \$2.95. Much practical Scriptural counsel on how to work efficiently, how to be systematic, how to work with people and get them to

work with you, how to avoid the panic that comes from indecision. — J.G.V.

LEADING RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD, by Max Stilson. 1964, pp. 123. \$1.95. Gives a brief but informative treatment of nine non-Christian faiths, plus a discussion of Christianity including both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. There is a summary of the errors and defects of Modernism, but no mention of Neo-orthodoxy or Neo-Liberalism. — J.G.V.

LIVING CAN BE EXCITING, by Aaron N. Meckel. 1964, pp. 148. \$2.95. Much practical counsel on how to be a happy, useful Christian. The author is a Congregationalist pastor in Florida. — J.G.V.

HEARTS IN CONFLICT, by Adel Pryor. 1964, pp. 148. \$2.50. Christian fiction for young people and adults. The author was born in Norway and has lived most of her life in South Africa. — J.G.V.

ROMANCE ALONG THE BAYOU, by Sallie Lee Bell. 1964, pp. 151. \$2.50. Christian novel for young people and adults by a well-known writer. The scene is in Louisiana. "A fast moving story, full of danger, excitement and thrills." — J.G.V.

FOR EVERY RED SEA, by Matsu Crawford. 1965, pp. 192. \$2.95. Christian fiction for adults, by a Presbyterian missionary to Japan. Brings out the victory of Christian faith over problems, hardships, heartaches and difficulties. — J.G.V.

STORIES TO LIVE BY, by John B. Wilder. 1964, pp. 87. \$2.50. Described on the dust jacket as "True Tales for Teens" and on the title page as "True Tales for Young Adults." From the contents we judge it is for "teens" and very young adults. The true stories in the book are told by the author in such a way that the young reader is encouraged to believe on Christ and live the Christian life. — J.G.V.

THE HAMMER OF GOD, by James H. Hunter. 1965, pp. 160. \$2.95. A fiction story of the Covenanters of Scotland during the "killing time" of the 1680's, by the author of "How Sleep the Brave." Good reading for everyone, and a good book for church libraries. The "Black Avenger", hero of the story, may strike some readers as a rather improbable character. The author somewhat naively represents the Covenanters of 17th Century Scotland as contending for "freedom of religion" in the modern sense, which is not very realistic. — J.G.V.

FAITH ALIVE; by Aaron N. Meckel. 1965, pp. 149. \$2.95. The sub-title is "The Secret of Joyful Living." A challenge to joyful Christian living in the light of Christ's deity and resurrection. — J.G.V.

EXTRAORDINARY LIVING FOR ORDINARY MEN, by Sam Shoemaker. 1965, pp. 160.

\$2.95. This book was published after the death of the Rev. Samuel Shoemaker, a distinguished clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The contents were collected and edited for publication by his daughter, Helen Shoemaker Rea and the staff of "Faith at Work" magazine. Dr. Shoemaker had a way of presenting Christian truth that got under people's skin, and called them to vital Christian faith and living. — J.G.V.

AFTER THE STORM, by Marie Chitwood. 1964, pp. 155. \$2.50. A Christian novel for young adults, by a resident of Alabama who has been active in Christian youth work. — J.G.V.

PLAY BALL! by James C. Hefley. 1964, pp. 127. \$2.95. The sub-title is "True stories of faith in action." Will be appreciated by boys interested in sports. — J.G.V.

LIVING ABOVE, by Betty Carlson. 1964, pp. 120. \$2.50. The sub-title is "Inspirational Devotions for Women's Groups." Pointed meditations on how to rise above life's troubles and worries and live serenely with and for Christ. — J.G.V.

THE WHITE PANTHER, by Betty Swinford. 1964, pp. 103. \$1.95. This is an adventure story for boys and girls, with plenty of mystery and excitement. — J.G.V.

I WAS A MORMON, by Einar Anderson. 1964, pp. 186. \$2.95. A fairly brief though serious critique of the main doctrines of Mormonism, by a man who was born and raised a Mormon but left the movement when he came to know Jesus Christ savingly. This book is recommended to all who have contact with, or are being influenced by Mormonism. A good book for church libraries in these days when Mormonism is very active and spreading rapidly. — J.G.V.

A FOUNTAIN SEALED, by Margaret Epp. 1965, pp. 280. \$3.85. A story with a Mennonite background, with a missionary theme. In fiction form, a strong plea is presented for carrying the Gospel "into all the world." — J.G.V.

SECRET OF HIDDEN RANCH, by Virginia Whitman. 1964, pp. 101. \$1.95. A Christian mystery and adventure story for boys and girls. Suitable for grade school and junior high school age. — J.G.V.

TREASURES OF DARKNESS, by Elsie Milli-

gan. 1964, pp. 135. \$2.50. "A missionary finds romance in Africa. The author, born and educated in England, is a missionary in Africa. — J.G.V.

THE SCAR, by Sallie Lee Bell. 1965, pp. 154. \$2.50. By a well-known writer of Christian fiction for youth and young adults, this novel tells of a young girl who did not value the heritage of a Christian home and upbringing, but sought a glamorous career in the world. She finds happiness at last in returning to the faith of her parents and her childhood. — J.G.V.

LOST HERD, by Pearl Roam. 1964, pp. 90. \$1.95. "A story of horses and adventure among the Indians." Suitable for young people of junior high age. — J.G.V.

LAW OR GRACE, by M. R. DeHaan. 1965, pp. 182. \$2.50. While this book contains much truth, it is not recommended because it presents a Dispensational type of antithesis between law and grace. The Christian is said to be not under the law as a guide or standard for living. The author interprets "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10) not as meaning that love is the impulse which motivates us to obey God's law, but that love has become a replacement or substitute for law. This teaching we believe to be erroneous. — J.G.V.

GENERAL WITHOUT A GUN, by Charles Ludwig. 1961, pp. 107. \$1.95. This is the story of William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, told for young people. — J.G.V.

THE MIRACLE OF AMERICA, by George L. Ford. 1963, pp. 63, paper cover. \$1.00. A brief book on American freedom and the perils that threaten it today, with an earnest plea to Christian people to become alert to these perils. We object to the use of the word "Miracle" in the title. The word should be reserved for the real, supernatural miracles recorded in Scripture. America may be a remarkable example of divine providence, but it cannot be called miraculous by any sound definition of miracle. — J.G.V.

LET'S GO TO INDIA, by Carol Terry. 1964, pp. 144. \$2.95. This book presents missionary stories for boys and girls. There are many photographs, mostly of children in India. The author has been a missionary in India for many years. — J.G.V.

Acknowledgments and Announcements

The Management of this magazine wishes to acknowledge, with hearty thanks, the following contributions to the cost of publishing the magazine which have been received since our last issue went to press:

December, 1965: No. 1590, \$2.00. No. 1591, \$10.00. No. 1592, \$1.50. No. 1593, \$3.00.

January, 1966: No. 1594, \$3.50. No. 1595, \$2.50. No. 1596, \$2.50. No. 1597, \$8.50. No. 1598, \$3.50. No. 1599, \$30.00. No. 1600, \$20.00. No. 1601, \$3.00. No. 1602, \$50.00. No. 1603, .50. No. 1604, \$2.00. No. 1605 (Canadian \$35.00), \$33.95. No. 1606, \$22.00. No. 1607, \$7.00. No. 1608, \$5.00.

No. 1609, \$1.00. No. 1610, \$14.55. No. 1611, \$25.00. No. 1612, \$15.50.

February, 1966: No. 1613, \$1.00. No. 1614, \$2.00. No. 1615, \$5.00. No. 1616, \$1.50.

March, 1966: No. 1617, \$40.00. No. 1618, \$10.00. No. 1619, \$25.00. No. 1620, \$20.50. No. 1621, \$2.00.

The generous contributions from friends which are listed above indicate serious concern on the part of the donors that **Blue Banner Faith and Life** shall continue publication. These gifts are deeply appreciated. Less than half of the money needed is received from subscriptions and sales of back issues. For the rest, we are mostly dependent on contributions. You can help the world-wide ministry of this magazine by contributing as the Lord enables you.

Circulation of this Issue

1400 copies of this issue were printed. Of

these 1241 were immediately circulated to subscribers and readers, leaving 159 copies which can be used as samples and to fill future orders for back issues. The distribution by countries was as follows:

U.S.A., 784. Canada, 86. Australia, 66. Scotland, 61. England, 55. Northern Ireland, 31. Japan, 30. Cyprus, 20. South Africa, 20. Ceylon, 14. New Zealand, 9. India, 6. Korea, 6. Taiwan (Formosa, Free China), 5. Eire, 5. Wales, 4. Lebanon, 4. 3 copies each to: Peru, Netherlands, Syria, Greece, Hong Kong, Mexico, Ethiopia. 2 copies each to: Indonesia, Sweden. 1 copy each to: France, U.A.R. (Egypt), Switzerland, Southern Rhodesia, Chile, Brazil, Thailand, Ghana, Costa Rica, Somali Republic. Total circulation, 1241. Number outside U.S.A., 457. Number of countries reached, 36.

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager
3408 Seventh Avenue
Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania 15010, U.S.A.

Reprints Available

In writing for free copies of reprints, readers living in the U.S.A. should send a 5 cent stamp for postage. Canadian and overseas readers need not send stamps.

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What is Christian Education? Booklet by the Editor. Single copy, free. In quantities, 10 cents each or \$1.00 per dozen, postpaid.

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A Christian Introduction to Religions of the World. 78-page paperback book by the Editor. Published by Baker Book House, 1019 Wealthy St., S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, U.S.A. In Canada, available from: G.R. Welch Company, Ltd., Toronto. This material was published as a series of lessons in the July through September issues of 1964. Price \$1.50 per copy. Please do not send orders for this book to the Manager of this magazine. We do not have copies for sale. Order from Baker Book House or G. R. Welch Company, or through your local book dealer.

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.

For Your Vacation Bible School

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL MATERIALS. Great Commission Publications, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia 26, Pennsylvania. Complete sample kit for 1966, \$4.65. Kit is returnable if in good condition and if returned within three weeks.

These fine materials are available in two editions. The original edition is solidly based on the Reformed Faith, but encourages the use of hymns and the term "Sunday." The revision (specify "Reformed Presbyterian Edition" in ordering) seeks to correct these defects. The approach of these materials is well illustrated by the following paragraph from the Intermediate (junior high) teacher's manual. "Since we believe the vacation Bible school should be an evangelistic enterprise, we have aimed at the maximum of instruction in the Bible that may be accomplished in a two-week school. The teaching of this course will make great demands upon the teaching staff. There are two full Bible lessons instead of one in each morning's teaching schedule. There is a full program of Scripture and hymn memorization. The integration of handwork with the Bible lessons means that here also there is an instructional challenge."

The major selling points of these materials are 1) presentation of the Reformed Faith, 2) heavy emphasis on Biblical instruction, and 3) integrated approach to handwork. No doubt those who are used to skimpier fare will tend to be overwhelmed by the "heaviness" of this course. The writers were quite optimistic about the capacity

of children at the various age levels. Teachers may have to omit sections and simplify concepts in order to do an effective job. Considerable skill on the part of teacher and students will be necessary for some of the handwork projects. A few of them are almost unworkable and should be revised.

This curriculum covers four departments with a three year cycle in each. This year junior high students will study the life and message of the apostle Paul. The workbook and teacher's manual were prepared by Edmund Clowney, acting president of Westminster Theological Seminary. A separate Flan-L-Map kit should also be purchased for use with this course. Students in grades four through six will study a Bible survey course. The theme for primaries is "Missionaries." One unit each day deals with New Testament missionaries and the second unit tells of missionaries of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. "God's Helpers" is the theme for beginners (pre-schoolers and kindergarten) and is primarily a study of Bible characters. In addition to the teacher's manual a coloring book and handwork pads are provided.

The catalog that describes the materials contains a step-by-step checklist for the VBS administrator.

For use in churches of the Reformed Faith these materials are far superior to anything produced by the independent publishers.

— David R. Armstrong

"God is, indeed, a God afar off; but He approaches you by and in the Scripture; unveils His presence to you; and speaks to you as though you were standing right by Him, and He drew you close beneath His wings . . . The confession of all those who have possessed the Scripture most fully and enjoyed it most richly, has ever been that it was God who brought them to the Scripture and the Scripture to them; that He opened their eyes, so that they might understand the Scripture; and that only by the light which shone on them from the Scripture, light has appeared in their own person and the life round about them."

— Abraham Kuyper

"This we may positively conclude, that no man has made any good proficiency in the school of Christ, but he who joyfully expects both the day of death and that of the final resurrection . . . Notwithstanding the opposition of the blind and stupid cupidity of our flesh, let us not hesitate ardently to desire the advent of the Lord, as of all events the most auspicious. For he shall come

to us as a Redeemer, to deliver us from this bottomless gulf of all evils and miseries, and to introduce us into that blessed inheritance of his life and glory . . . To conclude in one word, the cross of Christ triumphs, in the hearts of believers, over the devil and the flesh, over sin and impious men, only when their eyes are directed to the power of the resurrection."

— John Calvin

"What is ominous in the present-day drift of religious thought is the sustained effort that is being made to break down just these two principles; the principle of a systematized body of doctrines as the matter to be believed, and the principle of an external authority as the basis of belief. What arrogates to itself the title of 'the newer religious thinking' sets itself before everything else, in violent opposition to what it calls 'dogma' and 'external authority' . . ."

— Benjamin B. Warfield (Written over half a century ago, and even more relevant today than when first written. Ed.).

PSALM 81

ILLA. C. M. D.

Louis Spohr

1. O sing a-loud to God our strength; To God of Ja-cob sing; Take up a psalm, the
 psal-ter - y; Sweet harp and tim-brel bring. 2. Blow trum-pets at new moon, the day Our
 feast ap-point-ed is; For charge to Is-rél, and a law Of Ja-cob's God was this.

3. This testimony He ordained
 To Joseph when the land
 Of Egypt He passed through, whose speech
 I did not understand.

4. His shoulder I from burdens took,
 His hands from baskets freed.
 On Me thou didst in trouble call;
 I saved thee in thy need.

5. In secret place of thundering
 I did thee answer make;
 And at the streams of Meribah
 Of thee a proof did take.

6. O thou My people, give an ear;
 I'll testify to thee;
 To thee, O Isr'el, if thou wilt
 But hearken unto Me.

7. There shall not be in midst of thee
 An alien god at all;
 Nor unto any god unknown
 Thou bowing down shalt fall.

8. I am the Lord thy God Who did
 From Egypt land thee guide;
 I'll fill thy mouth abundantly;
 Do thou it open wide.

9. But Isr'el would not hear My voice;
 My people have Me spurned;
 I gave them then to stubborn hearts;
 To their own ways they turned.

10. O that My people would Me hear,
 And Isr'el choose My way!
 I would their en'mies soon subdue;
 My hand on them would lay.

11. The haters of the Lord to Him
 Submission then should feign;
 But as for them, their time should still
 For evermore remain.

12. He also would for them provide
 The finest of the wheat;
 Of honey from the rock thy fill
 I still should make thee eat.

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BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

VOLUME 21

JULY-SEPTEMBER, 1966

NUMBER 3

The Kingdom of Truth	91
The Lord's Great Controversy	95
Principles of Covenant Theology	99
Studies in the Epistle to the Ephesians	109
Reviews of Religious Books	129
Blue Banner Question Box	138

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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J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager

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From Everlasting to Everlasting

(Proverbs 8:22-30)

By Esther Belle Heins

The Christ was there before God's works of old,
Possessed by Him when He began His way;
Set up from everlasting, we are told;
The clouds were not established in that day.
While as yet God had not made earth or sea —
Nor had He strengthened fountains of the deep,
The Christ was there! He heard the Lord's decree
That boundaries He set the waters keep.

It pleased the Father that in His dear Son
All fullness dwell; He have preeminence,
That things of Heaven, earth, in Him be one —
That Christ be His divine Munificence.
The Christ was there — at even Calvary —
But lives! Christ lives, and shall eternally!

Mysteries of God

By Esther Belle Heins

We cannot syllogize God's grace,
Nor can eternity
Be captured in a theorem,
That one may better see
Through laws of logic the unknown;
God's mysteries unveiled,

For He who reigns is not defined;
No man such height has scaled.
Who weighs the insight given Paul!
It is not measured, priced;
The stewards of God's mysteries
Are so, through faith in Christ.

The Hand of God

By Esther Belle Heins

Our Father's hand is manifest
On mountain peak and plain,
From leaf to star, on rock-bound coast;
In rush of springtime rain,
Within the dell where violets
Bow heads as though in prayer,

And in the woods where rushing streams
Splash frocks the lillies wear.
We see God's signature upon
The desert's burning sand,
Where Silence speaks of wonders wrought
By His almighty hand!

What Hath God Wrought!

By Christina G. Rossetti

The shout of a King is among them.
One day may I be
Of that perfect communion of lovers
Contented and free
In the land that is very far off, and
Far off from the sea.

The shout of the King is among them.
One King and one song,
One thunder of manifold voices
Harmonious and strong,
One King and one love, and one
Shout of one worshipping throng.

BLUE BANNER FAITH AND LIFE

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The Kingdom of Truth

By J. G. Vos

"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?" — John 18:37, 38a.

Jesus is standing before Pontius Pilate, the Roman Procurator. Pilate asks Jesus, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" Jesus in response asks Pilate, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" — that is, are you using the term "king" in the Roman sense or in the Jewish sense?

Pilate replies, "Am I a Jew?" — that is, Pilate is speaking of kingship in the Roman sense. Jesus explains that he is not a king in the sense Pilate has in mind. "My kingdom is not of this world. . . my kingdom is not from hence." Jesus is not speaking about being a king in the earthly, political sense.

Still, Jesus claims to be a king. So Pilate asks another question: "Art thou a king then?" — that is, are you a king in any sense of the word? This time Jesus replies with a ringing affirmation: "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

Jesus is king, then, of the kingdom of truth. The citizens of this kingdom are those who are "of the truth." They hear and obey the voice of the King of that kingdom. They are supremely devoted to the truth.

The Roman Empire, of which Pilate was an official representative, was not a kingdom of truth. Its citizens heard and obeyed the voice of Caesar. Its officials were supremely devoted, not to truth, but to power. Here are two kingdoms face to face: the Roman Empire, built on the lust for power, and the Kingdom of Jesus, which is the Kingdom of truth.

Everyone claims to be in favor of truth, of course. Yet in fact there are various attitudes to truth. In particular the portion of Scripture which is before us suggests three different attitudes to truth, namely:

1. Pilate's attitude to truth, or **truth for man's sake.**
2. The philosophers' attitude to truth, or **truth for truth's sake.**
3. Jesus' attitude to truth, or **truth for God's sake.**

First let us consider —

I. Pilate's Attitude to Truth: Truth for Man's Sake.

Pilate sneeringly asks Jesus, "What is truth?" and apparently does not even pause for an answer. Pilate was a hard-headed Roman, a "practical" man of the world. He was what some people today would call a realist. To Pilate, truth is something to be used in the struggle to get ahead in life. To Pilate, the question of truth is really subordinate to the question of man's ambitions at the moment.

Is Jesus to be treated as innocent or as guilty? Three times Pilate declares Jesus innocent. Yet his final verdict is that Jesus shall be treated as guilty. Pilate is more concerned about the political needs of the hour than about questions of law and evidence. He is not deeply concerned about the question, "Is Jesus really guilty?" Rather, he is concerned about the question, "What will happen if I do not declare Jesus to be guilty?"

Soon the Jews will be shouting, "If thou let this man go thou art not Caesar's friend." The clamor of the Jews is ringing in Pilate's ears. Their clamor is louder than the claims of truth. So truth must be bent and twisted to fit the exigencies of the hour.

Russian Communism has murdered truth by regarding it as a plastic substance to be molded and re-modeled to fit the changing "party line" of the day. In Russia, history has been revised and radically altered. Names have been removed from history books and encyclopedias. What was declared to be true of Trotsky in 1918 was no longer held to be true in 1930. What was true of Stalin in 1940 was reversed by the Party Line in 1956. At one time nothing was too good for the Soviet State to say about Stalin; at another time nothing was too bad for the Soviet State to say about Stalin.

Truth under Communism is whatever suits man's purpose at the moment, whatever seems temporarily likely to advance the cause of the Soviet State.

Under Communism truth has been murdered, not only in the field of politics or government, but throughout the whole fabric of life. Truth in literature and in the field of science has been dictated by the Kremlin on the basis of serving the Communist Party's passing needs.

So a Soviet biologist, Lysenko, against all the biological science of the free world, held that changes produced by environment are inherited. This notion was promoted because it was held to fit Communist social ideology. For many years Soviet agriculture forfeited the tremendous gains that might have been achieved by the use of hybrid corn or maize. A doctrinaire notion, canonized as truth by the Kremlin, tied the hands of Soviet scientists and agricultural experts. But a few years later the Soviet State reversed the doctrine of heredity which it had once sponsored as essential to the Party Line. Now hybrid corn is produced in large quantities in the Soviet Union.

It is not only Pilate and the Kremlin that regard truth as a plastic to be bent and molded to fit man's changing purposes and goals. This attitude, although in a milder and less shocking form, is widespread in our present-day western culture. There is of course a wide difference between the aims of Communism and the aims of those in western culture who regard truth as relative to man's experiences. Nevertheless, the two share the same perverse attitude to truth as something changeable and relative to man's needs and experiences.

In particular, modern theories of ethics have been influenced by this plastic view of truth, as have modern views of education. This betrayal of truth in our western culture is inherent in the philosophy called Pragmatism or Instrumentalism. Pragmatism, a typically American philosophy, was originated by C. S. Peirce, advocated by William James, and later widely popularized by John Dewey. It was Dewey who adopted the name Instrumentalism for it. This philosophy is defined as "A system of thought in which stress is placed upon practical consequences and values as standards." Funk and Wagnalls defines Pragmatism as "the metaphysical theory that reality is for man what he makes it to be in the service of so-called practical ends." Webster defines Pragmatism as "Emphasis upon the application of ideas, or the practical bearings of conceptions and beliefs," adding that it is characteristic of this philosophy to hold that "the meaning of conceptions is to be sought in their practical bearings, and that the function of thought is as a guide to action, and that the truth is pre-eminently to be tested by the practical consequences of belief." Webster defines Instrumentalism as "The conception that the sig-

nificant factor of a thing is its value as an instrument; specifically, the doctrine that ideas are instruments of action and that their usefulness determines their truth; pragmatism; humanism."

Dewey had little patience with orthodox Christian belief. In his book **A Common Faith** he said that God is a name for the active relation between the ideal and the actual in human life (page 51). In the same book Dewey said, "Faith in the continued disclosing of truth through directed co-operative human endeavor is more religious in quality than is any faith in a completed revelation" (page 26). Thus he rejected the Bible as a completed revelation of truth by God to man.

According to Dewey, there cannot be any such thing as absolute truth. Something is to be regarded as "true" if it functions satisfactorily or produces a desirable practical result.

Dewey wrote two types of books: those on education and those on philosophy. His books on education have apparently been much more widely read than his philosophical writings. In the latter his radical rejection of the historic Christian view of truth is quite explicit, whereas in the former it is a concealed assumption rather than an expressly avowed position. This may perhaps explain why many students of education have absorbed a good deal of Dewey's attitude to truth without realizing how radically antagonistic it is to the very foundations of the historic Christian Faith.

When carried out consistently, Pragmatism or Instrumentalism involves the rejection of absolute truth and the rejection of absolute, permanently valid moral standards. Everything is made relative to man's changing, developing situation of the moment. Truth becomes something like a wage-scale which is geared to a constantly fluctuating cost-of-living index.

This view of truth has infected religion also. It is manifested in the prevalent substitution of the concept of **value** for that of **truth**. Our forefathers, in considering any doctrine of religion, were primarily concerned about the question, "Is it true?". But today it is more common to waive the question of truth and ask instead "What is its value?"

We are told today, for example, that the Westminster Confession of Faith was an excellent book for the Christians of the seventeenth century, because it represented their efforts to clothe their religious experience with garments made from the mental concepts they were familiar with. Their experience, we are told, had a reality and a value, but the garments they clothed it with were only of passing importance. Today, we are told, we must clothe our religious experience in new concepts which have meaning to the man in the street in our own day. Thus "truth" becomes a mere changing garment or vesture by which each

generation expresses in its own way its own experiences. The experience is held to be permanently valid, but the "truth" by which it is expressed is held to be changeable and constantly changing. Those who hold this view of religion regard the Westminster Confession and other great historic creeds of the Church as mere museum pieces today — documents with a certain historical interest, but not really usable by modern men.

Real Biblical Christianity deals in truth — absolute, unchanging, unbendable truth. The modern counterfeit of Christianity, on the other hand, deals in values, that is, whatever is regarded as useful for some human need or purpose. Jesus, the King of the Kingdom of Truth, calls the world back to truth.

Now let us consider —

II. The Philosophers' Attitude to Truth: Truth for Truth's Sake.

We may glimpse the Greek philosophers' attitude to truth lurking behind Pilate's sneering question, "What is truth?"

The Greek philosophers engaged in an endless search for truth. Always in pursuit of truth, they never reached any fully satisfactory conclusions. Their quest for truth was an endless chain reaction. There was never any end to the long, long trail. What one philosopher set forth as final, the next showed to be inadequate.

Moreover, even at any one time the philosophers could never agree among themselves. They were divided into sects and schools which mutually contradicted each other.

To the practical man like Pilate it must have all seemed a hopeless and useless tangle of words and phrases. No doubt Pilate considered all philosophers a bit odd — men who devoted their lives to the pursuit of something as elusive as truth — something so elusive that they could not even agree on what they were seeking.

"Surely," Pilate may have thought, "philosophy may be all right for these strange fellows who are a little cracked. Let them talk about truth — it is harmless, even though useless — but as for me, a man of the world who has to make practical decisions, I have to keep my feet on the ground. I cannot go around with my head in the clouds talking about abstract theories of truth."

The Greek philosophers professed deep devotion to truth. But it was truth for truth's sake. This may seem higher and more noble than Pilate's cynical attitude to truth, but it is still too low a view of truth. Like "art for art's sake," "truth for truth's sake" is essentially a form of idolatry.

What is idolatry? Idolatry is giving our supreme loyalty and devotion to anything or anyone other than the living God. "Art for art's

sake" is idolatry. It is a denial of man's obligation to love and serve God supremely in the sphere of his esthetic life. Ultimately, it is a denial that man is a creature of God.

So also "truth for truth's sake" is idolatry. It is idolatry just as surely as bowing in the temple of Baal is idolatry. It is a denial of man's obligation to love and serve God supremely in the sphere of knowledge. Ultimately, it is a denial that man is a creature of God.

The philosophers regarded "truth" as a more ultimate concept than God. In other words, they held that something is in harmony with God because it is true, not that something is true because it is in harmony with God. To them truth was the largest circle, and God was a smaller circle within that largest circle. They regarded impersonal, abstract truth as something greater, wider and more important than the personal, living God. To the Greek philosophers, the outermost circle of man's environment was not a Person but a thing.

Truth for truth's sake seems better than truth for man's sake just in the same sense that a subtle and cultured idolatry seems less shocking and offensive than a crude and repulsive one. But still it is an idolatry. We can put Baal in the place of God, or we can put human ambition and development in the place of God, or we can put abstract impersonal truth in the place of God. In any case, it remains idolatry.

This idolatry of truth for truth's sake is as characteristic of the scholarly world of our own day as it was of the scholarly world of Pilate's day. It is regarded as almost axiomatic today that a real scholar is interested in truth for truth's sake. To challenge or question this notion may seem almost like academic blasphemy. Yet it must be challenged in the name of the living God.

Truth for truth's sake always falls short of the real truth. In the end it comes down to God or man as the object of our supreme devotion. Either God or man is the king of the Kingdom of Truth.

The worshipper of Baal is really worshipping an idea formed by the mind of man. The devotee of truth for truth's sake is also really worshipping an idea formed by the human mind. He holds that man — not individually, of course, but collectively — is the king of the Kingdom of Truth. The "truth" he seeks is an impersonal projection of the human mind. In the end it comes down to truth for man's sake or truth for God's sake.

Finally, let us consider —

III. Jesus' Attitude to Truth: Truth for God's Sake.

The universe would not even exist except for the creative activity of God — the mysterious, infinite, almighty Person who is above and beyond

all facts, all laws, all thinking, all ideas. God is a particular Person, not an impersonal function of the universe or of man's mind.

If God is really the Creator of the universe, then the Creator must be greater than the creation, as the builder is greater than the building he constructs. But in that case, the notion of truth for truth's sake is an idolatry after all, and only truth for God's sake can be the proper object of a Christian scholar's quest and devotion.

This implies the constant recognition of the true background of all human knowledge. Whether in the humanities or in the sciences, the facts which are studied must be seen as facts created by God. Only when seen in relation to God can facts be seen in their true meaning and significance. God is the background of all reality and of all knowledge.

The greatest peril facing American Christian higher education today, in my judgment, is not the peril of too little emphasis on religion. Some hold that it is. I believe they are mistaken.

Rather, I would venture to assert, the greatest peril facing Christian higher education in America today is the peril of a dichotomy or division between the religious features and the so-called "secular" features of education. It is the peril of a division into watertight compartments of two sectors or parts of the educational field, with the accompanying tacitly held notion that God is important for one of these compartments but irrelevant for the other.

The tendency in Christian circles today is to think that if the Bible teaching in a Christian college is sound and the worship services adequate, then all is well. **The tendency is to think that God is interested in nothing but religion.**

But God is God everywhere. He is God of everything. He is the Lord of all reality and of all knowledge. If God is not the God of nature, then He is not the God of religion either. If He is not God in the field of history, and the field of language, and the field of psychology, and the field of physical science, and the field of biological science, and the field of social science — if He is not Lord over all these, then He is not really Lord of religion either. God is Lord over all reality, or He is nothing at all.

Do we sense this peril facing American Christian higher education — the peril of limiting God to the field of religion, the peril of relating God in a meaningful way only to the field of religion, while the idolatries of truth for man's sake and truth for truth's sake are left to dominate the vast field of life and knowledge outside the limited sphere called "religion"?

What is needed in Christian education today, I would urge, is not more emphasis upon religion, but rather a more pervasive, meaningful and relevant belief in God **beyond** the sphere of religion.

To put it another way, what is needed is a pervasive and thoroughly self-conscious theistic philosophy as the background and interpretive key and unifying principle of all knowledge in every field.

The kingdom over which Jesus is King is the Kingdom of Truth. He is supreme in this kingdom. Those who are "of the truth" hear His voice. They are the citizens of the Kingdom of Truth. To them, devotion to truth is not an idolatry, because it is not truth for man's sake nor truth for truth's sake, but truth for God's sake to which they are devoted.

For Jesus is none other than the living God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. Devotion to Jesus Christ is devotion to truth for God's sake.

There is nothing and no one greater than the eternal Word, God the Son, the personal Wisdom. His nature determines the nature of truth. It is the eternal Word, who is **THE TRUTH** (John 14:6) that makes truth true. It was His eternal thinking that made the laws of mathematics and of logic what they are. It was the working of His infinite mind that planned the universe with all its mysterious and marvellous laws and forces. The mysteries of mind and matter were planned by His thinking in the silent vastness of eternity.

The vastness of the spiral galaxies in remotest outer space sprang from the thinking of the eternal Word, whom we know in human history as the Lord Jesus Christ. For the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

The baffling complexities of the atom were planned in eternity by Jesus Christ. In the infinite reaches of His own eternity He planned the package. At the creation of the universe He wrapped it up. Man is only beginning to unwrap it today.

Shall we face it — Christ is of cosmic significance. It is the great heresy of our day to regard Christ as having only religious significance. Christ is the King of all truth, not just the King of religious truth.

The need of our idolatrous age is to relate all our thinking — not just our religious thinking but **ALL** of our thinking — to Christ, the eternal Word, the Son of the living God, the **Planner**, Creator, Purpose and Lord of all reality, the King of Truth.

Shall we dare to seek and love truth for God's sake? Shall we dare to break with the dominant trends of our age? Shall we dare to be citizens of the real kingdom of Truth?

Note: The foregoing article was preached as a Convocation sermon in the chapel of Geneva College, April 14, 1957. It was published in our July-September 1957 issue, and is reprinted here in slightly condensed and revised form.—Editor.

The Lord's Great Controversy

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

V. The Great Contender

So we come to the heart of the matter of the conflict of the ages, which is God himself as the great Contender.

God has spoken. He has given us his Word. He has made himself known among men in all the fulness of his self-revelation; in all the wonder of his works and ways. It follows as a matter of course that he should appear in his own self-defense against all that is or may be said or done against him. It is part of his infinite condescension that he should do this, that he should speak and act in his own behalf in conflict with what men say and do. No small part of his life and work on earth is his self-manifestation as a party in controversy.

Four topics bearing on the subject are to be considered. It goes without saying that our purpose at this point allows for little more than the merest intimation of these various aspects of the divine contention.

1

Mighty in his Own Defense

God's initial appearance in his own defense came in connection with the judicial decisions and pronouncements delivered in the garden of Eden subsequently to the fall of man.

The divine-human drama begins in the garden of the Lord where we are introduced at the outset to three participants. There is first of all God himself, the almighty Creator and Lord of all. And there is man, the crown of the creation, and his helpmeet. Presently another, a sinister presence, puts in his appearance. This is the tempter in the guise of a serpent, the subtle adversary of God and man.

Our first parents take their place upon the scene in the original perfection of God's work of creation. It appears, however, that it was in the plan of God to put them to the test, which he did. To implement this test a special commandment was imposed and Satan in disguise was allowed to insinuate himself upon the scene.

In the account of the temptation and the fall of man we are introduced to the long, sad story of the universal sin-situation in the midst of which God graciously intervenes for the redemption of sinner-men.

As an immediate consequence of the fall there came the initial self-revelation of God as the Judge. At the same time, it is true, God began to make himself known as a Saviour, a God of love

and mercy toward all, but especially for all for whom his saving grace was to be provided and on whom it was to be bestowed.

Now, however, the lovely garden becomes a court room. The Creator appears as the Judge and renders and begins to execute the verdict of the court. It was the original expression of judicial decision which was to become more apparent as time went on.

Our particular interest, however, concerns the fact, that, in giving expression to the various decisions of his justice God was also speaking in defense of himself as moral Ruler, Lawgiver and Judge. His deliverance of the respective verdicts was given in expression of his own contention for truth and right, for law and justice and for the absolute inviolability of his word.

The serpent, the woman and the man, having sinned, must suffer for it. They must be punished. Evildoers must incur the consequences of their wrongdoing. The rebels must be dealt with as they deserve, each according to his sin as the law of God requires. So doing God upholds and defends his own lawful authority as King and Judge.

Happily judgment is not the whole story. For in the very midst of the divine pronouncements the love of God appears and the original promise of his grace is given. To the serpent he says: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The promise is contained in the prediction that the seed of the woman, which as Paul explains in Galatians 3:16 is Christ, should crush the serpent's head.

Here we have the first intimation of the plan of redemption and at the same time a disclosure of the fact that God's gracious work of salvation will be accomplished and applied in a context of strife and division. The conflict of the ages is just God himself at war with Satan and sin. Basically it is a conflict in which God himself maintains and defends his own all-conquering cause and kingdom.

2

The Lord Mighty in Battle

A further teaching concerning the divine contention is that the Lord is revealed as an active agent or participant in actual physical combat.

(1) The history of this particular aspect of God's action of contention really begins with

Abraham, or rather Abram, as his name was at the time we are considering. Abram's nephew, Lot, was the other of the two principal characters involved.

Abram was that great hero of the faith whom God made to be the father of his people of old and of all of the faithful of his own and every succeeding day and age. Lot was a believer who, though weak in faith, was nevertheless his uncle's brother in the Lord.

Men lived by force of arms in those days and the strong preyed upon the weak. Coalitions offensive and defensive were formed among the tribal chieftains. The background in the history of the time involves two sets of kings, four from the East and five of the West, that is, of the region around the lower Jordan.

Chedorlaomer, leader of the kings of the East, and his allies had previously subjugated the kings and people of the West and put them under tribute. Twelve years later five kings of the plain organized a revolt. Whereupon Chedorlaomer and his associates came again and crushed the revolt and went their way with the captives and the spoils, among which were Lot and his family and their goods.

This, however, though quite unknown to the parties concerned, was a serious tactical error; for it meant that Abram had no choice except to hasten to the rescue. This, in company with his confederates, he did, and, overtaking the host of the marauders, fell upon them in the night and put them to flight and "brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods and the women also, and the people" (Gen. 14:16).

The story goes on to tell how the king of Sodom came out to meet the hero of the hour and also how another welcomed the return. This was that mysterious figure of the day, Melchisedec king of Salem and priest of the most high God, who brought forth bread and wine and blessed Abram and said: "Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand."

It was an early instance of the triumph of the few, God's few, against the many; the victory of the weak in conflict with the strong. Of particular interest is the fact that it was the triumph of the Lord who fought with and for his own and gave the victory.

The deeper significance of this event lies in the fact of its establishment of a precedent for this kind of action on the part of God. It shows not only that the kind of military action in which God's servant engaged at this time was lawful and right, but also that God himself has a right to participate in action of the kind. It was the fore-

runner of many such victories which God would give in time to come.

(2) Next in order in the account of militant and forceful action on God's part is the story of his deliverance of his people from the hand of the Egyptians. God sent the plagues and thereby finally exacted the release of his people.

So the exodus began and the Lord went on before and led the way. But a situation developed from which there seemed to be and was no escape until God opened a pathway through the sea. Unorganized as these children of Israel were at the time, utterly powerless to do for themselves in any way, it came to pass as Moses said: "The Lord shall fight for you." Now for the time at least the people believed and joined in the song of Moses: "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

Of special interest is the metaphorical anthropomorphism of verse three of the song: "The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name" (Ex. 15:3). So God fought and won and revealed himself as a mighty man of war, "the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Ps. 24:8).

(3) Having begun in this way it would have been strange indeed if he had not so continued in this name and capacity. We go on to read how he initiated the organization of the able-bodied men of Israel into a fighting force with himself at the head and of how often he upheld them with his might to their success in arms or withheld his aid to their defeat.

Among the wars of God of Moses' day was the conflict with Amalek (Ex. 17:9-16), of whom it was said that "the Lord hath sworn that he will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." There was war with the Midianites and with Sihon, king of Heshon and Og, king of Bashan. Also great judgments of God's holy indignation were executed not only on the heathen but also on the wickedness of his own people and on the wicked among them.

(4) We come to the time of Joshua whom God encouraged with the promise of success in the invasion and conquest of the land of promise on condition of obedience. The people passed over Jordan and were circumcised, and the manna ceased. And immediately, or ever a single sword was drawn, God appeared to Joshua in the form of "a man with his sword drawn in his hand" and with this announcement, "As captain of the host of the Lord am I now come" (Josh. 5:13-15).

The invasion advanced to an incomplete but generally successful issue, and these are the words of Joshua to Israel before his death: "The Lord your God is he that hath fought for you." "He shall expel them from before you." "The Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong." "The Lord your God, he it is that

fighteth for you" (Josh. 23: 3, 5, 9, 10). **Note**— For other references to the same effect relating to the times of Gideon, David, Abijah, Hezekiah and Nehemiah see: Judg. 7:18, I Sam. 17:45-47, II Sam. 22:35, II Chron. 13:12-15, 20:15, 32:7,8 and Neh. 4:20.

Appropos at this point is the language of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "And what shall I more say? For time would fail me to tell of Gedeon and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, - - - out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens" (Heb. 11:32-34).

All of which should be of the greatest encouragement to us in our day as we realize that God not only exercises an absolutely sovereign control over all events in behalf of his people but actually fights for them and with them in their struggles with the enemy. "The Lord of hosts is with us" if so be that our cause is just, which it is and must be when we stand firm in behalf of liberty and justice, our "Christian" and certainly peace-loving civilization and a true and lasting peace.

A look behind the scenes would certainly show that God and the angels are on the side of his people. "For the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them." The Lord "opened the eyes" of the servant of Elisha and he saw "the mountain full of horses and chariots round about Elisha" (II Kgs. 6:13-18).

Men, it may be, have discovered something of the power which resides in the atom, but God made the atom and ordained its present day discovery, development and the uses of atomic energy.

God knows the innermost being, nature, structure and capability of every atom in the universe and not only so but all of the possibilities which await their use. And above and beyond the atom God knows man. "His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men." "The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good" (Ps. 66:7 and Prov. 15:3).

3

God's Contention in His Law

(1) What is the law of God? One way of expressing it would be that it is what is right and what we ought to be and do. The Reformed symbols point to the Bible itself as the rule of faith and life, teaching "what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man." "The law is the expression of God's will — a transcript of his nature. It tells man what he ought to do" (Summary of Christian Doctrine by Dr. F. L. Patton, p. 86).

The creedal statements on the law of God refer in the main to what is known as "the moral law," and are perfectly correct as far as they go. The idea of the moral law, however, is somewhat restricted and expresses the meaning of the law in a somewhat narrow sense. The law as a whole goes beyond this and includes a great deal more. For while the law is an embodiment of God's will there is also another such embodiment. For besides the law there is the Gospel; and this, too, partakes of the nature of law.

The Gospel also is of controlled influence and binding force. The Bible speaks of those who "obey not the truth" and "obey not the gospel," as also of "obedience to the faith." Other significant expressions in this connection are "the law of Christ" and the state of being "under the law to Christ" (Gal. 6:2 and I Cor. 9:21). The law of God is obligatory but so also is the Gospel.

And as a matter of fact every word of God is law. Our confessional standards enlarge at considerable length on the moral law, defined as "summarily comprehended in the ten commandments" as the law of love for God and man.

The chapter of the Westminster Confession on the Law of God, after speaking of "this law, commonly called moral" enlarges somewhat on another, special law of God given to his people of old, a law which was intended only for the duration of their existence as his people in any special sense. The two sections devoted to this temporary law of God are as follows:

"God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a Church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, etc. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the New Testament."

"To them also, as a body politic, he gave sundry judicial laws which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any other, now, further than the general equity thereof may require."

Careful attention to this portion of Chapter X of the Confession will show that this digest of the legal aspects of the Mosaic economy is an extremely able presentation of the matter.

But as for the law of God embodied in the gospel; men, all men, everywhere are required to repent, believe and be converted. God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." And, having believed and repented and come to Christ and received him as he is offered in the gospel, we are further required to grow in grace and to this end to make diligent use of the means of grace. So it is that in a very distinct sense the gospel itself, as well as the moral law of the commandments, comes under the head of the law of God.

(2) The Law and the Gospel. Our discussion thus far plainly shows that clear distinction must be made between the law and the gospel; the law and grace.

God's communion with his original creation was a sublime act of condescension and as such it was an act of grace. God's gift of law to Adam before the fall was an evidence of his grace and goodness and all giving of the law after the fall has been the same. Indeed all of God's law-giving has ever been in the sphere of the grace and the goodness of God.

But law is law and grace is grace and we have to distinguish between them. One way of summarizing the message of the Bible is that of Law and Grace. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (Jo. 1:17).

Equivalent to this is the terminology of Law and Gospel. Yet another summarization is that of Sin and Salvation.

It is interesting to compare these expressions. Sin implies the law. "It is the transgression of the law." And "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Grace is God's immeasurable love for sinner-men which wrought redemption and brought salvation unto men, which is the burden of the message of his grace.

The law came first and, succeeding upon the fall of man, the gospel light appeared and the gospel was given. But it was not given as a substitute for the law but as a supplement to it, a supplementation of it. The two go together and mutually support, confirm and reinforce each other.

Christianity, the gospel of God's grace, involves a union of law and grace. The gospel was given in close connection with the law of God and there is an element of law and justice in it. There is a "law of faith."

And while we magnify the gospel, yet it is nothing apart from the law of God, and the law would be a dead letter apart from the gospel. True believers love and cherish both. They desire to learn whatever there is to be known, whatever it may be that remains to be learned of the truth and teaching of God's Word, his law and his grace.

(3) God's Gift of the Law. As we have seen we have to distinguish not only between the law and grace but also between the law itself and the gift of the law, which was in itself a kindness. The law is good and therefore a good gift and was given for our good. Given the right conditions and the proper response, it is and can be productive of the greatest good.

(4) God's contention in the law. Our particular concern with regard to the law of God has to do with his contention in it. It is not

the fault of God and of his law that man is a sinner, that is to say, a transgressor of the law, and in consequence of his transgression has made himself incapable of keeping the law and so of benefitting by the keeping of it.

By reason of our sinful nature and evil heart, our death "in trespasses and sins," we fight against the law of God. This universal antipathy to the law arises even among believers in the form of what is known as "Antinomianism." The law, as faithfully proclaimed, arouses our resistance and awakens our hostility because by nature we are against it (I Cor. 2:14 and Rom. 8:6).

So then we are rebels, in revolt against the Lord of the realm, against his government and his authority, his rights and prerogatives as our moral Ruler, Lawgiver and Judge. We are at war with our Creator and this is our war against our Maker that we will not have him to reign over us. This is our side in the universal state of conflict between man and his Maker.

But there are always two sides in any conflict and, if this is our side, there is also God's. And one way in which God fights against us in our sin and unbelief, in spite of our sinful aversion to and hatred of him, his rule, law and rule of law, is by the giving of the law.

He gave the law at the very first in the garden and continued his giving of it. Time came when, having gloriously delivered his chosen people from the bitterness of their Egyptian bondage, again he gave the law. And how mightily he gave it to his people at that time at Sinai and again and again thereafter! Read the first book of Moses and having read it read again the other four and see how greatly and extensively and in detail the law of God was given. We marvel at what might be taken as the greatness of the burden that was laid upon Israel in the laws and ordinances, the commands and precepts given.

At times the people seemed to rise to the occasion, but in general, and generally speaking, how they did rebel against it! How they rose up and tried to throw off the yoke of God's service and were punished for their plans!

And to show God's jealousy and zeal not only for his law as a whole but also in each and every particular how they were punished for what might appear to be only a very minor infraction of it! Witness Nadab and Abihu and their "strange fire" (Lev. 10:1-3). As the Scripture says elsewhere, the word spoken by God's messengers "was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2).

They rebelled, and imagination may suggest how we of today would rebel against any such regimen as might conceivably be laid upon us. And still God's own rule of right and law and truth and justice is always benevolent.

The law of God as a whole, the whole law of his Word still stands and demands our complete and perfect acquiescence, compliance and obedience. And what are we doing about it? Are we carefully and faithfully consulting all the counsel of His Word?

Yes, God contends for himself and his kingdom, and for us and our good and for the good of all by way of his most just and holy law. For "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judg-

ments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether" (Ps. 19:7-9).

God, in the law itself and in all his giving of it, fights for himself and for his own rightful praise and honor and glory, his own lawful dominion and power. He fights first for himself, but also for us and for our good. By this means he contends for all that is true and right, just and holy, pure and godly. "Blessed is the man - - - whose delight is in the law of the Lord" (Ps. 1).

Besides the three topics here considered on the subject of the **Great Contender** is a fourth, viz., **God's Contention in his Grace**, which awaits our attention in the articles following.

(To be continued)

Basic Principles of Covenant Theology

By J. G. Vos

1. Definition of Covenant Theology

The classic theology of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, which regards the entire Bible as the progressive revelation of a single consistent theme, namely, the covenant established by God with His people, by which they are brought to the eternal glorification and enjoyment of Himself.

2. Definition of Covenant

(a) Wrongly defined as an agreement or compact between God and man. This type of definition is common in older writers on Reformed theology. Noted theologians defined "Covenant" in this way — Henry Bullinger, Ursinus, John Preston, Van Mastricht, Herman Witsius, Francis Turretine. Nevertheless it is an incorrect form of definition and does not satisfy the requirements of the Biblical data. The element of truth in this type of definition consists in the fact that the covenant **relationship** involves mutuality — God promises salvation, and man exercises faith. But we must distinguish between the covenant **relationship** and the covenant which **establishes the relationship**. The covenant relationship certainly involves two parties, God and man, or God and the elect, but the covenant itself, which establishes the relationship, is not a bilateral compact or agreement between parties — rather, it is an act of God alone.

(b) Rightly defined as: A sovereign disposition of God by which His people are brought into the fullest religious relationship with Himself.

(c) Spiritual proof of this form of definition. That the covenant is wholly divine in its origin and its implementation is shown by the whole tenor of Scripture as it speaks of this matter. Some texts may be cited:

Before the Flood, God said to Noah, "But with thee **will I establish my covenant**" (Gen. 6:18). Note that God does not say, Let us have a covenant between us, but rather, "With thee will I establish my covenant." God is the source and establisher, Noah is the recipient. The covenant is "my" covenant, not "our" covenant.

After the Flood, God spoke to Noah again, and said: "**And I, behold I, establish my covenant** with you, and with your seed after you, and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. **And I will establish my covenant with you. . .**" (Genesis 9:9-11).

That this covenant is wholly and solely an act of God is manifested by the sign or token of the covenant — the rainbow, something that is completely beyond the control or manipulation of man: "And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you. . . . I do set my bow in the cloud. . . . and the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth" (Gen. 9:12-17). Note the strong emphasis on the divine initiative and monergism — "I, behold, I establish my covenant" (verse 9), "I will establish my covenant" (verse 11), "the covenant which I have established" (verse 17). Moreover, the rainbow is primarily not for mankind to see and observe, but for God to observe: "And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant. . . ." (verse 16). When God speaks about Himself ob-

servicing the rainbow, this is of course anthropomorphic language — God speaks of Himself in human terms. But it is done to teach a truth, and that truth is that the covenant is a unilateral, sovereign disposition of God, not an agreement between God and man.

This covenant with Noah and all flesh is not itself the Covenant of Grace, yet it is organically connected with it, and essential to it, and it serves to bring out the meaning of the term "covenant" when the Bible speaks of a covenant of God with man.

In Genesis 15 we have the covenant of God established with Abraham. It is a chapter full of mystery. Abraham is in a trance state in which he is the recipient of revelation. A deep sleep fell upon him, and a horror of great darkness fell upon him (Gen. 15:12). Then God revealed His covenant (verses 13-21.) It involves not only verbal promises but action — a theophany, a visible manifestation of God's presence, as stated in verse 17: "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces" (i.e., of the sacrificial animals). Abraham contributed nothing to all this — he merely witnessed it in the vision. The theophany is followed by the formal statement of the covenant, verse 18: "In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land. . . .". Note, it does not say that The Lord and Abraham made a covenant between themselves, but "the Lord made a covenant with Abram."

Then in Genesis 17 similar language is used: "I will make my covenant between me and thee. . . behold, my covenant is with thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee" (verses 2-7).

Coming down to the time of Moses, in that great scene at Mount Sinai, we find that the people of Israel were required to pledge their unreserved commitment and obedience to the Lord, but the establishment of the covenant itself is again spoken of as wholly an act of God: "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. 24:8).

Then in the time of David, we read in David's last words, as recorded in 2 Sam. 23, "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow" (verse 5).

Similarly, in Isaiah 55:3 we read, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

In Jeremiah's great prophecy of the New Covenant, the same emphasis occurs: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel", etc. (31:31-33).

This idea of the covenant as a sovereign disposition of God is further shown by the usage of the Septuagint and the New Testament in translating the Hebrew word **Berith**. The New Testament never translates the Hebrew **Berith** as **Syntheke**, but always as **Diatheke**. The Septuagint, when speaking of God's covenant with man, always translated **Berith** by **Diatheke**, with a single exception, where **Syntheke** appears (translations, such as the Greek Septuagint, are of course not inspired as translations; but the Greek New Testament is inspired). **Syntheke** would mean "mutual agreement" or "compact"; **Diatheke** means **sovereign disposition or administration**, or (in certain cases) **testament**. The term in theology that corresponds to **Syntheke** would be **Synergism**, i.e., co-operation between God and man in salvation; the term that corresponds to **Diatheke** is **Monergism** — the sole action of God, from the Greek words for "alone" and "work."

So in the New Testament we find much about a **Diatheke** of God with man, but nothing about a **Syntheke** between God and man.

3. Stages in the Establishment and Revelation of the Covenant.

Dispensationalism speaks of many covenants, whereas the Covenant Theology speaks of progressive stages of the establishment and revelation of the one covenant. If for convenience we speak of the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace as separate, or of the old covenant and the New covenant as separate, we should realize that while these are distinguishable stages of redemption and revelation, they are not properly different in their essence, but rather are organically bound together as parts of a single, consistent divine purpose and activity.

What is commonly called the Covenant of Works is called in the Shorter Catechism the Covenant of Life. This is not labelled a covenant in Scripture, yet it is correctly called one in theology, for it has all the elements of one. This was a sovereign disposition of God, revealed to and imposed on man, by which man was brought into a religious bond or relationship with God. This was made with Adam as the representative of his posterity. The command was imposed upon Adam and Eve, not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The presence

of the Tree of Life, from which they were barred after their disobedience, implied that eternal life, or the highest communion with God, would have been the outcome of the covenant, had they not fallen into sin.

It is characteristic of Dispensationalism to say that the Covenant of Works was from Moses to Christ, whereas it is characteristic of the Covenant Theology to say that the Covenant of Works was from the creation of mankind until Adam and Eve fell into sin. From that point the Covenant of Grace takes over. The Covenant of Works is not, however, abrogated or abolished. It remains in force in two respects: first, all mankind who do not come under the Covenant of Grace remain under the condemnation and curse of the broken Covenant of Works. Second, Christ, as the Second Adam, by His perfect obedience to the Father, fulfills the requirement of the Covenant of Works on behalf of His people. Thus in Christ the Covenant of Works is taken up into and made an organic part of the Covenant of Grace.

It should be noted that the so-called Covenant of Works is actually a gift of God's grace. The Garden of Eden and the situation in which Adam and Eve were placed proceeded from the kindness and love of God for man. That Adam and Eve were put through a probation with a view to their becoming moral adults through voluntary obedience to God, was a gift of God's love to them. This cannot be called mercy, because they had not yet sinned, but it is rightly called grace, for it is undeserved love and favor of God toward man. Thus grace began when man was created, not merely after he sinned.

The Covenant of Grace has as its background the eternal Covenant of Redemption, the covenant made in eternity between the Father and the Son. This is very wonderfully brought out in the 17th Chapter of the Gospel of John — our Lord's great High Priestly prayer. The Son undertook to do all that was necessary to give eternal life to all that the Father had given Him. This eternal phase of the Covenant is sometimes called the *Pactum Salutis* (usually translated "Covenant of Redemption") in old Reformed writers. It is brought out also with great force and clearness in Romans 5 where the apostle Paul shows how Christ is the Second Adam and that He accomplished what the first Adam had failed to accomplish.

This eternal covenant was revealed in progressive stages in history, beginning with Genesis 3:15, the first promise of a Redeemer. A further stage came with Noah. The Covenant with Noah was essential to the continuance of the program of redemption — if the elect are to be saved, history must continue, therefore humanity must not be wiped out prematurely by a new flood.

The Covenant of Grace was established in-

formally immediately after the Fall (Gen. 3:15). It was established formally with Abraham (Gen. 17:1-7). The progressive revelation of the Covenant of Grace may be divided into four principal stages, namely:

- 1) From Adam to Abraham
- 2) From Abraham to Moses
- 3) From Moses to Christ
- 4) From Christ to the end of the world

It should be realized that these are not different covenants, far less are they antithetical to each other as Dispensationalism holds, but rather they form a single covenant which has been progressively implemented and revealed. The relation between the earlier and the later parts is not a relationship of opposition or radical difference of principle, but a relationship like that of a seed to the full-grown plant, or that of a partial and incomplete stage of growth to the full and complete growth.

The fullest stage within the historical process is Christianity or "the New Covenant", which will be surpassed only by the ultimate establishment of God's eternal order. This present stage is called "Christianity" or "the Christian Dispensation" because in it everything clearly and manifestly centers around Christ, the Mediator and Surety of the Covenant. This was true of the earlier stages also, but not so manifestly and obviously so.

4. The Parties of the Covenant

Though the establishment of the Covenant is a sovereign, unilateral disposition of God, yet the relationship so established involves mutuality. It is a covenant of God with some other party or parties. So we may inquire as to the identity of the parties.

God of course is the first party. He is the establisher of the Covenant, as we have seen. In the first stage, commonly called the Covenant of Works, the second party was Adam as the federal head or representative of his posterity. The Shorter Catechism shows this when it says that the covenant was made with Adam, not only for himself, but also for his posterity with him. Thus the covenant was made with Adam and those represented by him, i.e., the human race.

The next and later stages are not so simple. It is often said that the Covenant of grace has for its parties God and sinners. This form of statement is characteristic of Lutheranism and Arminianism, which hold that God plans and intends the salvation of every individual of the human race. This involves, of course, holding that the Covenant of Grace is a failure in many cases, in that it fails to secure the salvation of a large number of people who are said to be included in its intended benefits. If the Covenant of Grace was made with those who ultimately perish in hell, it was

made in vain so far as they are concerned. Arminianism makes the intention of God's plan very wide, but its effectiveness very slight.

In Reformed theology it is stated that the parties of the Covenant of Grace are either (a) God and elect sinners, or else (b) God and His Son Jesus Christ as the representative of the elect.

The first of these views is called the "two-covenant view" and stresses the historical rather than the eternal aspect of the Covenant — it emphasizes the revelation and implementation in history rather than the background in the counsels of eternity. It seems to have been intended to stress man's responsibility and to avoid the danger of hyper-Calvinism which virtually denies human freedom and responsibility.

The other view, which is the one set forth in the Westminster Standards held by our own Church, is called the "one-covenant view." This stresses the eternal aspect of the covenant, though without neglecting the historical aspects. It strongly stresses the truth that the Covenant in history, with all its benefits and blessings, is rooted in the **Pactum Salutis** or Covenant of Redemption made by the Father and the Son in eternity. This seems to have been intended to stress God's sovereignty in salvation and to guard against the peril of Arminianism which virtually denies God's sovereignty.

Our **Testimony**, Chapter IX, Error 3, rejects as erroneous the proposition "That there are, besides the Covenant of works, two distinct covenants — **one**, a Covenant of Redemption made with Christ, and the **other**, a Covenant of Grace made with us, **distinct** from the Covenant of Redemption." (Page 165.) The key word here, of course, is the word **distinct**, which is italicized in the **Testimony**. The **Testimony** is not concerned to deny the existence of the Covenant of Redemption, but only to deny its separateness from the Covenant of Grace. In other words, there is an organic connection between the two; they are parts of a single consistent unity in God's plan.

It should be realized that both the "two-covenant view" and the "one-covenant view" are distinctly Reformed views. The difference between them is really semantic rather than a matter of basic principle. The late Rev. Frank D. Frazer once said that these two views were developed in an effort to steer the ship of Reformed theology safely between the rocks of Arminianism on the one side and the cliffs of Hyper-Calvinism on the other hand. He added that while the channel is narrow, the water is deep.

The view set forth in our Church standards regards the Covenant as made by God with Christ as the federal Head and representative of the elect. God determines to bring a vast number of human individuals to eternal glory. These are

the "seed" given to Christ in eternity. Christ undertakes to do everything necessary to bring this to pass. He will be born as a human being, live a perfect life under the law, suffer and die as the atoning Substitute for the elect, rise from the dead, ascend into heaven, send the Holy Spirit to apply redemption, and finally come again to raise His people from the dead, judge the world and inaugurate the eternal state.

Even man's response to the Covenant is effectively secured by what Christ has undertaken and done. This does not cancel man's responsibility but it does insure that the elect will be "effectually called" and regenerated, justified, adopted, sanctified and glorified. Even those parts of the process of salvation which man is active, such as repentance and prayer, are the result of a prior work of Christ.

5. The Nature of the Covenant

(a) Its essence. The essence of something is that which makes it what it is, in distinction from other things which are different. The essence of something is distinguished from its incidental features. Thus it is the essence of an automobile that it is a self-propelled vehicle to transport people or things. The color of the finish, number of cylinders, type of brakes, kind of transmission, are incidental features. A car may have these of one kind or another, and still be an automobile. But if it is not a self-propelled vehicle which can transport people or property, it is not an automobile. It is the essence of the episcopal form of church government that the church be governed by bishops; it is the essence of a wheel that it is capable of turning on an axle; it is the essence of justice that people be dealt with as they deserve.

What, then, is the essence of the Covenant? It is most effectively brought out by Professor John Murray in his lecture at Cambridge University, 1953, later printed in booklet form under the title "The Covenant of Grace" by the Inter-Varsity Fellowship. Professor Murray canvasses the Biblical data very thoroughly and penetratingly. He concludes that the essence of the Covenant is not that it is a compact or agreement between two parties, but rather that it is an expression of the unchangeable gracious promise of God. What is stressed in Scripture is not the mutuality of the Covenant, nor yet the terms or conditions of the covenant relationship, but the idea of **the sworn fidelity of God**. In one place he states that the covenant expresses the divine monergism and fidelity. The stress is on "the security, the determinateness, the immutability of the divine promise." Again, "It is an oath-bound and oath-certified assurance of irrevocable grace and promise."

This is brought out by the form of statement used by God in some cases, "By myself I have sworn . . .". This idea of the essence of the covenant as the unchangeable fidelity of God to His gracious promises is the background of Paul's

confident assertions in Romans 8 — “If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?”

(b) Its ethical character. In its administration the Covenant is ethical. God deals with man not as a thing but as a person — a responsible moral being endowed with intelligence and freedom. The beneficiaries of the Covenant are human persons created in the image of God. This ethical character of the administration of the Covenant must be insisted upon in order that we may repel the common charge that the Reformed Theology represents the Plan of Salvation as mechanical and fatalistic. It is alleged, for instance, that if God has decreed the salvation of the elect, then they need not repent or believe, for they will be saved whether they become Christians or not. All this is mere dust thrown into the air. The Reformed theology holds nothing of the kind — it is a mere caricature. We hold the personal and ethical character of the administration of the Covenant.

(c) Its conditional and unconditional character. The Covenant is both conditional and unconditional. In the absolute sense, so far as we are concerned, the Covenant is **unconditional**, for its one and only real condition has been fulfilled by Christ in His mediatorial work. This absolutely secures and guarantees the eternal salvation of the elect. Yet there is a sense in which the Covenant can be said to be conditional. Faith, repentance, obedience are required on the part of sinners if they are to be saved. If we wish to call this a “condition”, that is all right provided we understand that here the word “condition” is not used in the absolute sense, but only in the sense of **means or instrument**. But we must remember that the eternal efficacy and success of the Covenant is not contingent upon man’s faith and unbelief as **something beyond the control of the Mediator of the Covenant**. If someone departs this life without repentance and faith, he thereby demonstrates that he is not one of the elect for whom the Covenant was made. And when God requires repentance and faith of the sinner, **He also gives these graces as gifts to the elect**. Thus Augustine uttered his famous prayer, “Give what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.” That repentance is a gift of God to the elect is proved by Acts 11:18 and 2 Timothy 2:25. That faith is a gift of God to the elect is proved by Ephesians 2:8, Mark 9:24, Isaiah 42:7 and Galatians 1:15, 16.

Thus the Covenant is not conditional in any absolute sense except the sense that Christ has fulfilled its condition in accordance with the eternal Covenant of Redemption. God has appointed means of grace to be used by the elect, but the real condition was fulfilled by Christ as Mediator. There is no admittance to the marriage feast without the wedding garment, but the garment itself is provided as a gift by the king who gives the feast.

The Laodiceans were counseled to buy of Christ gold tried in the fire, that they might be rich, and white raiment, that they might be clothed. Yet the Lord said that they were “poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked.” How can the poor buy gold, unless this be a buying without money and without price? In other words, it is really a **gift** given by God, hence not in any proper sense a condition performed by man.

6. History of the Covenant Theology

If the Covenant Theology is Scriptural, it is of course in a sense as old as the Bible. Yet this must not be misunderstood. The Bible is a goldmine of truth, yet the truth must be mined. The truth is all there in Scripture from the completion of the canon. Nothing new will be added to it until the end of the world, when a new revelation from God may be expected. Yet though the truth has all been on deposit in the Bible since the time of the apostles, it has not all been clear in the mind of the Church since the time of the apostles. It becomes clear in the mind of the Church progressively as a result of controversy and Biblical study. Thus, for example, the doctrine of the Trinity has been in the Bible since the days of the apostles, but it was not clear in the mind of the Church until it was precisely defined at the Council of Nicaea, 325 A.D., in refutation of heresies that had arisen. Similarly the Covenant Theology was in Scripture from the beginning but it did not become clear in the mind of the Church until the Protestant Reformation and especially the classical period of the development of the Reformed Theology in the 17th century.

Among the Reformers, Zwingli stressed the Covenant idea. Calvin knew the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace and calls it by name but in his writings does not stress it very strongly. It was further developed in Germany by Ursinus and Olevianus, and then in Great Britain by such men as Rollock, Howie, Cartwright, Ames, and archbishop Ussher in Ireland. The Westminster Confession of Faith is the first Reformed creed that made the Covenant Theology formative of its entire doctrinal structure. Soon after the Westminster Assembly had finished its work, the Dutch theologian Cocceius published his work under the title, **Summary of the Doctrine of the Covenant and the Testament**. The theology of Cocceius was a thorough-going covenant theology. However, he was not entirely sound and went to unwarrantable extremes in several matters.

In the 18th Century — that barren period of Rationalism on the Continent and Moderatism in Scotland — the Covenant theology was neglected, and the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches were scarcely aware of its truth and importance. In the 19th Century it enjoyed a revival, especially under the stimulus of the work of Abraham Kuyper in the Netherlands.

In the Reformation period the Anabaptists de-

nied the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace. The present-day Baptists are the heirs of the old Anabaptists though they have corrected the extreme errors of some of their spiritual forbears. Baptists are strongly **individualistic** in their religious tendencies. This is shown in their church government, where the individual congregation is an independent unit; in their limitation of the responsibility of the minister, practically, to his own field of labor to the exclusion of responsibility for other ministers of the same denomination; in the insistence upon individual faith as the necessary requirement for the reception of baptism. This strong individualism is contrary to the Covenant concept, which strongly stresses the corporate character of the church and the corporate nature of responsibility. American Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, including the Covenant Church, have been strongly influenced by Baptist tendencies, with the result that the churches are weak in their grasp of the Covenant Theology which is their true heritage.

The Methodists, though they did not directly contradict the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace, yet nullified it in practice by their Arminianism in theology, as they held that the Covenant was made not merely with the elect but with all sinners, and thus that it guaranteed the salvation of no one. Also by rejecting the idea of the Covenant of Works they cut the ground away from beneath the doctrine of Christ's active obedience as our Substitute. Methodist or Wesleyan Arminianism, with its strong assertion of the sinner's powers and its opposition to the sovereign grace of God, has strongly influenced all American churches, including our own.

Today there is some evidence of a revival of interest in the Covenant Theology, but this is beset by the most serious obstacles and limitations. First, the prevalent opposition to creeds and precise statements of Christian doctrine is against an intelligent grasp of the Covenant Theology. Many people today seem to think that theological vagueness is somehow more "spiritual" than precision of thinking, and they prefer to deal with theology, if at all, in an atmosphere of low visibility. Secondly, the prevalence of theological Liberalism is against any revival of the Covenant Theology. Among other things, the divisive "Higher Criticism" of the Bible, which reduces Scripture to a collection of diverse traditions, documents and viewpoints, makes it impossible to hold that the whole of Scripture presents a consistent, progressive implementation and revelation of a single divine purpose throughout history. Liberalism destroys real Biblical theology and reduces it to a study of **Israel's faith** — not what God revealed, but what Israel believed, is the subject matter studied in Liberal circles. Thirdly, the presently popular Theology of Crisis, sometimes called Barthianism or the Dialectical Theology, makes a real revival of the Covenant Theology difficult,

by its denial of the direct action of God in history and its relegation of the great redemptive facts to a nebulous region labelled **Urgeschichte** or the **Supra-Historical**.

Yet the Covenant Theology is truth, which is certainly a point in its favor. And with the blessing of the God of truth, it will rise again to honor and influence in the modern world. We may say of the Covenant Theology what Dr. Francis L. Patton, one-time President of Princeton University, said of Presbyterianism: Supposing it should die, and also be buried, and in some future age be dug up by archaeologists in the course of their excavations — we may be confident that after examining it, they would come to the conclusion that it belonged to the order of vertebrates!

7. Distinctive Values of the Covenant Theology

The late Professor R. B. Kuiper, one-time professor of Practical Theology at Westminster Seminary and later at Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, listed seven distinctive practical values of the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace. I shall enumerate these here, but shall only discuss part of them. They are:

- (a) This doctrine makes for a full-orbed Reformed Theology
- (b) It guarantees the continuity and unity of the Church.
- (c) It requires a balanced program of church activity.
- (d) It demands a consistent system of Christian education.
- (e) It stresses the significance of church ordinances.
- (f) It defines the Christian's relation to the world.
- (g) It releases the Christian for devoted service in God's Kingdom.

All of these seven practical values could be discussed at length, but space does not permit this, so a selection must be made.

(a) The doctrine of the Covenant makes for a full-orbed Reformed theology. By "full-orbed" is meant many-sided completeness. The charge, often heard, that Calvinism is a one-sided theology, arises from ignorance of the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace. This concept fills out the system of Calvinism so that the charge of one-sidedness is put out of court. I need not point out to the readers of this magazine, surely, that "Calvinism" is not simply a synonym for "Predestination" as some ignorant people suppose. Calvinism is a complete system of theology rounded and articulated in all its parts, and is vastly more than belief in predestination, just as it is vastly more than a rejection of Arminianism.

The Covenant concept stresses God's condescension, thus complementing Calvinism's emphasis on God's transcendent majesty. In the Covenant the transcendent God becomes the **friend and husband** of His people. (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14; 31:32).

The Covenant concept stresses God's love and mercy, thus complementing Calvinism's emphasis on God's absolute predestination. It shows that God's decree of election, though **sovereign**, is not **arbitrary**. In His eternal decree of election God has taken account of family ties. God has promised to be a God to Abraham and his seed, to believers and their seed. This does not mean every individual person descended from believers, but it is the general principle of God's election. Also the Covenant concept stresses the sincerity of God's offer of salvation to all sinners. (Ezek. 33:11; Matt. 23:27; 1 Tim. 2:4). Where predestination is held **without the Covenant concept**, the tendency is for people to become sullenly fatalistic, or else to give up belief in election altogether. The general rejection of election and predestination in American church circles may fairly be attributed to the fact that in the past election was preached **without the complementary truth of the Covenant of Grace**. The history of the New England theology, where Calvinism deteriorated to inconsistent Calvinism, to Arminianism, to Unitarianism, to Universalism, and finally in many places to closed and empty churches, is an example of this sort of thing.

Other respects in which the Covenant concept makes for a full-orbed Reformed theology are that it emphasizes the ethical manner of God's execution of His decree of election, complementing the absolute and unchangeable character of the decree itself. Also the Covenant concept stresses strongly man's responsibility to God, complementing the truth of man's spiritual inability and absolute dependence upon God. Finally, the Covenant concept stresses the salvation of the human race as such, complementing the emphasis on individual salvation. This has been termed "eschatological universalism", in distinction from an unscriptural "each-and-every universalism."

(b) The Covenant guarantees the unity and continuity of the Church. Scriptural proof of this concept has been presented repeatedly in our columns (See especially the article on Dispensationalism in the April-June 1963 issue). At this point I shall only seek to establish that the Reformed theology holds that, according to Scripture, there has been one single body of people on earth in a covenant relationship with God from the beginning of history to the present time, and that this will continue to the end of the world. Rightly understood, the church began in Eden. What began at Pentecost was not the Church as such but rather the New Testament form of the Church. The true Israel of Old Testament times was the Church in the form it possessed at that

time; the true Christian Church of the present day is the real Israel of the Christian era. The Reformed Theology holds the **spiritual unity and continuity** of the New Testament Church with the Old Testament Israel.

This proposition implies that basically Israel and the Church are identical and the one is organically continuous with the other. There are differences, to be sure, but they are differences of administration, not differences of essence or basic character.

I know of no better statement of the elements of unity, continuity and difference between Israel and the Church than that found in the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter VII, Sections 5 and 6. It should be noted that the title of this chapter of the Confession is **Of God's Covenant with Man**, not **Of God's Covenants with Man**; the word **covenant** in the title is singular, not plural. In this chapter, Section 5 sets forth the essential spiritual unity and continuity between the Old Dispensation and the New, that is, between the administration of the Covenant to Israel, under the Old Testament system, and the administration of the same covenant to the Church, under the New Testament system. Section 6 then sets forth the **differences** of administration between the Old and the New. The chapter ends with the statement: "There are not therefore two covenants of grace, differing in substance, but one and the same, under various dispensations." (Page 16).

This matter of the spiritual unity and continuity of the Church with the Old Testament Israel is of very great theological importance. If this truth be denied, other serious and destructive errors are sure to follow. For example, the question of the organic unity of Scripture is involved, as is also the question of salvation under the Old Testament. The unity and continuity of the Church with Israel is denied chiefly by Dispensationalism, which sets up a radical antithesis between Israel and the Church; it is also denied by modern Liberalism, which regards the Bible as man's quest for God, not God's revelation to man, and holds that instead of revealing one consistent divine purpose progressively realized in history, the Bible presents a collection of human strivings, aspirations, viewpoints, insights which are partly truth and partly error, and which often are mutually contradictory. This type of thinking regards the Old Testament, not as God's gracious revelation, but as Israel's evolving faith, and the New Testament, including Christ, as humanitarian idealism rather than divine truth. Dr. Albert Schweitzer is a good example of this tendency.

(c) The Covenant demands a balanced program of Church activity. The church has a mission to its own membership and it has a mission to the unsaved world. Neither of these may be neglected. The doctrine of the Covenant teaches

that Christ covenanted to redeem a vast multitude from all peoples and nations and kindreds and tongues. These people must be reached with the Gospel, therefore the Covenant theology calls for a strong emphasis on home and foreign missions—this is the church's mission to those without. But the doctrine of the Covenant also teaches that God's ordinary way of increasing and perpetuating His Church is by the salvation of the children of believers. The covenant was made with Abraham and his seed forever. The Covenant requires faithful and persistent preaching of the Gospel to the Church's own membership and in particular to the children and youth. The children are included in the church's membership by reason of their birthright covenant status. This is the real reason for infant Baptism, of course. But the Covenant implies more — the Church is to make a continuous effort to ensure that all its children and youth shall be in the inner circle or vital sphere of the covenant, by regeneration and personal faith. Neither part of the church's program may be neglected. Some churches neglect missions or contribute only slightly to missions and evangelism. Others are all out for missions and evangelism, but grievously neglectful of their covenant responsibilities to their own children and youth. It is not unknown for churches to provide much better Christ-centered education for the children of the heathen in India or Korea than they do for the children of their own church families right here in America. Against such tendencies, the Covenant calls the church to a balanced and complete program of activity.

(d) The Covenant stresses the significance of Church ordinances. Because it inculcates a high view of the nature and importance of the Church, the doctrine of the Covenant emphasizes the importance of such ecclesiastical ordinances as Baptism, the Lord's Supper, preaching, church government and church discipline. Largely under the influence of Dispensationalism, many people today have light and inadequate notions of the nature and importance of the church. It is common to regard the church as a mere means to an end. This, of course, cannot be right. The church is to last on into eternity, therefore it is an end in itself, not a mere means to an end. Some say the church exists merely for missions and evangelism. It would be truer to say that missions and evangelism exist for the sake of the Church. Church ordinances are taken lightly today, church government and discipline are regarded lightly, because the Church itself is regarded lightly. The remedy for much of this evil is a new stress on the Biblical Covenant Theology.

(e) There are several other practical values of the Covenant Theology that could be mentioned, but one more must suffice at this time. The Covenant is a pledge and guarantee of the permanence of the fruits of missionary work, in spite of persecution, repressive governments and the works

of the devil. Tertullian said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church — a very true statement. The real progress of Christianity in China came after the many martyrdoms of the Boxer trouble in 1900. The Covenant is made with believers and their seed after them. A covenant keeping Church will continue to exist in spite of everything. Its form may change, its reality will live on. This should be a great encouragement to missionaries, for it assures them that, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, their labor is not in vain in the Lord. Not only will souls be saved for eternity, but there will be a continuous conservation of the fruits of their labor in this world during the process of history.

We live in a time when the activities of missionaries and the fruits of missionary work are being interfered with by nationalistic governments in many parts of the world. It seems that in Africa, for example, the dawn of "freedom" means no real freedom, but only a new and different kind of tyranny. The same is true of Asia, Indonesia and most of the Mohammedan world. At the same time the Communist world has come near to suppressing Christianity altogether — real Christianity has had to become an "underground" movement. If we were to look only at these day-to-day developments, we might well despair. But the Covenant reminds us of the sworn fidelity, the unchangeable gracious purpose, of God. We may be tempted to say that there is no encouragement, that the wild boar from the forest wastes and destroys God's heritage today. But God's covenant is unbreakable and in God's own mysterious but gracious ways the fruits of past and present missionary work will be conserved. And there will always be a true and faithful church on earth to implement the great Commission and send the Gospel throughout the nations of the world.

Note: Readers interested in a fuller and more detailed treatment of the subject of Covenant Theology are referred to the series of 35 lessons on "The Covenant of Grace" which were published in this magazine from October 1949 through June 1950, and again from January to September 1959. In the event of sufficient demand from readers, this series may be reprinted at some future time.—Editor.

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"There are many among us who live in the daily practice of sins, some who carry on small dishonesties, or occasionally use small minced oaths, who walk in the counsel of the ungodly. O brethren! if this be your case, it is quite plain that you have never had a divine awakening. When a man is made anxious about his soul, he always puts away his open sins."

— Robert Murray McCheyne

Religious Terms Defined

DEITY OF CHRIST. The truth that the historical person Jesus Christ, by reason of His divine nature, was and is the only true God, Creator of the universe, in which dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (1 John 5:20. John 1:1-3. Col. 2:9).

DEPRAVITY, TOTAL. The truth that the unsaved sinner is corrupted in every part of his personality, including both body and soul, so that apart from the special work of the Holy Spirit he cannot choose to love God, nor do anything spiritually good in God's sight.

DEVIL, THE. The chief of the fallen angels, who, by the providential permission of God, heads the kingdom of evil in opposition to the kingdom of God until the time appointed by God for him to be cast into hell (Rev. 20:10).

DISPENSATION. A particular manner of God's dealing with His creatures, or the period of time that coincides with the same. In the Bible, three dispensations are distinguished: (1) The Covenant of Works, from the creation of mankind to Adam's fall. (2) The Old Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, from Adam's fall to the crucifixion of Christ. (3) The New Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, from the crucifixion of Christ to his second coming. These three are dispensations of **HISTORY**. Beyond them is "the age to come," or **ETERNITY**.

DOCTRINE. A truth of the Bible set forth in logical form in its relation to other truths of the Bible. True doctrines consist of (1) facts, plus (2) the divinely revealed meaning of the facts.

DONATISTS. A separatist sect of North African Christians in the fourth and fifth centuries after Christ, which held that the validity of a minister's official acts depends upon his personal piety, and that those who had denied Christ under persecution could never be restored to good standing in the Church. These errors were strongly and effectively opposed by the North African bishop Augustine of Hippo.

DORT, SYNOD OF. A synod summoned by the authority of the government, at Dort in the Netherlands, 1618-1619, for the purpose of settling the Arminian controversy. It was attended by delegates from Holland, England, Scotland, Switzerland and Germany. The Synod condemned the five leading propositions of the Arminians as false, and affirmed the contrary propositions of Calvinism as Biblical truths. The Westminster Assembly of Divines, 25 years later, built upon this foundation.

EASTER. Originally the festival of the Saxon goddess of springtime, Eostre. The name was taken over by the Church for a day to commemorate

Christ's resurrection. Easter observance is not even mentioned in the Bible, and must be regarded as a corruption of the appointed worship of God. The word "Easter" occurs once in the King James Version (Acts 12:4), but it is incorrect, and should be translated "passover" (see American Revised and Revised Standard versions).

ELDER. An officer of a Christian congregation ordained to participate in the government of the Church. All elders share in governing the Church, but some, called "ministers" or "pastors" also preach the Gospel (1 Tim. 5:17). In the New Testament the word "bishop" is used interchangeably with "elder"; every elder is a bishop, and every bishop is an elder.

EPISCOPACY. An unscriptural form of Church government in which bishops are regarded as a district office higher than pastor or elders, each bishop having jurisdiction over a number of congregations and their officers. The New Testament knows nothing of bishops as officers distinct from, and superior to, ministers and elders.

ERASTIANISM. The doctrine (named after Erastus, a Swiss physician of the 16th century) which teaches that the State should be supreme over the Church and should support, control and legislate for the Church.

ERASTIAN TOLERATION. An act or policy of a government which claims a totalitarian supremacy over the Church, by which a limited freedom of worship or other activities is allowed to religious bodies which are willing to recognize the State's supremacy in principle and to comply with the State's rules and regulations concerning religious matters. Erastian Toleration is a base counterfeit of religious liberty, for it proceeds from the false notion that the State is supreme in matters of religion.

ETERNITY OF GOD. God's mode of existence without beginning, without end, and independent of all limitations of time, so that all events in the history of the created universe are equally present to Him at once.

EUCCHARIST. A name for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; literally, "giving thanks".

EXALTATION OF CHRIST. "Christ's exaltation consisteth in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day" (S. C. 28).

EXCOMMUNICATION. The final censure of church discipline, by which the offending person is solemnly excluded from the visible Church until he gives evidence of repentance.

Some Noteworthy Quotations

THEY THAT SIDE with the saints shall thrive with the saints.

— John Trapp

THE SUM IS: remember always the presence of God; rejoice always in the will of God; and direct all to the glory of God.

— Archbishop Leighton

WHEN WE GO TO GOD by prayer, the devil knows we go to fetch strength against him, and therefore he opposes us all he can.

— Richard Sibbes

IF GOD'S TODAY be too soon for thy repentance, thy tomorrow may be too late for His acceptance.

— William Secker

WHEN GOD IS not believed, we must needs give credit to the devil.

— Stephen Charnock

THEY LOSE NOTHING who gain Christ.

— Samuel Rutherford

CHRIST'S PERFORMANCES outstrip His promises.

— Nehemiah Rogers

UNITY IN ERROR is unity in ruin.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

FOR GOD WE TAKE to record in our consciences that, from our hearts, we abhor all sects of heresy and all teachers of erroneous doctrine; and that with all humility we embrace the purity of Christ's Evangel, which is the only food for our souls; and therefore so precious unto us that we are determined to suffer the extremity of worldly danger, rather than that we will suffer ourselves to be defrauded of the same. For hereof we are certainly persuaded that whoever denies Christ Jesus, or is ashamed of Him, in presence of men, shall be denied before the Father and before His holy angels. And therefore, by the assistance of the mighty Spirit of the same Lord Jesus, we firmly purpose to abide to the end in the confession of this our faith.

— The Scottish Parliament, 1560

THERE IS AN IMPASSABLE GULF fixed between those who hang the efficacy of Christ's work upon the "free" action of man's will, and those who ascribe it all to God's free grace. They are of different religions.

— Benjamin B. Warfield

GIVE ME THE EVIDENCE that I am saved from the punishment of sin by saving me from its power.

— Thomes Chalmers

THE GREATEST ARGUMENT of the Saviour's power is His patience.

— Stephen Charnock

LIP-HOMAGE paid to all religions is the virtual denial of each.

— R. A. Vaughn

THE SECRET OF HOLY LIVING lies in the doctrine of the union of the believer with Christ.

— Charles Hodge

IT IS AN INEXPRESSIBLE GRIEF to me to see the church spending its energies in a vain attempt to lower its testimony to suit the ever-changing sentiment of the world about it.

— Benjamin B. Warfield

TAKING THE LINE of least resistance makes rivers and men crooked.

— Anonymous

LOVE will stammer rather than be dumb.

— Robert Leighton

FOR OURSELVES, we do not affect the designation of moderate Calvinists. We believe the whole Calvinism of the Canons of the Synod of Dort, and of the Confession of the Westminster Assembly, and we are willing to attempt to expound and defend, when called upon, the whole doctrine of these symbols, to show that it is all taught or indicated in Scripture. We have been only confirmed in our Calvinism by all the study we have given to this subject.

— William Cunningham

THE GRACE OF GOD does not find men fit for salvation, but makes them so.

— Augustine of Hippo

IF FAITH HAS NOT for its basis a testimony of God to which men must submit, as to an authority exterior to our personal judgment, and independent of it, then faith is no faith.

— Adolphe Monod

IT MAY SOMETIMES seem difficult to take our stand frankly by the side of Christ and His apostles. It will always be found safe.

— Benjamin B. Warfield

THE MORE I STUDY THE SCRIPTURES, the example of Christ, and the history of my own heart, the more I am convinced, that a testimony of God, placed without us and above us, exempt from all intermixture of sin and error which belong to a fallen race, and received with submission on the sole authority of God, is the true basis of faith.

— Adolphe Monod

Studies in the Epistle to the Ephesians

(Continued from last issue)

LESSON 20

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

1. The Responsibilities of Members of Christ's Church. 4:1-32, continued

(d) The duty of cultivating practical holiness. 4:17-32, continued

Putting off the old nature must be accompanied by putting on the new nature. So Paul goes on to say: "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (verses 23, 24). This new nature, here called "the new man," is not something we can achieve ourselves; it is a gift of God. It is not something developed by man, but something created by God. So Paul says, "which after God is **CREATED** in righteousness and true holiness." Being born again is not an accomplishment; it is a miracle; not our own doing, but God's work. We receive it as a gift. But having received it, what are we going to do about it?

Some professing Christians seem to think that they can receive this wonderful new nature from God, and then let it ride in the back seat all their lives, while their old, sinful nature occupies the driver's seat and holds the steering wheel of their lives. It is perhaps possible that some who do this will go to heaven in the end, but at any rate they will not be happy or useful Christians in this world. And there is reason to doubt that such people will go to heaven if they live that way all their life without change.

What, then, are we to do about our new nature? Put it on. Put it in the driver's seat; place it in control of our lives and conduct. The Christian life is a continuously repeated process of putting off the old man and putting on the new man. We will have to continue with this process until we enter eternal glory. Then, in the state of glory, our new nature will be perfectly and completely in control; we shall be made perfect in holiness, and will never have to contend with the old nature again, to all eternity. For at the believer's death the sinful nature is completely eradicated from his personality.

Next, Paul takes up some practical details of Christian conduct. Christianity is really a very practical religion. And that means that it must be practiced. No one can be a real Christian unless he is a practicing Christian.

A person might purchase a book on how to swim, study it and pass an examination on it with

a grade of 100. But he will never be a swimmer until he jumps into the water and actually starts to swim. It is not possible to be a practicing swimmer without getting wet. A person might read many books about the Christian religion, and pass an examination on the history and doctrines of Christianity, and yet not be a Christian. To be a Christian one must experience the saving power and life of Christ personally, and then practice the teachings of Christianity in his own life.

Paul has told us that there is a great difference between the Christian's life and the worldly person's life. He has also told us that the Christian must put off the old man and put on the new man. Now he proceeds to add some practical details about the change this ought to bring in the person's life. Of course what we have here is not a complete list of all the Christian virtues. In another place Paul gives a list of "the fruit of the Spirit" and includes some things not mentioned here. This is not intended as a complete list, but rather as a sample or representative list of details of Christian conduct.

The first great difference is **truthfulness**. These Ephesian Christians, many of them, were converts from Greek paganism. They came from a society or culture in which it was not considered wrong to tell a lie. Here in America even worldly people have been considerably influenced by Christian tradition. Most people in America will say that it is wrong to tell a lie, even though they themselves may tell lies sometimes. But in a pagan society such as that of Ephesus people were not ashamed of telling lies, though they might be ashamed of their stupidity in allowing themselves to get caught telling lies.

In our American society, however, there are some people who think it is all right to tell a lie, provided it is a "white" lie, not a "black" lie. The theory is that a lie told with a bad motive—to cheat someone, for example—is a "black" lie, but a lie told with a good motive—for example, to avoid hurting someone's feelings, or to cheer a sick person up—is a "white" lie, and is considered justifiable.

Really this distinction between "white" and "black" lies is wrong. We might just as well speak of "white" thefts and "black" thefts, "white" murders and "black" murders. If a thing is wrong, it is wrong, and our having a good motive does not make black white. And yet all of us are involved in this evil of "white" lies to some extent. Our civilization and culture, our code of

politeness, are all wrapped up in this system. A guest will tell his hostess that he had a lovely evening, when he really was miserably bored and wanted to go home as soon as possible. Someone has a headache and feels all out of sorts, but upon being asked "How are you?" will reply, "Just fine. How are you?" Not very important, perhaps, but still it is an aspect of the pagan character of our modern society. We feel that other people expect us to tell these little "white" lies, so we keep on doing it. But we ought to realize that this demand is being made on us by a non-Christian society. Our Christian ideal is higher, the ideal of full truthfulness. We should strive toward that ideal.

Questions:

1. Besides putting off the old nature, what must we do?
2. What is the source of the new nature?
3. How do some professing Christians deceive themselves in their idea of the Christian life?
4. What process must be continuously repeated in the Christian's life?

5. When will the sinful nature be fully eradicated from the Christian's personality?

6. What is meant by saying that Christianity is a practical religion?

7. Why is a merely theoretical knowledge of Christianity not sufficient?

8. Does Paul present a complete list of Christian virtues in verses 25-32?

9. What was the attitude of Greek paganism to the question of truthfulness?

10. How can we explain the fact that in America many people who are not Christians consider it wrong to tell a lie?

11. What is the distinction between "white lies" and "black lies"?

12. Why are "white lies" wrong?

13. How are even Christian people involved in the social demand for telling "white lies"?

14. What is the bearing of the Christian ideal of truthfulness on the common practice of telling "white lies"?

LESSON 21

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

1. The Responsibilities of Members of Christ's Church. 4:1-32, continued

(d) The duty of cultivating practical holiness. 4:17-32, continued

The next great difference between the Christian and the worldly person which Paul mentions is the matter of **controlling one's temper**. Everyone has a temper to control. Some have more temper to control than others. But the trouble comes when our temper starts to control us. God told Cain to control his anger, and not let it control him (Gen. 4:6,7.) Paul does not say that a Christian should not have a temper. He does not even say that a Christian should never get angry. Sometimes we cannot help getting angry. When we have been unjustly treated our natural reaction is anger. A person may be righteously angry, because of injustice suffered by himself or by someone else. Paul does not say that a Christian should never be angry. But he says that we should not stay angry. "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath." When something happens that makes us angry, we are not to let the old nature take over the steering wheel of our lives and drive us into sin. We are to settle the matter in some way, as soon as possible. Possibly we can talk matters over with the person who has angered us. But perhaps that will be impossible. In that case, we can pray about it and commit the matter to the Lord, and leave it in His hands. "Commit thy

way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. . . Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil" (Psalm 37:5, 8). If we commit the matter to the Lord, our anger will pass and peace will return to our soul. So Paul says, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath"; that is, don't let the matter go beyond that one day; settle it in some way immediately. He adds, "Neither give place to the devil." That is, do not give the devil any standing room in your life.

When we are living right as Christians, the devil has to try to work on us from the outside. He is like a person standing in the street in front of our house trying to throw messages in through a crack in a door or window. He cannot accomplish much that way. But when a Christian "gives place to the devil" he opens the door and lets the devil in and gives him standing room on the inside. And the devil can really work when he has standing room on the inside of a person's life.

Sometimes a person that we know to be a Christian falls into sin and goes from one sin to another until we almost despair of that person ever getting back to godly living again. What has happened? He has given place to the devil. Instead of trying to work on that person by temptations from the outside, the devil has gained standing room on the inside of that person's life—a very sad state of affairs indeed. In such a case, it is usually only through God's mercy in the form of severe affliction and suffering that the person can be restored to a spiritual state.

The Christian who cherishes and nurses his anger is giving place to the devil. He is opening a door in his life that will give the devil an entrance. The Christian who has a grievance against some other person, and instead of settling it or committing it to the Lord, just broods over it and harbors a permanent grudge against that person, is giving place to the devil. He can hardly pray, so his Christian friends ought to pray for such a person, that by God's great mercy he may be restored to a spiritual state again.

The third great difference between the Christian and the worldly person in the matter of conduct concerns honesty. "Let him that stole steal no more" (verse 28a). Stealing, of course, is just one form of dishonesty. There are other forms. One form of dishonesty is idleness. The Christian who lives without working is dishonest, so the apostle commands Christian people, not only not to steal, but also to labor, to work at some kind of job or occupation. In that way he will live honestly himself, and also will have something to give to others who may be in need. The person who is not a Christian will work because of necessity, or ambition, or interest; but the Christian will work because of **conscience**—because he is convinced that it is not right to live without working.

The Christian should avoid all kinds of gambling, because they are all attempts to get something for nothing, without giving a comparable value in return. All attempts to get something for nothing are contrary to the Christian ideal of honesty. The person who participates in a lottery pays perhaps \$1 for a ticket and hopes that he will have the lucky number and win \$100 or \$1000 or even more. That is dishonest; it is trying to get out more than is put in. The same is true, to a greater or less extent, of every form of gambling. The essential paganism of our modern American culture is revealed by the present craze for getting something for nothing. This is promoted by merchants all over the land, many of them respectable church members.

Christian people, we believe, should separate from and protest against the whole system.

A Christian should also avoid trying to get an advantage over another person by driving too sharp a bargain. That, too, is an attempt to get more than we really are entitled to. If we love our neighbor as ourself we cannot be guilty of such practices. They are really dishonest.

Questions:

1. Is it wrong to have a temper?
2. Why was Cain angry, and what did God tell him about his anger?
3. When we are angry, what must we specially guard against?
4. What does Paul mean by saying "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath"?
5. How can we keep the sun from going down on our wrath?
6. What is meant by giving place to the devil?
7. What is the result of giving place to the devil?
8. When a person has given place to the devil in his life, how can he be restored to a spiritual state again?
9. Why is idleness a sin?
10. Give two reasons why every Christian ought to work at some job or occupation.
11. What is the difference between the worldly person's motive for working and the Christian's motive for working?
12. Why are all forms of gambling wrong?
13. What should be our attitude as Christians to the prevalent craze for getting something for nothing?
14. Why is it wrong to attempt to drive too sharp a bargain?

LESSON 22

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

1. The Responsibilities of Members of Christ's Church. 4:1-32, continued

(d) The duty of cultivating practical holiness. 4:17-32, continued

The fourth great difference in conduct between the Christian and the worldly person is clean speech: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (verse 29). This command is being violated today chiefly in two ways. The first

is by **profanity**, and the second is by **filthy or impure speech**.

Profanity, or cursing and profane swearing, is extremely common today. We hear it on every hand. Some people never say "Jesus Christ" except as a swear word. No Christian should ever indulge in profane swearing. The Christian should avoid not only what the world calls swearing, but also the very common practice of using God's attributes profanely in such expressions as "For goodness' sake!", "Goodness gracious!", "Mercy on us!", "Good heavens!", and the like. Also the Christian should conscientiously avoid the prevalent practice of using "minced oaths," that is,

slightly disguised imitations of the profanity the worldly person uses. These "minced oaths" include such common expressions as "darn" (damn), "heck" (hell), "Gosh" (God), "Jeepers" (Jesus), "Cripes" (Christ), "Gee" (Jesus), and many other approximations which Satan persuades Christian people to use. Many Christian people are extremely careless about their speech. We should be shocked every time we hear a Christian say "Goodness gracious!" or "Good Gosh!" The lack of sensitivity to the sinfulness of such speech is one of the signs of spiritual decadence at the present day. If a person is really a Christian, his speech should be free from all forms of profanity. It should be in marked contrast to the speech of the worldly person.

The other common violation of clean speech is by the use of filthy or impure language. This is not so much a matter of the actual words used as it is of the way they are used and the thoughts in the person's mind. It is a terribly common sin today. No Christian should ever tell or listen to what are called "dirty stories" or "dirty jokes." To do so is to copy the sins of the world, and to offend against God, and grieve His Holy Spirit.

Last of all, the Christian will cultivate a forgiving spirit. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (verses 31, 32). Instead of malice, bitterness, evil speaking, etc., the Christian should cultivate kindness and a forgiving spirit. This is just the opposite of the way worldly people live. The world's code is to hold a grudge against a person who has wronged us, to get even if possible, and never really to forgive the wrongdoer.

A cartoon in a religious magazine portrayed two Christians who had been involved in a quarrel because of an injury which one of them had done the other. They had been outwardly "reconciled" and were seen shaking hands as a token of reconciliation. Each was extending his right hand to shake hands with the other. But each held his left hand concealed behind his back. In the left hand of one was a knife, in the left hand of the other, a hatchet. Beneath the cartoon was the caption: "Yes, brother, I can forgive but I cannot forget." The worldly person does not really forgive an injury. He puts up an outward appearance of forgiveness, but he continues to hold the wrong against the other person. He may not actually be planning how he can "get even" but he does not really feel friendly toward the other person. Such is not forgiveness in the Christian sense.

The Christian will really forgive. His forgiveness is not mere polite formality concealing a heart full of bitter enmity. His forgiveness is without reservations and it comes from his heart.

For the Christian himself knows what forgiveness is; he has experienced it — he has a motive for forgiving others: to show gratitude to God, who has already forgiven him.

There is great need for this forgiving spirit among Christian people. Some who have a zeal for God and for the truth of God yet in reality neutralize the effectiveness of their testimony by their bitter, unforgiving spirit. It is to be feared that the sin warned against by the cartoon described above, is only too common. This is just another proof of the low spiritual state of the churches today. Revival is badly needed—not the superficial, emotional kind of revival, but the real revival that is wrought by the Holy Spirit, which will lead Christian people to realize, confess and forsake their sins.

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (verse 30). Christian people who commit the sins Paul has been speaking of in this passage (4:25-32) thereby grieve the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells in every born again Christian, carrying on His sanctifying work. When a Christian falls into sin, this grieves the Holy Spirit.

It is not enough to avoid giving place to the devil. We must also avoid grieving the Holy Spirit. What is meant by "grieving the Holy Spirit"? This is clearly not the same thing as the "unpardonable sin" of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The sin of grieving the Holy Spirit is not unpardonable; it is a sin that can be forgiven. It is evident from the context that by "grieving the Holy Spirit" Paul means falling into sins such as he has been describing. By so doing, the Christian would offend or displease the Holy Spirit, resulting in a decrease, for a time, of the manifestation of the Spirit's presence in the person's soul. Such a person will lose, for a time, his Christian joy, his consciousness of God's favor, his assurance of salvation. He will also lose his usefulness in God's Kingdom, and will become a problem to his fellow Christians and to his church. Those who seek a further discussion of this matter are referred to the **Westminster Confession of Faith, XVIII. 4** and the **Larger Catechism, Q. 81**.

Grieving the Holy Spirit is itself a sin, but it does not result in the Holy Spirit abandoning the person, as some have held. The Holy Spirit never abandons those who have been born again. He takes His abode in their souls and remains there for ever. This is, indeed, taught by verse 30, which adds that believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption. The "day of redemption," of course, is the Last Day, the Day of the Lord, the day of Christ's second coming, of the resurrection and the judgment. See Romans 8:23, which speaks of Christians waiting for "the redemption of our body." Compare also 2 Cor. 1:21, 22, ". . . God, who hath also sealed us,

and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts"; 2 Cor. 5:5, ". . . God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit"; Eph. 1:13, 14, ". . . after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, . . .". The teaching of these various texts is closely related. Two ideas are prominent, the idea of the "seal" and the idea of the "earnest." It is affirmed that believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption, and that believers have received the earnest of the Holy Spirit.

A seal is an official pledge or guarantee, placed on a document such as a contract, will, treaty, etc., to guarantee that it is genuine and valid and that it will be faithfully carried out without failure and without alteration. Once officially sealed, no changes can be made. It is a binding, unalterable obligation of the person who has affixed the seal. The Holy Spirit is God's "seal" placed upon the soul of the Christian. This is God's guarantee that the work of salvation will be carried on in that person until it is finally complete at the day of redemption — the time of the resurrection of the body. The seal is God's binding pledge that He who has begun a good work in us will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ.

The earnest is what we would call a "down payment" today. It is a partial payment which proves that the transaction is binding and will not be canceled later. It is not, of course, as if God owed the Christian anything; but rather, that God has chosen to give the Holy Spirit to His children as a first instalment, thus pledging that all other blessings and benefits will be bestowed in due time. Thus the Holy Spirit in the Christian's soul is God's pledge and certification that all other blessings — the Kingdom of God, the sum-total of all good to all eternity — will surely be the Christian's portion. The Christian believer, having received the Holy Spirit, is also guaranteed all other blessings. He will receive these at the resurrection, when consummate blessedness shall be his portion. But meantime, while waiting for that blessed time, he has the Holy Spirit as God's seal and as God's earnest — God's unbreakable pledge that all shall be his at "the day of redemption."

If it were possible for the Holy Spirit to abandon and forsake any true child of God, then all that we are taught in the above-cited texts about the Holy Spirit as a seal and an earnest would amount to nothing. It is only because of the truth that the Holy Spirit abides in the Christian's soul permanently, that He can be a seal and an earnest until the day of redemption.

We may note, too, that Eph. 4:30 is one of the texts which prove the personality of the Holy Spirit. Many people think of the Holy Spirit as a

kind of impersonal force or influence, such as magnetism or gravity. But Paul speaks of "grieving" the Holy Spirit. Clearly, a force or influence cannot be grieved. Only a person can be grieved. And if it is possible to grieve the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit must be a Person, not a mere force or influence.

May we all, as Christian people, believers in Christ, put off the old man, put on the new man, and cultivate real practical holiness in our daily living. May we all be practicing Christians.

Questions:

1. How is the command to avoid corrupt speech most commonly violated today?
2. What is profanity, and why is it wrong?
3. Why should a Christian avoid such expressions as "Goodness gracious"?
4. What are "minced oaths" and why are they wrong?
5. What should be the Christian's attitude toward what are commonly called "dirty stories" and "dirty jokes"?
6. What is the world's code with regard to forgiving others?
7. How does real Christian forgiveness differ from the world's kind of "forgiveness"?
8. What kind of religious revival is needed today?
9. What is the Christian's great motive for forgiving others?
10. What is the difference between "grieving the Spirit" and the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?
11. What is meant by "grieving the Holy Spirit"?
12. What are the results of grieving the Holy Spirit?
13. What is meant by "the day of redemption"?
14. What is the meaning of a seal, and how is the Holy Spirit a seal?
15. What is an earnest, and of what is the Holy Spirit an earnest?
17. What is the bearing of Eph. 4:30 on the personality of the Holy Spirit?
16. How can it be shown from Scripture that the Holy Spirit never abandons any true child of God?

LESSON 23

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued**2. The Duty of Christians in Personal and Social Matters. 5:1 to 6:9****(a) Separation from idolatry and uncleanness. 5:1-17**

In chapters 5 and 6 we have a treatment of the personal and social duties of Christians; that is, not so much their duties as members of the Church, as their duties as individuals and members of society, in the home and in the world. There follows also a concluding section on the believer's spiritual warfare and weapons.

Verse 1 with its "therefore" connects the thought up with what has preceded, in chapter 4: "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." This is a general statement that the Christian, as a child of God, must also be a follower of God. Verse 2 adds the obligation to follow Christ's example of love. The Christian is not merely to have love, nor merely to claim to have love, but actually to walk in love. Christ's example of love was love carried into action; He "loved us, and hath given himself for us." It is easy to say that we ought to love God and our fellow Christians; but what is needed is to walk in love, to carry love into the practice of our daily lives.

Verses 3 and 4 urge the avoidance of uncleanness in thought, word and deed, and the substituting thereof of "giving of thanks." We should realize that immorality such as is mentioned in these verses was extremely common in ancient pagan Greek world, and was not even regarded as sinful. It was therefore the more necessary that Paul warn the Christians against such sins, since they were living in such an environment.

The statement in verse 5 that no such person has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God means, of course, none that is unrepentant. There is no sin so great that it can exclude from God's Kingdom those who truly repent. See the **Westminster Confession of Faith, XV.4.**

Verse 6 is a solemn warning against those who would deceive the believer with "vain words." By "vain words" the apostle means what we would call "empty talk." It is a warning against the popular idea that Christians can commit such sins as are mentioned in verses 3-5 without danger to his Christian standing of his spiritual life. As a matter of fact there were those in the Gentile churches of Paul's day who claimed that as the body is a comparatively unimportant part of the human personality, what the body did could have no effect on the spirit, and so Christians could indulge in fornication without committing sin and without interfering with their sanctification. The results of putting such a theory into practice can

be easily imagined. The adherents of such a view apparently were able to put up a learned and plausible argument in favor of their idea, but Paul brands it as "vain words" and warns Christians against being deceived by it. Instead of what the body does being unimportant, Paul says, it is because of such things as these that the wrath of God comes upon wicked people. The serious Christian will not want to dabble and play with the sins of the world; rather, he will make a clean break of separation from them, and bear witness against them. "Be not ye therefore partakers with them" (verse 7). Those who partake of the sins of the world, can expect to share in the judgments which come upon the world. Christians should be separated.

In verse 8 we have the believer's former state of pagan darkness contrasted with his present state of divine light, coupled with an exhortation to walk in that light. Those who think that the heathen have a religion which is suited to their need, and that we should therefore not send missionaries to win them for Christ, do not know what heathenism is. There is a great deal of foolishness written about some of these heathen religions, regarding them as beautiful or romantic. But Paul describes them correctly as "darkness," while Christianity and Christian people are "light in the Lord." To "walk in that light" means, of course, to conform our conduct to the law and will of God.

In verses 9 to 10 the apostle enjoins Christians to bring forth in their lives the fruit of the Spirit, namely, goodness and righteousness and truth. Note that here, as in Gal. 5, it is the "fruit" of the Spirit, in the singular, not "fruits" but "fruit". But, as in Galatians, the contrasted sinful works are spoken of in the plural: "works," not "work."

The "unfruitful works of darkness" mentioned in verse 11 probably means the sinful works which were characteristic of pagan society; the word "darkness" recalls verse 8 ("Ye were sometime darkness. . ."). It is possible that in verses 11 and 12 Paul may be referring to the secret religious rites of some of the cults of that age. Those who are interested in a description of the ancient "mystery religions" are referred to **The Origin of Paul's Religion**, by J. Gresham Machen; Chapter VI, **The Religion of the Hellenistic Age**; see pp. 227-237 of the 1921 edition.

Whether "the unfruitful works of darkness" refers to religious rites or, as is more probable, to moral offences, it is clear that the Christian is to maintain separation from them. He is to have no fellowship with them, but rather to reprove them. The fact of secrecy is often a sign that evil is being done. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made mani-

fest, that they are wrought in God" (John 3:20,21). In contrast to all works of darkness, the Christian belongs to the realm of light.

So Paul adds, "But all things that are reformed are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light" (verse 13). That is, the light of the Christians' pure and good life, by way of contrast will reprove the works of darkness, and bring out their true character. Christian people's life should be in strong contrast to the non-Christian life around them. They should live so that their very lives will be a powerful reproof of the sins of the world.

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (verse 14.) Compare the somewhat similar thought in Rom. 13:11-14. "He saith" means, of course, God saith. The verse is apparently a paraphrase or free quotation of Isaiah 60:1,2, where "the church is set forth as being in a state of darkness and of death, and is exhorted to awake, and become light, for that her light is come, and the glory of Jehovah has arisen upon her" (Henry Alford). The fact that Paul does not quote Isaiah word for word, but rather gives a paraphrase or free quotation, is to be explained on the principle that the Holy Spirit is the real author of both Isaiah and Ephesians. When an author is quoting his own previous writings, he may be allowed a degree of liberty which it would not be proper for another, quoting him, to take. By divine inspiration, Paul's quotation grasps the true meaning of the text in Isaiah.

Verses 15-17 concern practical matters. The Christian, as a wise man, is to walk "circumspectly," that is, carefully, thoughtfully. He is to "redeem the time, because the days are evil"; Christians cannot do everything; they must spend their time on what is really important; they must regard time as a sacred stewardship, not to be

wasted. The Greek means "buying up the time," taking advantage of it. The Christian is not to be unwise, but to understand what the Lord's will is. The Greek word for "unwise" means senseless. Christians who are absorbed in the things of the world and can scarcely bring themselves to devote an hour or two occasionally to the worship of God, will tend to be "senseless," religiously obtuse, with no sensitivity as to what the Lord's will is. Paul exhorts his readers to be just the opposite.

Questions:

1. What is the general subject of chapters 5 and 6?
2. What is meant by walking in love?
3. Does 5:5 mean that anyone who has committed the sins mentioned cannot be saved?
4. What does Paul mean by "vain words"?
5. What kind of "vain words" were Paul's readers liable to be deceived by?
6. How does Paul describe the religious and moral condition of heathenism?
7. Why should a Christian separate from the "unfruitful works of darkness"?
8. From what source is the quotation of 5:14 apparently taken?
9. How can we explain the fact that Paul gives a paraphrase rather than an exact quotation?
10. What is the meaning of "circumspectly"? What is involved in walking circumspectly?
11. What should be the Christian's attitude to the use of time?
12. What is meant by "unwise" in verse 17? How can Christians avoid the danger of being "unwise"?

LESSON 24

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

2. The Duty of Christians in Personal and Social Matters. 5:1 to 6:9, continued

(b) Spiritual worship. 5:18-20

Verse 18 teaches that the believer is not to be drunk with wine, wherein is excess — a teaching very important not only in Paul's day, but also in our own. But there is one matter in which the Christian need fear no excess, and need exercise no temperance, namely, being filled with the Holy Spirit (18b). The "intoxication" produced by being filled with the Holy Spirit is beneficial to the believer, to the Church and to the world. For the result of being filled with the Spirit is a spiritual,

as opposed to a merely formal, worship of and devotion to God.

Note that to "be filled with the Spirit" is a command, not merely the description of an experience. Since we are commanded to "be filled with the Spirit" it must be our duty to seek this blessing from God. Of course there is no reference here to any of the phenomena characteristic of what is called "Pentecostalism," nor to any idea of receiving the Holy Spirit as an experience separate from receiving Christ as our Saviour. Rather, the meaning is that we are continuously, by our prayers and by our manner of life, to seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Christian's worship will include praise and thanksgiving. Praise usually takes the form

of song. We should observe that in the Greek text the adjective "spiritual" probably goes with all three nouns: Psalms, hymns, songs. Paul designates all three as connected with the Holy Spirit. The word "spiritual" in Scripture never has the modern meaning of "religious" or "devotional". In this text it means dynamically connected with the Holy Spirit as author or source. A spiritual song is a song of which the Holy Spirit is the Author.

In Paul's day the only hymnbook in use was the Old Testament Psalter. This is an historical proposition capable of abundant proof, and no one can prove the contrary. We may add that the Greek words for "Psalms, hymns, songs" are found in the titles of the Old Testament Psalms in the Septuagint (Greek version of the Old Testament). This was the form of the Old Testament commonly used by Paul and by the churches to which he wrote his Epistles. We conclude, therefore, that "Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" in Eph. 5:19 (and the same terms in Col. 3:16) is a reference to the Psalms of the Old Testament, and contains no reference to any other materials of praise.

For a full study of this text the reader is referred to the article **Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs** by the Rev. Frank D. Frazer, in the April-June 1948 issue of this magazine, pages 83-85; reprinted in the October-December 1952 issue, pages 164-166; April-June 1957, pages 71-73. Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 are constantly being confidently quoted as a complete refutation of the principle that only the Psalms of the Bible are authorized for singing in the worship of God. Those who adhere to that principle ought to have a clear and accurate understanding of these two texts. And those who confidently cite these texts as a justification of the use of non-inspired hymns in divine worship, ought to be willing to study a scholarly and exact exegesis of the texts, such as Mr. Frazer presents in the above-mentioned article. We do not have space available here for a full discussion of this subject, but refer the reader to Mr. Frazer's article.

We shall, however, say something about an objection that is often raised against the exclusive use of the Psalms in divine worship. This objection is to the effect that many hymns are just as "inspired" as are the Old Testament Psalms. For example, it has been claimed that Fanny Crosby's hymns are just as "inspired" as any of the Psalms. This objection is not only a very common one, but it is raised with an air of complete confidence, as if it disposed of the subject once and for all, beyond all possibility of a rebuttal.

In reply to this objection, it may be said, first of all, that if Fanny Crosby's hymns are just as inspired as the Psalms, then they will have to be printed in every copy of the Bible. Whatever is inspired is Scripture and is a part of the Word of God and must be included in printed copies of

the Bible. If Fanny Crosby's hymns are really as inspired as the Psalms, then we can appeal to any line in her hymns for proof of doctrines, and for decision of controversies.

But of course, the objector does not hold that Fanny Crosby's hymns should be incorporated into the text of the Bible. Yet he says that those hymns are "just as inspired as the Psalms of the Bible." The explanation is, of course, that the objector is using the word "inspired" in a different sense from its proper meaning when it is used to describe the Bible as "the inspired Word of God." The person who says that Fanny Crosby's hymns are as inspired as the Psalms may have too high an idea of Fanny Crosby's hymns, or he may have too low an idea of the Psalms. In most cases, probably, the latter is the case. The objector does not mean by "inspired" what this word properly means in connection with the inspiration of Scripture. Rather, he means by "inspired" something like "inspirational" or "productive of religious sentiment and emotion." We are not concerned to deny that Fanny Crosby's hymns possess this quality, but this is something quite different from their being "inspired" in the sense in which "inspired" is used in the Bible and in theology. The person who raises the objection we are considering, usually has no adequate idea of the inspiration of Scripture. His real meaning is not that Fanny Crosby's hymns are as inspired as the Psalms, but rather that the Psalms are no more inspired than Fanny Crosby's hymns. And if a person has no conviction of the real inspiration and infallibility — the divine character — of the Bible Psalms, it is practically useless to discuss the matter with him at all.

Christian worship includes also giving thanks. Paul instructs Christians to give thanks "always for all things", which includes even those things in God's Providence which may seem hard and grievous to us. As we see from Rom. 8:28, all things work together for good to the Christian, so in some way we can give thanks "always for all things."

Thanksgiving is to be "unto God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Let us never forget that our only approach to God is through the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our only Mediator and High Priest. All our prayers are acceptable to God only through Him.

Questions:

1. What does verse 18 teach us on the subject of temperance?
2. What kind of "intoxication" is beneficial to all concerned?
3. What is the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit?
4. What is implied by the command to be filled with the Spirit?

5. What is the difference between the meaning of "spiritual" in verse 19 and the common meaning of "spiritual" in modern usage?

6. What does Paul mean by "Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs"?

7. What was the only hymnbook in use in the churches in Paul's day?

8. In what version of the Old Testament are

the words "Psalms, hymns, songs" found in the titles of the Psalms?

9. What was the relation of this version of the Old Testament to Paul and the churches to which he wrote his Epistles?

10. How can we answer the person who says that Fanny Crosby's hymns, for example, are "just as inspired as the Psalms of the Bible"?

LESSON 25

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

2. The Duty of Christians in Personal and Social Matters. 5:1 to 6:9, continued

(c) Mutual duties of husbands and wives, including a discussion of marriage as an illustration of the relation between Christ and the Church. 5:21-33

In this section we have the apostle Paul's teaching on the mutual duties of husbands and wives, and interwoven with this we find an illustration or figure of the relation between Christ and the Church.

Verse 21 ("Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God") according to the grammar is part of the sentence which starts at the beginning of verse 18. But it is difficult to see the connection, for verses 18-20 concern religious duties owed to God, whereas verse 21 concerns a general moral duty owed to men. Although the connection is obscure, the meaning of verse 21 is quite plain: Christian people are not to think of themselves only, and what they want or prefer, but to be willing to yield to others, for the sake of harmony and fellowship.

Paul finds in the divinely appointed constitution of the family a parallel to the relation between Christ and the Church. He teaches here that as Christ is the Head of the Church, so in the family the husband is the head of the wife (verses 22-24). We shall consider what this involves, first as regards the relation between Christ and the Church, and secondly as regards the relation between husband and wife in the family.

Paul asserts that Christ is the Head of the Church, adding that He is "the Saviour of the body." All Christians accept the truth of Christ's Headship over the Church, at least in theory. This truth is not always honored in practice, however. The Roman Catholic Church at least pays lip service to Christ's Headship over the Church, in its claim that the Pope of Rome is Christ's vicegerent, that is, Christ's earthly representative or agent. But we believe that Romanism grievously denies the truth of Christ's Headship in practice, by claiming for the pope and the hierarchy powers and privileges which in reality belong to Christ alone, such as the power to forgive sins.

Another grievous infringement of Christ's Headship over the Church is found in the Erastian system, according to which the civil magistrate (that is, the State) is supreme over the Church. It was against a particularly offensive form of this Erastian system that our Covenanter forefathers in Scotland witnessed and struggled three centuries ago. But the Erastian system is not dead by any means. In a large part of the world today it is taken for granted that the State is supreme in the sphere of religion, and therefore supreme over the Christian Church. An extreme form of Erastianism existed in Germany under Hitler, and in Japan and Japanese-occupied Asia during the Second World War and for a year or two previous to it. And it would seem that Erastianism now prevails in Soviet Russia and her satellite countries including Communist China, where the Church exists only by the permission and at the mercy of a totalitarian State. We maintain that Erastianism is a dishonor to the Lord Jesus Christ and a grievous injury to His Church, against which all faithful Christians should testify.

Christ's Headship over the Church is also infringed by the popular modern notion that the Church is an absolute democracy in which the members can change the doctrines or manner of worship by a majority vote if they see fit to do so. This is a practical denial of Christ's Headship over the Church. If Christ is really the Head of the Church, then the members are not the head of the Church. If Christ is really the Head of the Church, then the members are not free to do as the majority may see fit. For if Christ is really the Head of the Church, then, as Paul says, the Church must be subject unto Christ. The Church is to be controlled by the will of Christ revealed in His Word, through the medium of lawful church government as instituted by Christ through His apostles.

Another infringement of Christ's Headship over the Church is found in the spirit of modern individualism which has come down to us, not from the Bible, but from the French Revolution—the modern spirit of everyone wanting to do as he pleases in the sphere of religion as in all other matters. Some dare to say openly that they will believe and live as they please; others are not so bold as to say this openly, but they say it day after day by the way they live. All such dishonor

Christ and reject His real Headship over the Church. They say, by their lives if not in spoken words, "We will not have this man to reign over us."

It is to be feared that there are some who are considered "spiritual" and who are concerned about the need for revival and evangelism, who yet are not willing to have Christ really be the Head of the Church. To all such the words of Samuel to King Saul are applicable: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (1 Sam. 15:22, 23).

Questions:

1. What new subject does Paul take up in this section of the Epistle?
2. What is the meaning of verse 21 ("Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God")?
3. What parallel does Paul present between

the constitution of the Church and that of the family?

4. Is the truth of Christ's Headship over the Church accepted by the Roman Catholic Church? How is it denied in practice by that church?
5. What is the Erastian system, and why is it wrong?
6. Give some examples of the Erastian system from the history of the Church.
7. How is Christ's Headship over the Church infringed by the popular idea that the Church is an absolute democracy?
8. How does the modern spirit of "doing as we please" infringe Christ's Headship over the Church?
9. What does Christ's Headship over the Church imply concerning the government of the Church?
10. How did the prophet Samuel answer King Saul's claim that he had religious reasons for disobeying God's command? What is the relevance of Samuel's rebuke at the present day?

LESSON 26

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

2. The Duty of Christians in Personal and Social Matters. 5:1 to 6:9, continued

(c) Mutual duties of husbands and wives, including a discussion of marriage as an illustration of the relation between Christ and the Church. 5:21-33, continued

In the last lesson we considered Paul's statement that Christ is the Head of the Church. We shall now take up the parallel statement that "the husband is the head of the wife" (verse 23).

"God never created anything without giving to it the law of its being. The family is of God; and the blessedness of the family relation depends upon obedience to the divine law. Should a wife render obedience to her husband? The law of God must answer the question. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the Church. (Eph. 5:22,23). Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

"What duty, then, does the Scripture lay upon the husband that is at all commensurate with the submission required of the wife? Simply this: 'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth

and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.' (Eph. 5:25-29). If the husband gives to his wife the full measure of self-sacrificing love which the word of God demands of him for her, it will be as easy thing for the wife to give to her husband that reverence for him which is required of her. The obligations are mutual and neither party has the right claim what is due from the other, while withholding what is due to the other." (R. J. George, in *Lectures in Pastoral Theology*, First Series, *The Covenanter Pastor*, 1911, page 224).

Though this may be an unpopular teaching in some circles at the present day, it is a teaching of the Word of God. We believe that the statement of Dr. R. J. George, quoted above, is a sound and Scriptural summary of the Bible teaching on this subject.

Back of this teaching of Ephesians 5 is the Biblical view of the origin and constitution of the family. In verse 31 Paul quotes the statement of Gen. 2:24 which proves that the family is a divine institution going back to the very beginning of the human race. This is contrary to the common modern idea that the family is a product of natural social evolution. According to the Bible, the family is a divine institution. But if God instituted the family, then its constitution and principles of existence must also be prescribed by God. As Dr. George wrote, "God never created anything without giving to it the law of its being." The constitution of the family must therefore be sought in Scripture. And it is perfectly clear in Scripture that God has ordained

that the husband shall be the head of the family. The revolt against this principle which is so prevalent today is more than a revolt against the idea that the husband is the head of the wife; it is a revolt against the whole idea that the family is a divine institution with a constitution ordained by God. The objection to Paul's teaching that wives should be subject to their husbands, as the Church is to Christ, is rooted in a deeper revolt against the authority of Scripture, which is, ultimately, the authority of God.

There are of course certain limits to the injunction that wives should be subject unto their husbands, just as there are certain limits to the obligation of Christian people to obey magistrates, which Paul inculcates in Romans 13. These limits are not discussed, or even stated, in this passage; rather, they are assumed. In general, there can be no obligation of obedience in any matter which is contrary to the law of God. God's commandments take precedence over all authority delegated to human beings.

Commenting on this passage in Ephesians 5 and its briefer parallel in Col. 3:18, together with Gen. 3:16, the late Dr. Walter A. Maier of *The Lutheran Hour* wrote as follows:

"It must be evident from these passages that according to divine will the family, instead of having two heads, is to have one, the husband, to whom both God and man look for the direction of the domestic affairs. It is the husband who takes the initiative in establishing the union by his proposal for marriage; it is he who sustains it by his financial support; and it is he who must direct it according to Biblical requirements. The Scriptures are too definite to permit of any other interpretation; and when the ceremony asks the bride to pledge herself 'to love, honor, and obey', this promise is in direct conformity with Heaven's ideal for the highest married happiness." (*For Better, not for Worse: A Manual of Christian Matrimony*, page 459. Copyright 1939 by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Quoted by permission).

In the chapter from which the above quotation is taken, Dr. Maier presents a very interesting and Scriptural discussion of the various aspects of this subject (pages 453-466 of the book). He shows how Christianity has brought real benefits to women far beyond any other religion in the world, but also how the modern feminist or "woman's rights" movement goes far beyond what the Bible warrants and is rooted in modern infidel rebellion against the authority and law of God. The chapter contains many effective illustrations, and can be recommended to anyone seeking a sane and Scriptural discussion of this subject.

Questions:

1. What truth is parallel to the truth that Christ is the Head of the Church?
2. What did Dr. R. J. George say about the constitution of the family?
3. What Bible teaching lies back of Paul's statements about marriage in Eph. 5?
4. What is the common idea about the family in modern unbelieving circles?
5. What deeper revolt lies back of the modern objection to Paul's teaching that wives should be subject to their own husbands?
6. What are the limits to the obedience which wives should render to their husbands, according to the Bible?
7. What was the belief of the late Dr. Walter Maier regarding the pledge "to love, honor, and obey" in the marriage ceremony?
8. What are some of the real benefits that Christianity has brought to women, in contrast to conditions existing under other religions?
9. Is the modern feminist or "woman's rights" movement in accord with the teachings of the Bible?

(To be continued)

LESSON 27

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

2. The Duty of Christians in Personal and Social Matters. 5:1 to 6:9, continued

(c) Mutual duties of husbands and wives, including a discussion of marriage as an illustration of the relation between Christ and the Church. 5:21-33, continued

Besides the teachings that Christ is the Head of the church and the husband is the head of the wife, we have in this passage, a beautiful statement of the destiny of the Church. The destiny of the church is absolute perfection and eternal glory.

Christ will present the church to Himself "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing"; it will be "holy and without blemish" (verse 27). And what is true of the church itself is also true of all its real members — their destiny is absolute perfection and eternal glory. We should remember this in our moments of weariness and discouragement. What we have in these verses (25b-27) is not an ideal, but the statement of a fact. It is a fact that Christ gave Himself for the church; it is a fact that he will present the church to Himself perfect in eternal glory. The accomplishment of this does not depend on our feeble and fickle efforts: it will be accomplished by the almighty power of the Son of God. The

church is far from perfect today, but it will be perfect in eternity. The Christian is far from perfect today, but he will be perfect in eternity.

In verse 26 the "washing of water" probably does not mean baptism, but rather the thing represented by baptism, namely, the new birth, or regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Compare Titus 3:5, which speaks of "the washing of regeneration". If the sacrament of baptism were meant, this would be "the regeneration of washing." The doctrine of baptismal regeneration, which is held by some churches, is not taught in the Bible. Baptism is not the same thing as regeneration, nor is it the cause of regeneration. It is a sign and seal of certain spiritual things, including regeneration or the new birth.

In salvation, there is a connection between the work of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God so the text reads: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word (verse 26). The Word of God, the Gospel, preached and believed, accompanies the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. The Word alone, without the Spirit, is ineffectual. The Holy Spirit works with the Word.

The presentation of the church spoken of in verse 27 will of course not take place until the church is complete in heavenly glory, after the number of the elect is filled. Following the resurrection, this presentation will mark the completion of Christ's great work of redemption. This will be the "marriage of the Lamb" described in symbolic language in Revelation 19:7-9.

In the passage we have been studying, we should realize the very high ideal of Christian marriage which is set before us, and also the glorious fact of the relation between Christ and the Church, which is His bride.

Modern free-and-easy ideas of marriage are contrary to the Bible. The apostle Paul goes clear back to the very beginning of human history, in verse 31, and quotes Genesis 2:23, 24, "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. . . Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." From the record in Genesis we might suppose that Gen. 2:24 was a statement of Adam. But from our Lord's words in Matthew 19:4, 5 we learn that the statement was made by God. It was the Creator, who from the beginning made man male and female, who said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife . . . ". This implies a great deal concerning marriage and concerning divorce which we cannot take up in this lesson. Among other things, it certainly implies the great importance and seriousness of marriage, as a divine ordinance, and the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord. All sudden, hasty marriages are contrary to the sacredness of marriage as a divine ordinance. All marriages in

which God is left out of consideration, and His will disregarded are sinful and displeasing to Him. Christian people should beware lest they lapse into the world's low standards concerning marriage.

In verse 32 the word "mystery" appears again. The mystery referred to of course is not human marriage, but the profound spiritual truth of the relation between Christ and His Church, a truth beyond man's power of discovering, but one now revealed by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul.

Questions:

1. What is the destiny of the church, as revealed in this passage of Scripture?
2. Do verses 25b-27 present an ideal to live up to, or a statement of fact?
3. On what does the attainment of the church's destiny really depend?
4. How can verses 25-27 help us in times of discouragement?
5. Does the expression "washing of water" in verse 26 refer to baptism? If not, what is the meaning, and how is it related to the sacrament of baptism?
6. What verse in the Epistle to Titus is similar to Eph. 5:26?
7. What is meant by "baptismal regeneration"? Is this doctrine taught in the Bible?
8. How does the Word of God become effectual unto salvation?
9. When will the presentation of the Church take place, and where?
10. What passage in the last book of the Bible speaks of the marriage of the Lamb?
11. What are the two main truths taught in Eph. 5:21-33?
12. What is the bearing of this passage on modern ideas of marriage?
13. From what book and chapter of the Old Testament is verse 31 quoted?
14. Who is the speaker of these words in the Old Testament? What place in the Gospel of Matthew proves that this is the case?
15. What is the bearing of this passage on hasty marriages?
16. What is meant by the statement that it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord?
17. What is the "mystery" referred to in verse 32?
18. Does Eph. 5:21-33 explain why many marriages of the present day end in disaster?

LESSON 23

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued**2. The Duty of Christians in Personal and Social Matters. 5:1 to 6:9, continued****(d) Mutual duties of parents and children. 6:1-4**

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (6:1-3). Here Paul quotes directly from the Ten Commandments. We note a slight difference in form from the wording to which we are accustomed, as found in the King James Version of Exodus 20:12. The clause "that it may be well with thee" is taken from the Ten Commandments as given in Deut. 5. The other differences are to be explained on the principle that the Holy Spirit is the real Author of Ephesians, as of Exodus and Deuteronomy. When an author is quoting his own previous writings, a free quotation or paraphrase is permissible, which would be improper in the case of an author quoting another author's writings.

The duty which children owe to their parents is obedience in the Lord. This means obedience insofar as consistent with the higher obligation of obedience to God. Children are not under obligation to obey their parents when commanded to tell lies, steal or worship idols, for example. But where no wrongdoing is involved, it is the duty of children to obey their parents.

To the child, the parent's authority is the authority of God. The parent's authority does not depend on reason nor on custom, nor yet on human legislation. It is derived from God. And God has ordained that the lesson of obedience to lawful authority shall be first learned in the home. The child who has learned this lesson in the home will in later life have respect for lawful authority in school, church and state. And on the other hand, a great deal of "juvenile delinquency" results from failure of parents to teach the lesson of obedience to authority in the home. Many a school teacher has been at wit's end because of pupils who have no respect for authority and no regard for the rights of others. And many a criminal career had its real beginning in lack of regard for parental authority in the home.

This lack of regard for parental authority may arise from sheer selfishness and neglect on the part of parents; they may be too absorbed in their own business and pleasures to bring up their children properly. But in many cases disregard for parental authority is the result of some of the foolish ideas which have been promoted by the "experts" of our day. The concept of democracy has been pushed to ridiculous extremes. When

a family is regarded as a free democracy in which parents and children have each one vote as to what shall and shall not be done, the God-ordained authority of parents has been destroyed. Democracy is a good form of government for the state, but in the home God has committed authority to the parents, not to the children.

There is a story of an Englishman who visited America, and on his return to England was asked what he had seen in America. "I have seen a great many obedient parents," was his reply. When children and parents are regarded as having equal authority, the result will be that the children will dominate the household. Worse than that, they will go out into school and society without having learned the lesson of obedience to authority, and consequently throughout life will be a problem to their fellow men and a dishonor to God.

Equally foolish are some of the theories of modern psychology. Parents should not be unreasonable, certainly, but to expect parents to plead and reason with young children instead of insisting upon obedience, is to misunderstand the normal relation between parents and children. Who has not seen a mother apparently completely helpless in the presence of a stubborn, misbehaving child? Where the God-ordained authority of parents in the home is maintained in the fear of God, such tragedies will not exist.

Paul gives two reasons why children should obey their parents in the Lord. The first reason is, because this is right. That is, it is the God-ordained order in the home. Modern psychology is concerned most about results; the apostle Paul is concerned about what is right.

The second reason Paul gives is that God has promised special blessings to those who honor their parents. As he explains, this is the first commandment in Scripture with a promise attached to it: "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." God has promised prosperity and long life to those who obey this commandment. The Shorter Catechism correctly explains that this promise is to be understood with the qualification, "as far as it shall serve for God's glory, and their own good" (S. C. 66). It does not mean that in each and every case those who honor parents will attain wealth and live to an old age, but it means that within the limits of God's glory and their own true welfare, they shall receive these benefits. And it is certainly true, as a general proposition, that obedience to parents and respect for lawful authority tend to promote prosperity and long life.

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (verse 4). Paul now addresses fathers, instructing them, both negatively

and positively, as to the training of their children. Alford comments that mothers are included, though not mentioned separately because the husband and father is the head of the family. Alford adds that Paul's meaning is that parents should not provoke their children by "vexatious commands, and unreasonable blame, and uncertain temper. . .". Parents should be reasonable, dependable and consistent in their dealings with their children. They should not tolerate disobedience one day, and the next insist upon strict obedience. It is a great mistake for parents to give any commands which they do not intend strictly to enforce. Parents should make rules and give commands only deliberately and thoughtfully, and then should insist upon obedience. If parents are inconsistent and unpredictable, one day allowing any kind of conduct and the next day becoming extremely strict, the children will be bewildered and discouraged. They need to know exactly what they can count on.

Especially parents should control their tempers. No parent can control his children without first learning to control himself. Children cannot learn the lesson of self-control from parents who have no self-control.

And parents should be reasonable in what they require of their children. To expect a child to perform any task as well as an adult is unreasonable; it fails to take into account the immaturity of the child. To expect a child to pay attention to anything as long a time as an adult is unreasonable. And it is unreasonable to expect children always to do right without some encouragement and occasional rewards.

On the positive side, parents are to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. "Nurture" here means "discipline" — it is translated "chastening" in the American Revised Version. "Admonition" means "training by word", including both encouragement and reproof. "Of the Lord" probably means the kind of nurture and admonition which the Lord expects and approves of, and has promised to bless. This verse includes the whole task of the moral and religious education of the children, which God has committed to the parents. For a fuller study of this subject, the student is referred to **The Covenant of Grace and the Christian Family**, in the October-December 1949 issue of this magazine, pages 166-168, and **The Covenant of Grace and Christian Education** in the April-June 1950 issue, pages 67-77. (Reprinted in January-March 1959 issue, pages 34-37; July-September 1959 issue, pages 144-155).

LESSON 29

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

2. The Duty of Christians in Personal and Social Matters. 5:1 to 6:9, continued

Questions:

1. From what part of the Old Testament is Eph. 6:2, 3 quoted?
2. How can we explain the fact that the quotation does not give the exact words of the Old Testament passages?
3. What is the duty which children owe to their parents?
4. What is the source of the authority of parents over their children?
5. According to God's plan, where is the lesson of obedience to authority to be first learned?
6. What are some of the results of failure to teach the lesson of obedience to authority in the home?
7. How can the common lack of regard for parental authority be explained?
8. What is wrong with regarding the family as a democracy?
9. If children are regarded as having equal authority with their parents, what will be the result?
10. Should parents plead and reason with young children, or should they insist on obedience?
11. What is the first reason why children should obey their parents in the Lord?
12. What special blessings has God promised to those who honor their parents?
13. What limitations are to be understood in connection with this promise of God?
14. Is it true that obedience to parents and respect for lawful authority tend to promote prosperity and long life?
15. Does the command of verse 4 apply to fathers only?
16. What are some of the ways in which parents sometimes provoke their children to wrath?
17. Why is it important that parents control their tempers?
18. What are some of the things that cannot reasonably be expected of children?
19. What is the meaning of "nurture" and "admonition"?
20. What great task is included in the commission given to parents in verse 4?

(e) Mutual duties of masters and servants. 6:5-9

In the Apostolic Age slavery prevailed throughout the Roman Empire, and hence in the

early Church this presented special problems. While the background of Paul's instruction here is a state of society in which slavery existed, still the injunctions given here are based upon permanent principles, and apply to the relation between masters and servants — employers and employees — in all times and places.

The first duty of employees is to perform their work honestly and faithfully. To render inefficient, slipshod service is dishonest, just as truly as robbing the employer's cash register is dishonest. Employees ought to do just as good a job for their employer as they would do for themselves.

This should not be done with "eyeservice," that is, merely doing faithful work when under observation, or when there is a probability that poor work will be detected. On the contrary, employees ought to render faithful service as a **matter of conscience**, because that is what God requires of them: "as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." The Christian should do a better job than the person who is not a Christian. He should render more faithful, more efficient service, because he is not thinking merely of his pay check, but of honoring and serving God.

The Christian employee's work, moreover, is to be done "with good will" not with a reluctant, grudging spirit. We have in these verses a statement of the Bible's teaching on the subject of our daily work — what is sometimes called "secular" work, though this term is misleading. According to the Bible, all lawful tasks and employments are to be regarded as a service rendered to God. The Christian may work in a factory or on a farm, he may be a doctor or a business man, but his daily work is not to be regarded as "secular" in the sense that it is unrelated to his devotion to God. Rather, every task is to be performed, primarily, **for God's sake**. Even the labor of a slave for his earthly master, according to Paul's teaching, is in reality a service to Christ, and is to be so regarded (verse 5).

This passage of Ephesians exposes the superficiality of much present-day talk about "full time Christian service." The common idea seems to be that to engage in "full time Christian service" one must be a minister, evangelist, missionary, teacher in a Bible institute, or in some other way devote one's full time to the direct propagation of religion. Young people at conventions and summer conferences and camps go forward to dedicate their lives to "full time Christian service", quite evidently meaning by this that they expect to become ministers, ministers' wives, missionaries, etc. These same young people do not realize that when they publicly professed their faith in Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and were received as communicant members of His Church, they definitely pledged their entire life

to His service. Nor do they realize that every **Christian**, according to the Bible, is under obligation to serve the Lord Jesus Christ "full time", no matter what his daily work may be.

The common use of the phrase "full time Christian service" is not a mere inaccuracy or concession to popular terminology. It is seriously harmful for two reasons: (1) it is the result of a theological error; (2) it leads to further theological error. We may well pause to consider this for a few moments.

1. The expression "full time Christian service" proceeds from a theological error. It results from the notion that a Christian's "ordinary" daily tasks, such as farming or manufacturing, are not really service to Christ. This notion reflects an unscriptural division of life into "secular" and "religious" portions, the "religious" portions alone being regarded as truly service to Christ. This is a serious theological error. It amounts to a denial of the truth that God is sovereign in all areas of human life. It virtually limits the glorifying of God to the one area of religious worship and propaganda. But according to the Bible, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1). All our daily tasks are ways of glorifying God, and therefore they are to be regarded as service to Christ.

2. The expression "full time Christian service" leads to further theological error. Whether people intend it so or not, it tends toward the notion that it is more pleasing to God for a person to be a minister or missionary than for that person to be a farmer or mechanic. This leads further to the notion that if a person is really in earnest about serving Christ, he must dedicate his life to "full time Christian service" in the conventional sense of becoming a minister, missionary, etc. Young people come home from conferences and enthusiastically tell how many came forward to dedicate themselves to "full time Christian service." The common idea clearly is that these particular young people are the ones who really take Christian service seriously.

This in turn is likely to give those young people who do not feel called to the ministry, the mission field, etc., a kind of religious inferiority complex. They are likely to begin to feel that they are second-class Christians, whose commonplace daily tasks lack the glory of being a service to Christ. Hence they are likely to regard their daily tasks as a mere means of earning a living, rather than as something which should directly glorify God. The young man who stays on the farm, and the young woman who becomes a housewife and mother in an "ordinary" Christian home, will tend to feel that their activities are commonplace and unimportant in comparison with the glamorous lives of those dedicated to "full time Christian service." Those who come home from

summer conferences without having gone forward to dedicate their lives to "full time Christian service" are likely to feel a bit guilty, as if they were lacking in devotion to Christ. And this, we should realize, is no trifle, but a serious matter.

Whether we realize it or not, the prevalent usage of the phrase "full time Christian service" is an indication of the influence on us of the narrow and faulty theology of American "Fundamentalism," which fails to reckon with the glory of God in life as a whole. And whether we realize it or not, our continued use of the expression "full time Christian service" in the conventional sense is giving aid to modern secularism, which regards God as limited to the area of religious faith and worship.

The leaders of our young people's work should seriously ponder the theological implications and relationships of this expression "full time Christian service," and consider whether its affinities are with consistent Biblical Christianity (the Reformed Faith, or Calvinism) or with the unbiblical tendency to limit God to the sphere of religious worship and propaganda.

Questions:

1. What social condition formed the back-

ground of Paul's injunctions to masters and servants?

2. In what sense is this passage of the Epistle applicable today?

3. What is "eyeservice", and why is it wrong?

4. Why should a Christian do a better job than a non-Christian?

5. What is the Bible's teaching concerning our daily work?

6. What is meant by "full time Christian service" as this phrase is commonly used?

7. What theological error is involved in the common usage of the phrase "full time Christian service"?

8. To what error does the phrase "full time Christian service" tend to lead?

9. What does the common usage of the phrase "full time Christian service" imply concerning those who spend their lives in "ordinary" occupations such as farming and housekeeping?

10. What are the real theological affinities of the common usage of the phrase "full time Christian service"?

LESSON 30

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

2. The Duty of Christians in Personal and Social Matters. 5:1 to 6:9, continued

(e) Mutual duties of masters and servants. 6:5-9, continued

This passage of Scripture also teaches that employees who do their work honestly and faithfully will receive a reward from the Lord: "Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." Not only are our ordinary daily tasks to be regarded as a service to Christ, but we will be rewarded by Him according to our faithfulness in performing them. How superficial and wrong it is, then, to regard only specifically religious occupations as "full time Christian service"!

The teachings of this passage imply that laziness, dishonesty, neglect and selfish greed in connection with our daily work are sinful and dishonoring to Christ. Some people have the idea that if a person works for a large corporation, dishonesty and inefficiency are not sinful. They think it is not sinful to "pad" their expense accounts with false entries, steal postage stamps or other things belonging to their employer, and neglect duties when it can be done without discovery. But according to Christian principles all

these practices are sinful. The Christian standard of ethics requires complete honesty and faithfulness in our relationships. The fact that we may be working for a corporation instead of an individual does not affect the ethical principles that are involved.

We now come to consider the duties of employers. These may be summed up as reciprocal fair treatment, according to the Golden Rule. "And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in Heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him" (verse 9). "Threatening" is wrong, for it is contrary to the duty of love to one's neighbor. This is addressed by Paul especially to masters, because he wrote in a day of slavery. But the principle applies to employees as well as to employers: threatening is not a legitimate way of gaining our desires. In our day of powerful labor unions, Christian employees in industry should remember that measures which amount to "threatening" are sinful.

Employers are to recognize their responsibility to God, with whom there is no respect of persons. In Paul's day masters were much more likely than servants to act in an irresponsible and arbitrary manner, hence the warning is addressed especially to masters. But in the case of employees as well as of employers the obligation exists to remember our responsibilities to God, with whom there is no

respect of persons. It is to be feared that in the conflicts between labor and management which take place so frequently in the industrial world of the present day, this matter of responsibility to God is very seldom considered at all. Too often selfish greed leads to irresponsible actions in which not only God, but the welfare of the general public are completely disregarded.

Employers must remember that those in their employ are not machines but people, not tools but human beings created in the image of God for the glory of God. All attitudes which regard human beings as mere means to an end are sinful. All demands and requirements which disregard the physical, mental, moral and spiritual welfare of the human personality are sinful. In short, people are to be employed but not exploited. Every contract or arrangement must be calculated to bring real benefits to both parties. All inhuman and selfish attitudes and conduct are wrong, whether on the part of the employers or on the part of employees.

Before leaving this subject, we wish to call attention to the excellent exposition of the Fifth Commandment which is found in the **Westminster Larger Catechism**, Q. 123-133, and also to the discussion of the Eighth Commandment in Q. 140-142.

LESSON 31

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

3. The Christian's Equipment for his Conflict with Sin. 6:10-24

(a) The true source of the Christian's power. 6:10

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might" (verse 10). The Christian is to be strong in the Lord, not "in the flesh." All spiritual power has its source in God, in spite of those who place it in human free will, human good works, human decisions and resolutions, etc. So Paul does not exhort his readers to be strong in themselves, but to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of the Lord's might.

This is often violated today, both by the individual Christian and by the organized church. As suggested in the preceding paragraph, the individual Christian often wrongly places confidence in his own imaginary strength. The theology of human decisions and free will is all around us today, but it is a broken reed. The arm of the flesh will fail. Our real strength and sufficiency lies in the grace and power of God.

It is also often violated by the organized church. Programs, standards of efficiency, up-to-date methods and equipment come to be trusted in as if spiritual power were inherent in them. All of these things may have their legitimate func-

Questions:

1. What does this passage of Scripture teach concerning rewards?
2. What practices and attitudes does this passage show to be sinful?
3. May those who are employed by a large corporation engage in practices which would not be proper if they were employed by an individual?
4. How may the duties of employers be summarized?
5. Why is threatening wrong?
6. Does the warning against threatening apply to employees as well as to employers?
7. To whom are both employers and employees responsible?
8. How is responsibility to God often forgotten today?
9. Why is it wrong for employers to regard their employees as tools or machines?
10. What is meant by "exploiting" people? Why is it wrong?

tions and uses, but when we begin to put trust and confidence in them, we are sinning against God. Let us never forget that the Church was strongest and purest in the apostolic age, when it had no modern methods, no elaborate statistical reports, and no standards of efficiency. Many a church of the present day has become like the church of Laodicea, which flattered itself by saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," when all the while in the Lord's sight that church was "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17).

There is a story about Thomas Aquinas, the great theologian of the Middle Ages. According to the story, Thomas visited the pope at Rome, and was shown the pope's magnificent palace and all his treasures. "Thomas," said the pope, "the day is past when the Church could say, 'Silver and gold have I none!'" To which Thomas replied: "Yes, father, but the day is also past when the Church could say 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk!'"

(b) The Christian's enemies and his spiritual armor. 6:11-17

The Christian's enemies are spiritual enemies, that is, they are personal evil spirits, including the devil; and also, the evil which remains in the Christian's own nature. Therefore carnal or material weapons cannot avail in this conflict. Only spiritual weapons — those provided by the Lord — can be of any real effectiveness.

This passage, like Scripture as a whole, implies the reality, personality and malignant character of Satan and Satan's kingdom. There is a tendency at the present day to allegorize Scripture references to Satan and evil spirits, regarding them as merely a way of describing the sinful tendencies in the human personality. Over against this tendency to explain Satan away as a mere human characteristic, stands the realism of the Bible with regard to Satan and Satan's kingdom. Satan is a real, living person, called "the god of this world," "the father of lies," "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," "the one who deceives the whole world," etc. Satan's kingdom is regarded in Scripture as an **objective realm of evil** — it is just as real and objective as the land of Egypt was in Moses' day. Against this kingdom of evil the Christian's warfare must be waged. Only spiritual equipment can be effective that the Christian "may be able to stand" (verse 13). Unconverted persons and unspiritual Christians commonly make the mistake of regarding material things and human beings as the real enemies in the conflict against evil. The informed, spiritual Christian will know better; he will realize that the foes are spiritual.

Satan makes use of material things and of human beings in his warfare against the Kingdom of God, it is true. We should not shut our eyes to the fact that he often avails himself of such. But at the same time we should always remember that the real enemy is the spiritual kingdom of evil behind the visible scene. Christianity cannot do without an orthodox doctrine about Satan any more than it can do without an orthodox doctrine concerning God.

LESSON 32

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

3. The Christian's Equipment for his Conflict with Sin. 6:10-24, Continued

(b) The Christian's enemies and his spiritual armor. 6:11-17, continued

Here we find the famous catalog of "the whole armor of God." The equipment mentioned is both offensive and defensive. In the enumeration we note the following order: 1. The girdle of Truth. 2. The Breastplate of Righteousness. 3. The Sandals or footwear of the preparation of the gospel of Peace. 4. The Shield of Faith. 5. The Helmet of Salvation. 6. The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

It is significant that **truth** is mentioned first, and **the Word of God** last, indicating that the beginning and end of the Christian's equipment is God's revelation, the Bible. Many people discount the importance of truth today, or they brush it off with a little faint praise, saying, "Doc-

The Communist activities in Europe and America cannot be truly understood without a realization that the power behind them is the Kremlin, the seat of power in Soviet Russia. Back of Communist activities and propaganda lies the malignant power of the Kremlin. And similarly, the facts of evil in personal, social and national life cannot be truly understood without a realization that the power behind them is Satan, the god of this world. The church of the present day needs not only a stronger and clearer faith in God; it also needs a more emphatic and discerning belief in the devil.

Questions:

1. What is the implication of the command to be strong in the Lord?
2. How is this command disregarded by the individual Christian today?
3. How is this command violated by the organized church today?
4. What was wrong with the church of Laodicea?
5. What is meant by saying that the Christian's enemies are spiritual enemies?
6. What does Scripture teach concerning Satan and his kingdom?
7. What mistake do unconverted persons and unspiritual Christians often make concerning the conflict with evil?
8. What must we realize in order truly to understand the facts of evil in personal, social and national life?

trines are important, of course, but. . .". There is no such depreciation of the importance of truth in the Bible. It is represented as being absolutely important.

This listing of "the whole armor of God" is significant in what it omits as well as in what it contains. It says nothing about some things that many people regard as highly useful and important in the Christian warfare. For example, there is nothing said here about man's free will, which many people seem to regard as a fountain-head of spiritual good. Nothing is said about tolerance, which is becoming the watch-word of the false American religion of democracy, implying that all religions are equally true and valid. Nor is anything said about the universal brotherhood of man, another slogan of the prevalent false religion of our day. Nor is anything said about emotional excitement, which some people regard as necessary for true evangelism. Nor is anything said about ecumenical church union, which is today regarded as a chief weapon against evil and an important step toward bringing the King-

dom of God to this world. Instead of such notions as these, the apostle Paul deals in the old familiar concepts of the Word of God, such as truth, faith, righteousness, salvation.

This "whole armor of God" is a unity, to be used in its completeness. No separation of one element from the rest is permissible. We are to use **the whole** armor of God. There are people who violate this, by placing all the emphasis on one or another separate element. For example, they stress righteousness but are not interested in truth. Or they emphasize faith, but are not interested in righteousness. What God has joined together, man must not put asunder. The whole armor of God is a unity and is not to be divided.

Those who question or doubt the effectiveness of the equipment described in this passage should be exhorted to try it and see whether it is effective or not.

(c) The duty and privilege of prayer. 6:18-20

The whole armor of God is to be used **prayerfully**, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (verse 18). Someone has truly remarked, "You cannot do more than pray, until you have prayed."

We should have a Biblical idea of the place and effectiveness of prayer in the Christian life. Many people have wrong ideas about prayer. The common slogan "Prayer changes things" is a false slogan. Prayer certainly does NOT change things. The truth is that GOD changes things in answer to prayer, if and when it is in accord with His purpose to do so. Prayer is not a force. Prayer has no power. When people say "Prayer has more power than dynamite" they are not on Scriptural ground. Prayer has no power at all. Prayer is communication with God; it is not a force or power in itself. Many Christians piously but wrongly use the saying "Prayer changes things," without realizing that this implies a mechanical and impersonal idea of prayer. To compare prayer with electricity, dynamite and atomic energy is foolishness.

But prayer rightly used has an important place in the Christian's life and conflict with evil. Prayer is to be offered "for all saints," but especially for God's ambassadors, the preachers of the Gospel (verse 19), that they make known with boldness the mystery of the Gospel. Paul requests prayer for himself and his work, that utterance may be given unto him; that he may speak boldly as he ought to speak.

Ambassadors for Christ are to speak **boldly**. The truth of the Gospel is not to be toned down or soft-pedalled. There are tendencies to soft-pedal it today, but they are wrong. The **unpopular** and **controverted** truth is to be plainly and boldly spoken. We are not to try to avoid "the offence of the cross" by toning down the message.

This does not imply that the Gospel is to be preached as offensively and antagonistically as possible. Paul never did that; on the contrary, he went as far as he could, short of a compromise of truth, to present the truth to men in a winsome and acceptable manner. But it does imply that the truth is to be proclaimed as **plainly and pointedly** as possible. Fear of giving offence or causing embarrassment is not a legitimate reason for suppression of truth.

We live in a day when plain and pointed preaching of truth, with plain and pointed rejection of the contrary errors, is often avoided. Such truths as the total depravity of the sinner, God's decree of election, the particular and substitutionary atonement of Christ, the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, are often by-passed or stated in a vague and ambiguous manner, so as to avoid giving offence. But this vagueness and evasiveness is sinful. God commands us to preach and teach His truth plainly and pointedly, without fear of man.

To speak the truth plainly and boldly requires prayer. Otherwise the preacher may hinder the cause of truth by "corrupt, blind and indiscreet zeal" (**Larger Catechism, Q. 105**).

Questions:

1. What two types of equipment are found among "the whole armor of God"?
2. What are the first and last items in "the whole armor of God"? What is the significance of this?
3. What are some of the things which are popular in religious circles today, which are not mentioned in Paul's description of "the whole armor of God"?
4. Why is it wrong to emphasize some parts of the whole armor of God and neglect others?
5. How is the whole armor of God to be used?
6. What is wrong with the common slogan, "Prayer changes things"?
7. Why is it incorrect to speak of prayer as a force?
8. Why is prayer especially needed in behalf of preachers of the Gospel?
9. What is meant by speaking the truth boldly? Why is it wrong to soft-pedal unpopular truths, or tone down the message?
10. What are some unpopular truths of the Bible that are often by-passed or stated vaguely at the present day?

LESSON 33

III. Practical Section of the Epistle. 4:1 to 6:24, Continued

3. The Christian's Equipment for his Conflict with Sin. 6:10-24, Continued

(d) Conclusion and benediction. 6:21-24

In this Epistle Paul has only recorded the things which the Holy Spirit indited. Other matters, of purely personal interest, will be told his readers by Tychicus, who was presumably the bearer of the Epistle from Rome to Ephesus. We must of course remember that Paul was in prison in Rome at the time of writing, so the Ephesian church would naturally be somewhat anxious about his condition and circumstances.

Tychicus is described as (a) a beloved brother, and (b) a faithful minister in the Lord. The same things are said of him in Col. 4:7. He is also mentioned in Acts 20:4, Titus 3:12 and 2 Timothy 4:12. It is evident that Tychicus was one of Paul's most competent and reliable helpers.

In the concluding benediction, note that "peace" is invoked only upon "the brethren," that is, upon true Christians, and the invocation of "grace" is limited to those who "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." These are not to be regarded as two distinct classes of people, but as two descriptions of one and the same class of people, namely, genuine Christian believers. What a contrast this forms to the tendency of many Christians of the present day to wish grace and peace to men regardless of their relation to Christ. Plainly Paul did not believe in the popular modern doctrines of the universal Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man. Paul invoked peace and grace only upon the household of faith.

The apostolic benediction is greatly misused at the present day. Ministers are called upon to "pronounce the benediction" in all sort of miscellaneous assemblies — for example, at a high school commencement program. This is highly improper. The benediction is to be pronounced only by a minister of Christ, and only in an assembled congregation of Christ's Church. It is out of place in mixed meetings even if some Christians may happen to be present.

"The ministers of the Gospel are to pronounce publicly the apostolic benediction in some such words as these: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" (**Reformed Presbyterian Testimony, XXIV. 10**).

"The public worship should be concluded with a benediction, pronounced upon the people by the minister. . . . The people should wait quietly and reverently to receive the benediction. It should not become a mere formality for dismissing the congregation. The bestowal of the blessing of

God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, upon the people is a high and holy duty and privilege of the minister of the Gospel" (**The Directory for the Worship of God of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (1945), II. 14, 15**).

It is one of the signs of the deterioration of the church in our day that many ministers of supposedly evangelical denominations do not hesitate to pronounce the apostolic benediction in miscellaneous assemblies which are not congregations of Christ's Church.

This brings us to the end of our study of the Epistle to the Ephesians. In it we have seen the divine history and nature of the true Church of Christ, and the Church's place in God's universe. We have also seen the way of salvation by divine grace apart from human works. We have seen the true spiritual unity of the body of Christ, and the function of spiritual gifts and church offices. We have also studied the practical section of the Epistle and noted the duties of Christian people as members of the Church, as members of the family, and as members of society.

This letter was written nearly two thousand years ago, from a prison in Rome to a church which long ago ceased to exist. Yet its truths and teachings remain unchanged by the lapse of time. It comes to us today as a message from God, and the acceptance and practice of its truths will bring blessing, joy and all good fruits today, just as they did some 1900 years ago in ancient Ephesus. For the real author of the Epistle to the Ephesians was not Paul, but God the Holy Spirit.

Questions:

1. What was Tychicus to tell the readers of the Epistle?
2. How is Tychicus described by Paul?
3. What else can be learned about Tychicus in the New Testament?
4. Upon what class of people does Paul invoke grace and peace?
5. How is the apostolic benediction sometimes misused today?
6. What do the standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church say about the use of the apostolic benediction?
7. Why is it not proper for a minister to "pronounce the benediction" at the close of a high school graduation ceremony?
8. What are some of the great themes that we have studied in this Epistle?
9. Why do the truths and teachings of the Epistle remain unchanged with the lapse of time?
10. Who is the real author of the Epistle to the Ephesians?

The End

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 limits of 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 to the Manager of "Blue Banner Faith and Life."

DESCENT OF THE DOVE, by Charles Williams. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 49502. 1939, pp. 245, paper cover. \$1.95.

With a novel touch, Williams writes a clear and interesting survey of church history, which he rightly regards as the application of Christ's redemption by the Holy Spirit, beginning his account with Pentecost. "The visible beginning of the church is at Pentecost, but that is only a result of its actual beginning — and ending — in heaven." A recording of what happened often leaves the question of why it happened unanswered. This account of what men have done with redemption and what redemption has done with men is worth reading.

— Edward A. Robson

PSALM 139 — A STUDY IN THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD, by Edward J. Young. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W. 1, England. 1965, pp. 117, paper cover. 75 cents.

Dr. Young's study of Psalm 139 is a devotional exposition. The theme of the Psalm is God's omniscience. Dr. Young views all of Scripture as God-breathed, and "not merely the utterances of some devout and pious soul of the Old Testament age" (p. 17). For those who hold the Psalms to be a God-appointed means of praise, and for those who highly regard the praise of God, this study is valuable.

— Edward A. Robson

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS, by F. Foulkes. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. 1963, pp. 182. \$3.00.

For a commentary of this size the introduction is extremely lengthy and not always of highest value. The extended comparison of Ephesians with other New Testament literature is cumbersome and sometimes abstruse.

In the establishing of arguments for the Pauline authorship, however, Mr. Foulkes displays a flair for fairness, accuracy and sound reasoning. The remarks on predestination in Ephesians 1 are theologically vague, as are his attempts to explain the "spiritual wisdom" mentioned in the latter part of the same chapter. In Eph. 2:8 the discussion of whether the words "it is the

gift of God" refer to faith or to salvation is a sketchy one, the author giving no space to the view that "faith" is the antecedent other than a passing mention. References to early Christian hymns (cf. p. 153) are certainly questionable. Likewise the exegesis of 5:19 ("Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs") does not even bother to investigate the possibility of each of these words referring to the divinely inspired Book of Psalms.

Like many English commentators, Foulkes is conservative and moderately sympathetic to Calvinism. This particular work, however, contains little to recommend itself over against older works such as that of Charles Hodge. The introduction alone rates special attention because of its discussion of current critical problems.

— Ronald W. Nickerson

THE LOVELIEST STORY EVER TOLD, by Murdoch Campbell. Obtainable from Free Church Bookroom, 15 N. Bank St., Edinburgh 1, Scotland. 1964, pp. 94, paper cover. 4s. 6d.

This is the story of how Rebekah was found by Abraham's servant and brought to Canaan as the bride of Isaac. The beauty and wonder of this story of God's mysterious providences concerning His covenant people are brought out with skill and faithfulness. The author illustrates his material with many anecdotes and illustrations which help to hold the reader's interest and make the meaning clear. While not actually treating Rebekah as a type of the Church or the Christian, the author takes points in the history of Rebekah as occasions for introducing many parallel lessons of Christian truth. No Christian can read this little book without being impressed by the author's striking lessons and earnest pleas. It is beautifully and winsomely written, and will be spiritually helpful to many.

— J. G. Vos

FIVE PIONEER MISSIONARIES. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern St., London, W. 1, England. 1965, pp. 345, paper cover. 7s 6d or \$1.50.

This book is a symposium by five authors. The pioneer missionaries studied are David Brainerd, William C. Burns, John Eliot, Henry Martyn and John G. Paton. Here is missionary biography at its best, setting forth spiritual giants of the heroic age of modern missionary effort. These

men lacked the facilities provided by modern equipment and transportation, but they went about their mountain-high tasks with unflinching faith and high devotion to the Lord. It is tragic that the stories of these men and others like them are not more widely known among Christians, especially young people, of the present day.

Incidentally, William C. Burns, pioneer Protestant missionary to China, died (in 1868) at Yingkow, Manchuria, where the present reviewer worked for a time in training Chinese young men and women for Christian work. Burns' mortal body was laid to rest in the cemetery connected with the little Anglican church where a few foreign residents worshipped. The place is called Nieu-chwang in the book (p. 165) according to the usage of the time, though the actual name was Yingkow (a treaty port on the Liao River, southern Manchuria). There the body of this intrepid messenger of Christ awaits the resurrection day in a land given over to atheistic Communism, if anything an idolatry even worse than that against which Burns bore witness in his day.

— J. G. Vos

RUTH: THE SATISFIED STRANGER, by Philip Mauro. Reiner Publications, Swengel, Pa., 17880. 1963, pp. 220, paper cover. \$1.95.

Much precious Bible truth is set forth in this devotional study of the Book of Ruth. The lessons are soundly evangelical and spiritually edifying. However, the book is marred by the author's frequent tendency to interpret historical material allegorically or typically, beyond what is warranted by truly Biblical principles of interpretation. For example, Ruth's limiting her gleanings to the fields of Boaz is made a lesson in the Christian's duty of separation from the world; the nearer kinsman, who had the prior obligation under the Levirate law to marry Ruth, is said to represent the Christian's "old man" or original sinful nature, which must be put away. Many of these allegorical interpretations are ingenious, but we must insist that this is not a sound way of handling Scripture. The Book of Ruth is among the historical books of the Old Testament and on its face must be interpreted as historical narrative. As such, it teaches several valuable lessons about God's dealing with His people and their response to Him. There is no evidence in the Bible that this beautiful story is to be interpreted allegorically.

— J. G. Vos

GEORGE WHITEFIELD'S JOURNALS. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern St., London, W. 1, England. 1965, pp. 595. \$5.00.

Whitefield was perhaps the greatest evangelist the Reformed Faith has known in modern times. This fact alone is reason enough for the publication of his writings. His influence on American Presbyterianism was also significant. And the ecumenical spirit which he showed more

than two centuries ago can profitably be studied by those who desire interdenominational fellowship today.

Nearly all of this material has been published before. Included are ten journals which describe his life from infancy to the age of thirty. Thus his final twenty five years are not mentioned in this volume.

These journals were originally published separately and few will desire to read straight through this book. Some sections are of little interest. However, most readers will marvel at the grace God gave to this man. His conversion came at the age of twenty after a lengthy struggle. Almost immediately God began to work through him in the lives of others. He was ordained the following year and crowds gathered to hear him preach. At age twenty two he was preaching nine times each week. "On Sunday mornings, long before day, you might see streets filled with people going to church, with their lanterns in their hands, and hear them conversing about the things of God. Other Lecture Churches near at hand would be filled with persons who could not come where I was preaching." The crowds grew from 1000 to 12,000 to 20,000 and up. "The congregation, I believe, consisted of near 80,000 people. It was, by far, the largest I ever preached to yet." (age 24)

Whitefield was not always victorious. In South Carolina he broke up a New Year's dance and "discoursed with them on the nature of baptism, and the necessity of being born again. . . . (he baptized a child and prayed with the group) . . . but the people were so bent on their pleasure, that notwithstanding all that had been said, after I had gone to bed, I heard their music and dancing. . . . Lord, for Thy mercies' sake. . . suffer them not to go in such a carnal security till they lift up their eyes in torment! Draw them, O draw them from feeding upon such husks."

The book is recommended.

— David R. Armstrong

THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, ed. by Gerhard Kittel, translated by Geoffrey Bromiley. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. Vol. III, 1965, pp. 1104. \$22.50.

This volume contains entries under the Greek initials Theta to Kappa. A Hellenophile (lover of Greek) rejoices oft over this excellent companion, and will find it valuable and highly useful. This particular volume begins with Tamar and ends with the "house pups" (*kunes*) — so it literally starts with women but ends up with the dogs! Notwithstanding this idiosyncrasy, the book contains so much Greek information that a religious "corban" should be set aside for it — especially if your *klesis* ("calling") be that of a *kerux* ("preacher").

— Robert M. More, Jr.

Brief Notices of Recent Books

The following notices are all by the Editor of "Blue Banner Faith and Life." The addresses of the various publishers are given at the end of the notices. All these books are hardbound unless "paperback" is stated in the notice.

THE CLIMAX OF THE AGES: STUDIES IN THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL, by Frederick A. Tatford. Zondervan, 1964, reprint of 1953, pp. 256, paperback. \$1.50. Contains an appendix by Professor F. F. Bruce dealing with the problem of the chronology of Daniel 1:1; also an extensive bibliography of works on Daniel. The author holds that the seventieth "week" of Daniel 9 is still future, an interpretation which this reviewer does not accept. Apart from debatable matters such as that just mentioned, the book contains a great deal of valuable material on the Prophecy of Daniel.

A LIFTING UP FOR THE DOWNCAST, by William Bridge. Banner of Truth, 1961, pp. 287, paperback. 5 shillings or \$1.25. Thirteen spiritually edifying sermons in the Puritan tradition. All the sermons are on Psalms 42:11. They were first preached in London in 1648.

GOD'S ELECTION IN JOHN 3:16, by L. R. Shelton. Old Puritan Press, no date, pp. 24, paperback, no price stated. By treating John 3:16 in the light of many other texts of Scripture, the author brings out the truth of the sovereignty of God in man's salvation.

COMFORT FOR CHRISTIANS, by Arthur W. Pink. Bible Truth Depot, 1963, reprint of 1952, pp. 121, paperback. No price stated. A series of devotional meditations by the late Arthur W. Pink. Edifying and Scriptural.

THE OLD FASHION HOME, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church. 1965, pp. 51, paperback. Free on request. A series of radio addresses originally broadcast from Station WACO, Texas. The author presents Biblical truth about the constitution and responsibilities of the family, and calls Christians to responsibility and obedience to authority in the home.

MAN'S HIGHEST WISDOM, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church. 1965, pp. 12, paperback. Free on request. A radio exposition of James 3:13-18.

THE FOLLY OF FOOLS, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church. 1965, pp. 11, paperback. Free on request. A radio address on Proverbs 14:9. "In reality, fools are those that neglect and refuse to hear the voice of God, and submit to His requirements in repentance and faith."

THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church. 1962, pp.

40, paperback. Free on request. A radio exposition of 2 Thess. 2:7-12. Deals in a very practical way with the subtle and sinister working of Satan in the world.

HELL: GOD'S ETERNAL PUNISHMENT, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church. 1964, pp. 55, paperback. Free on request. A Scriptural exposition and defence of the doctrine of eternal punishment.

CHRIST AND THE HYPOCRITE, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church. 1963, pp. 48, paperback. Free on request. The false assurance of hypocrites exposed to the light of God's Word.

GOD'S REGENERATION, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church. 1963, pp. 40, paperback. Free on request. Exposition of the nature and necessity of the new birth. The need of the sinner for a deep, supernatural change of heart is earnestly stressed.

ESTABLISHED BY THE WORD OF GOD, by Robert E. Coleman. The Seminary Press. 1961, pp. 33, paperback. 35 cents. The sub-title is "Bible Lessons for New Christians". The author is Professor of Evangelism in Asbury Theological Seminary (Kentucky). The material is elementary and very simply presented. There are blanks for the student to fill in with his own answers based on Scripture. The teaching concerning the atonement is Arminian in character (p. 5). The teaching on Assurance (p. 13) is over-simplified and confuses objective certainty of salvation with subjective assurance of salvation.

THE INCOMPARABLE BOOK, by Wilbur M. Smith. Baker Book House. 1961, pp. 64, paperback. 75 cents. A concise basic introduction to the study of the Bible. This will help young and new Christians to gain a grasp of the structure and contents of the Bible.

BASIC INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT, by John R. W. Stott. Eerdmans. 1964, pp. 179, paperback. \$1.45. A useful compact introduction to the New Testament as a whole and in its parts. The author adheres to supernatural, evangelical Christianity in his treatment of the material.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT: A BIBLE STUDY, by Gervas A. Carey. St. Thomas Press. No date, pp. 37, pocket-size paperback. No price stated. A brief but cogent defence of the Scriptural teaching on capital punishment as the God-ordained penalty for murder.

"NEVER PERISH," by J. C. Ryle. Sovereign Grace Union. No date, pp. 48, paperback. 1 shilling. A defence of the Biblical truth of the perseverance of the saints, by the noted evangelical Bishop Ryle of the Church of England of a century ago.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM TODAY, by H. M. Carson. Eerdmans. 1965, pp. 128, paperback, \$1.45. Originally published 1964 by the (British) Inter-Varsity Fellowship. Deals with Roman Catholicism as officially defined by the R. C. Church. The author is aware of the writings of Dr. Hans Kueng and others, who are seeking to bring the Roman Catholic Church to a more Biblical position in various matters. He holds, however, that Romanism has not changed essentially and that its classic errors must still be opposed by the Protestant who is true to the Word of God.

BILLY GRAHAM: THE PASTOR'S DILEMMA, by Erroll Hulse. Maurice Allan Publishers, Ltd. 1966, pp. 96, paperback. 3 shillings sixpence. The author is sincerely sorry to find himself in the position of a critic of Dr. Billy Graham. He expresses respect for Dr. Graham as a person and high admiration for his zeal, sincerity and industry. Nevertheless, he feels constrained by conscience to raise certain serious questions. The "dilemma" mentioned in the title is (a) Whether to co-operate or not, and (b) Whether to keep silent or not. In facing these questions, the author, a Baptist pastor in England, develops his treatment along three lines: 1. Do the results match up to the claims made for them? 2. Is the whole counsel of God preached? 3. Is co-operation with Modernists Scriptural? The author shows that Dr. Graham holds and preaches an Arminian view of human free will, and that he co-operates with and accepts the public sponsorship of men who must be regarded, by the Bible-believing Christian, as enemies of the cross of Christ. The book is written throughout in a spirit of intense earnestness with a note of sadness because loyalty to truth forces the author to call Dr. Graham's message and methods in question.

MISSIONARY PRINCIPLES, by Roland Allen. Eerdmans. 1964, pp. 168, paperback. \$1.45. By the author of the well known "Missionary Methods — St. Paul's or Ours?" and other books on missionary methods and strategy. In the present book the author discusses motivation for missionary work (Biblical and unbiblical), the hope which missionary effort seeks to realize, the means by which the work is to be done, and what will be the fruit of right understanding and right action in all these matters.

ESSAYS ON THE DEATH PENALTY, ed. by T. Robert Ingram. St. Thomas Press. 1963, pp. 138, paperback. \$1.95. A series of seven essays on the general subject of capital punishment as the God-ordained penalty for murder. The entire treatment defends the Biblical teaching on this much-misunderstood subject. The first essay is by the late C. S. Lewis, and deals with "The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment." Throughout the book the common misuse of Scripture in connection with this subject is exposed and the real teaching of the Word emphasized. For example, the common facile citation of Exodus 20:13

("Thou shalt not kill") is shown to be irrelevant to the question of capital punishment, since the context (on the very same page in most Bibles) specifically commands the death penalty: "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall surely be put to death" (Exodus 21:12; cf. verse 14). All the common popular objections to capital punishment are faced and answered and it is shown that opposition to this penalty arises not from real adherence to Biblical truth but from a spurious sentimentalism which disregards the reality of guilt.

THE HOLY WAR, by John Bunyan. Sovereign Grace Union. 1966, reprint of 1682, pp. 311, paperback. 8 shillings sixpence. A less-known but important work by the author of the well-known *Pilgrim's Progress*. Heartily recommended; Bunyan is timeless.

THE PASSION AND DEATH OF CHRIST, by C. H. Spurgeon. Eerdmans. 1965, pp. 152, paperback. \$1.45. A series of sermons on the sufferings and death of our Lord, by the "prince of preachers." The print is rather small for steady reading, but the material, as would be expected from Spurgeon, is excellent.

POEMS FOR MOTHERS, by Phyllis C. Michael. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 61, paperback. \$1.00. Homespun verse by a mother of two sons who lives on a Pennsylvania farm. A strong, wholesome emphasis on Christian family life and the blessings of God seen in the common experiences and tasks of life.

DANGER, SAINTS AT WORK, by Jean Rees. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 121, paperback. \$1.25. With dry wit the author tells the reader How not to run a meeting, How not to pray in public, How not to visit the sick, How not to show films, etc. A great deal of sanctified common sense and wise counsel.

PRAYER IN THE SPACE AGE, by Asa Zadel Hall. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 64, paperback. \$1.00. Practical counsel on private prayer as service to God.

PRAYER: THE CHRISTIAN'S VITAL BREATH, by L.A.T. Van Dooren. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 88, paperback. \$1.00. An earnest exhortation to faithfulness and persistence in private prayer.

SPEAK UP! HANDBOOK FOR THE PUBLIC SPEAKER, by Elna W. Daniel. Zondervan. 1964, pp. 63, paperback. \$1.00. Very practical advice, simply and directly presented, on effective public speaking for Christian workers.

KNOWING GOD'S SECRETS, by John Hunter. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 151, paperback. \$1.50. Sub-title: The Secret of the Effective Christian Life. Deals with problems and difficulties which every Christian must face, such as overcoming temptation, meeting sorrow, conquering fear.

SERMON SUGGESTIONS IN OUTLINE (SERIES I), by R. E. O. White. Eerdmans. 1965, pp. 78, paperback. \$1.45. No minister should preach another man's sermons. A book of this type should therefore not be used as a refuge from the labor of preparing one's own messages. However as an exhibition of specimens showing how portions of Scripture can be handled homiletically it has some value.

GAME AND PARTY IDEAS, by Morry Carlson. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 64, paperback. \$1.50. Many games for socials and parties, both indoors and outdoors. A good source for some new ideas along this line.

HANDBOOK FOR CHRISTIAN WRITERS: A GUIDE TO BETTER COMMUNICATION, by Colena Anderson. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 96, paperback. \$1.95. Practical, usable instruction in the techniques of writing, intended especially for those who prepare Christian education helps, materials for youth programs, and the like.

APOSTLE TO THE ILLITERATES, by David Mason. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 92, illustrated, paperback. 69 cents. A sketch of the life of Frank C. Laubach. We object to the use of the term "apostle" in the title, though perhaps it is used only in the sense of "person sent", not implying apostolic office in the sense of Christ's twelve apostles. On Dr. Laubach, see our brief review of his book **How to Reach One and Win One for Christ**, in our April-June 1966 issue, page 84.

HELLBENT FOR ELECTION, by P. Speshock. Zondervan. 1964, pp. 183, paperback. \$2.95. This novel or rather allegory is said to be reminiscent of the style of C. S. Lewis. It is highly commended by Eugenia Price and others. "The story of a man who is thoroughly convinced the last thing he wants to do is go to heaven" (dust jacket flap). "Hellbent" is the name of the principal character, who for a long time was sure he wanted to go to hell. The book seems to imply that God's decree of election is contingent upon a decision of man's free will (p. 179, p. 183), though perhaps the author did not intend to imply this. Scripture teaches, of course, that God's decree of election is eternal, and prior to everything that occurs in time. It would have been better to title the book "Hellbent for Salvation."

ABANDONED TO CHRIST, by L. E. Maxwell. Eerdmans. 1965, reprint of 1955, pp. 248, paperback. \$2.25. By the well-known principal of Prairie Bible Institute, Alberta, Canada. An earnest call to seriousness, devotion and self-denial in the Christian life.

GO HOME AND TELL, by Bertha Smith. Broadman Press. 1965, pp. 154, paperback. \$1.25. "How answered prayer undergirded an adventurous witness in China." The author spent over 40 years as a missionary in China prior to her

retirement in 1961. She tells many heroic experiences of missionaries and Oriental Christians.

THE CHALLENGE OF WORLD COMMUNISM IN ASIA, by J. R. Saunders. Eerdmans. 1964, pp. 125, paperback. \$1.95. This book has a foreword by Billy Graham. It tells how the Communists took over China, aided by a blundering and misguided policy on the part of the United States. An eye-opener to anyone who may think that Communism in Asia is merely a program of reform and social justice for the common people. The danger to America if Communism wins in Asia is pointed out.

HOW TO ENJOY THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, by Don Mainprize. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 116, paperback. 79 cents. The author aims to point the new, young or discouraged Christian the way to joy and victory. He stresses the need for a life of prayer, confession of sin, and self-discipline. The author is unguarded in saying that the Spirit-filled Christian can reach a state in which there is no known sin in his life (page 52). As long as the Christian knows he is not yet as holy as he will be in heaven, there is "known sin" in his life. This is not the same thing as deliberately cherished or loved sin, of course. Still, to know one has not yet reached absolute moral perfection is to know there is sin in one's life. We believe that the Westminster Confession of Faith (VI. 5) is correct and Scriptural in affirming: "This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be, through Christ, pardoned and mortified, yet both itself and all the motions thereof are truly and properly sin."

THE HUMANITARIAN CURTAIN, by Claude Bunzel. Twentieth Century Evangelism. 1964, pp. 53, paperback. \$1.00. The author sees the United Nations organization as a step on the road to World Government — a world government which would destroy our liberties and make religion a tyrannical ecumenical monopoly. He is especially alarmed by the tendency of "liberal" church denominations to abet these trends.

GO! REVOLUTIONARY NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY: A SOUL-WINNER'S MANUAL FOR PASTORS AND LAYMEN, by Charles W. Kingsley and George Delamarter. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 95, paperback. \$1.50. A picture of Jesus on page 28 with both his arms chained has underneath it the caption "Unchain the Christ." This idea is certainly not compatible with belief in the Scriptural teaching of Christ's sovereignty and present exaltation as Lord of the universe. This book pleads for evangelism and personal witness, and gives much good practical counsel and instruction on this theme. The theological framework in which this is viewed, however, is distinctly Arminian. Salvation and assurance of salvation — the objective state and the subjective consciousness of that state — are confused in typical "Fundamentalist" fashion (pages 80, 81).

LEVELING WITH GOD, by Robert A. Cook. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 94, paperback. \$1.50. The author is former President of Youth for Christ International and is now President of The King's College (Briarcliff Manor, New York). The author pleads for sincerity and reality in the Christian life. This book should open the eyes of young people who think there is no chasm between the claims of Christ and the idolatries of American culture, with its self-indulgence, man-worship and popularity-seeking.

GOD'S SON, by DeVere Ramsay. Eerdmans. 1964, pp. 48, illustrated, paperback. \$1.95. A book for very young children, giving stories about Jesus and many pictures. We do not approve of "pictures of Jesus" in any case, though of course there is a difference between using them as aids to devotion and using them in instructional materials for children. The stories are well presented and the teaching is evangelical.

ALL THE BOOKS AND CHAPTERS OF THE BIBLE, by Herbert Lockyer. Zondervan, 1966, pp. 313. \$4.95. This is an outline for Bible reading. It goes through the entire Bible with a paragraph of brief comments on each and every chapter. Obviously, in a book of this type and scope the reader is bound to meet with interpretations that he cannot fully endorse. On the other hand, here is much edifying material.

ALL THE PARABLES OF THE BIBLE, by Herbert Lockyer. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 381. \$4.95. The author classifies some Biblical material, especially in the Old Testament, as parabolic that is not commonly so regarded. An Introduction discusses the character, uses and misuse of parables. He rightly insists that each parable in Scripture must be taken as a whole and has some one main point or teaching. Trench's classic book on **The Parables of our Lord** and Fairbairn's **Typology of Scripture** could well be used along with the present work.

ALL THE DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE, by Herbert Lockyer. Zondervan. 1964, pp. 310. \$4.95. A Foreword by Professor F. F. Bruce commends this work. The author does not follow the theological schematism that Christians who hold the Reformed Faith are accustomed to. At certain points his order of treatment seems illogical — for example, the "Doctrine of Grace" is treated **after** the doctrines of the Covenants, Predestination, Sin and Salvation. The Covenant of Grace is treated as beginning with the New Testament, though the author affirms that "there is a sense in which this covenant is the culmination of all previous ones." In Arminian fashion the author treats repentance and faith as "conditions" prior to regeneration (page 181) and says that predestination does not mean "God's determining from past ages who should and who should not be saved" (page 153; the author categorically states "Scripture does not teach this view"; but what about Ephesians 1:4?).

MORNING AND EVENING DEVOTIONS FROM THE BIBLE, by Charles H. Spurgeon. Baker. 1964, pp. 783. \$5.95. "Selected passages from the Word of God with running comments." This book is a reprint; the reviewer was not able to ascertain the date of original publication, which was presumably in Spurgeon's lifetime a century or so ago. Reproduced by the photolithoprint process from an earlier edition, the type is rather small for steady reading. Very helpful and edifying.

JOHN'S WONDERFUL GOSPEL: A COMPREHENSIVE EXPOSITION, by Ivor Powell. Zondervan. 1962, pp. 443. \$6.95. A chapter-by-chapter expository study of the Gospel of John. The author is a Baptist, originally from Wales. The doctrine of God's eternal decree of election, so clearly taught in John Chapter 17, is not adequately brought out. On the whole, however, the teaching of this book is sound and it will be a good help in the study of the Gospel of John.

GOD'S PLAN FOR THE FUTURE, by Lehman Strauss. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 198. \$3.95. This book presents a premillennial and dispensational view of Bible prophecy. The seventieth week of Daniel 9 is treated (incorrectly, we believe) as still future. Though there are many things in this book that every Bible-believing Christian will agree with, we are unable to endorse the premillennial-dispensational framework in which the work is cast.

THE LIFE AND PHILOSOPHY OF CHRIST: A STUDY GUIDE, by T. Layton Fraser. Eerdmans. 1965, reprint of 1961, pp. 308. \$3.75. By a Southern Presbyterian professor of Bible in a church college, this book is intended as an introductory college text on the Life of Christ. The treatment is scholarly and true to the Word. A considerable portion of the book consists of blanks in which the student is to fill in answers to questions which are given. As the book is hardbound, these pages cannot well be removed — they are not perforated or otherwise removable. If the teacher is to check on the answers as written by students, it means that the entire book (weighing about a pound and a half) will have to pass back and forth between professor and students. Moreover it would seem likely that second-hand books with all the answers written would be passed down from one class to the next year's, thus embarrassing or frustrating the aim of getting the student to look up his own answers in the Bible. Several very unorthodox books and authors are included in a Bibliography and list of books suggested for further reading (a.g., John Bright, **The Kingdom of God**; George Buttrick, **The Interpreter's Bible**; Werner Keller, **The Bible as History**; Kee and Young, **Understanding the New Testament**).

A SURVEY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: A STUDY GUIDE, by T. Layton Fraser. Eerdmans. 1965, reprint of 1962, pp. 261. \$3.75. The general

plan and structure of this book are similar to those of the same author's work on **The Life and Philosophy of Christ**, on which see review above. Again, we register objection to several unorthodox books in the list of "Suggested Reading" (Page vii). The author treats (briefly) the Inspiration of the Bible, but does not affirm its infallibility or inerrancy, though he does posit its "prophetic accuracy." The treatment of the Creation is excessively brief and incomplete — nothing is said about the theory of organic and human evolution, which college students almost everywhere are being told is proved scientific fast. On the other hand, it is in the author's favor, definitely, that he treats the early chapters of Genesis as **historical** rather than mythical or legendary.

THE AMPLIFIED BIBLE. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 1485. \$9.95. **The Amplified Bible** was first published in three separate volumes, two on the Old Testament and one on the New. It now appears in a single volume, well printed and bound. In this reviewer's judgment, the New Testament part is superior to that on the Old Testament. The Bible reader who has a good concordance and Bible dictionary does not need the kind of help provided by **The Amplified Bible**, while the reader who lacks a good concordance and Bible dictionary, and still feels the need of the kind of help provided by **The Amplified Bible**, is likely to be led astray at many points. The present one-volume edition embodies extensive revision and change from the previous three separate volumes. In spite of its limitations, **The Amplified Bible**, supporting and stressing as it does the divine inspiration and authority of the Bible, will doubtless (especially by its New Testament part) help many to gain a better understanding of God's Word.

ROBERT G. LEE'S SOURCEBOOK OF 500 ILLUSTRATIONS FOR PUBLIC SPEAKERS, MINISTERS, SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS. Zondervan. 1964, pp. 218. \$3.95. No minister or teacher should use this type of book as a steady resource. The best and most effective illustrations come to a man without his looking for them, from wide general reading and contact with life. However, among books of its kind, this is a good one, and provides much fresh illustrative material.

YOUR CHILD FROM BIRTH TO REBIRTH, by Anna B. Mow. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 152. \$2.95. Practical Scriptural counsel for Christian parents. In a chapter entitled "The Rebirth" the author discusses the importance of a decision for Christ. She speaks of "This decision to become a member of the family of God" and says that this includes "joining the church" (p. 139). According to the Covenant theology, which we hold to be Scriptural, the children of Christian parents are members of the Church from birth, hence of course cannot make a decision to "join the church." A decision for Christ and a public profession of faith are cer-

tainly necessary, but must not be simply equated with spiritual rebirth, which may come in infancy (Luke 1:15).

EXPOSITORY SERMONS ON REVELATION: VOLUME 2, by W. A. Criswell. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 184. \$2.95. This volume deals with Revelation chapters 2 and 3 (the letters to the Seven Churches of Asia). The author is a Southern Baptist minister. He treats the seven churches as representing seven successive periods in church history, but adds that all seven exist in every age.

THE ZONDERVAN PASTOR'S ANNUAL FOR 1966, by William R. Austin. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 384. \$3.95. This book provides 52 morning services, 52 evening services, all complete with ready-made sermon outlines; midweek meditations and programs, services for special days, funeral meditations, material for communion services and weddings. Except for rare cases of emergency, we consider the use of a book of this type as unethical and dishonest. Ministers are to mine their own gold from the Word of God, and not take the easy shortcut of preaching ready-made materials prepared by someone else. Used in a strictly limited way as an occasional source of new ideas for presenting truth, this book may serve a purpose.

THE CROSS THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES, by F. J. Huegel. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 192. \$2.95. A series of meditations on the crucifixion of Christ and the blood atonement. Strongly stresses the spiritual implications for the Christian life.

ON THE DAMASCUS ROAD, by Avin Harry Johnston. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 183. \$2.95. A Christian novel with its setting in the time of the Apostle Paul.

THE BIBLE FOR TODAY'S WORLD, by W. A. Criswell. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 128. \$2.50. A series of sermons, by a Southern Baptist pastor, on the Bible as relevant to the present day. The author affirms and defends the verbal inspiration and infallibility of Holy Scripture (p. 49). An excellent book.

GOING STEADY WITH GOD, by Anna B. Mow. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 224. Price not stated. The sub-title is: "Your life with God every day of the year: a practical guidebook for Young People." There is a short item for each day. The months are divided into topics, such as "Your new life", "Your true identity", "Love and marriage", "Put your faith to work." The importance of a personal experience of knowing Jesus Christ is stressed.

NOTHING TO WIN — BUT THE WORLD: MISSIONS AT THE CROSSROAD, by Clay Cooper. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 152. \$2.95. The author is president of World Vision, Incorporated. There is a Foreword by Governor Mark Hatfield of Oregon. A plea to American Christians to take seriously the call of world evangelism.

YOU CAN'T LOSE FOR WINNING, by Jess C. Moody. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 152. \$2.95. The sub-title is: "A Candid Look at Minister, Layman and Church in a Changing World." There is an introduction by Dr. Billy Graham. Not profound, but relevant, and contains much material that Christians need to take seriously.

THE TRAIL, by Sallie Lee Bell. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 146. \$2.50. A Christian novel for young people and young adults, by a well-known author.

HEART OF THE FAITHFUL, by Kathy Eckenbarger. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 245. \$3.50. A novel about a Christian lawyer, his experience of tragedy in his family, and his Christian influence on an unsaved friend.

WORKS COUNT TOO! by Charles N. Pickell. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 120. Price not stated. Subtitle: "Faith in Action in the Life of the Christian." Of course works count, but they do not count toward paying the price of redemption. The author pleads for faithfulness and responsibility in the practical everyday matters of the Christian's life. The so-called New Morality is exposed for what it really is. The increasing secularization of the American Government is deplored as contrary to the scope of Christ's dominion: "Caesar and God are distinct, but Caesar is not beyond the rule and authority of God."

DARE TO LIVE NOW! by Bruce Larson. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 126. \$2.50. An earnest plea for seeking and finding vital reality in the Christian's life.

MAGIC IN MARRIAGE, by James H. Jauncey. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 152. \$2.95. A study of marriage and its problems from a distinctly Biblical and Christian point of view. Much wise, Biblical truth and counsel concerning romance, sex, money and other matters.

GLAD MOMENTS WITH GOD, by Martin P. Simon. Zondervan. 1964, pp. 365. \$3.95. Subtitle: "A Family Book of Daily Devotions." A page a day through the year, with a Scripture reference at the top and devotional comments, followed by prayer suggestions, on the page. A well worked out book, soundly evangelical.

DEEPER LIFE FOR YOU, by C. Wade Freeman. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 95. \$2.50. A plea for practical sanctification and sincere devotion to the Lord, by a Southern Baptist Director of Evangelism (Texas).

WALK WITH GOD BETWEEN SUNDAYS, by Richard C. Halverson. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 160. \$2.95. Brief (1 to 2 pages) meditations on many topics concerned with effective Christian living and witnessing.

EXPOSITORY SERMONS ON REVELATION: VOLUME FOUR, by W. A. Criswell. Zon-

dervan. 1965, pp. 189. \$2.95. Covers Revelation chapters 11 to 17. In these chapters there is bound to be some difference of interpretation, even among the most devout and learned Christians. Thus the author holds that the Radiant Woman of chapter 12 represents Israel rather than the Church. The author regards the Book of Revelation as infallible Scripture and draws from it much instruction and comfort for Christians, even though we cannot agree with all his interpretations.

MOMENTS OF MEDITATION FROM MATTHEW HENRY, compiled by Fredna Bennett. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 365. \$3.95. A book of daily devotions for a year, one page for each day, gleaned from Matthew Henry's well-known commentary on the whole Bible. The Scriptural soundness and practical value are what we would expect from Matthew Henry.

IN THE MIDST, by G. Don Gilmore. Eerdmans. 1962, pp. 100. \$2.50. "How the Power of Christ Transformed the Life of a Church." Unfortunately the author quotes with approval some writers who are far from sound in the faith — Frank C. Laubach, Elton Trueblood, Kierkegaard, Paul Tillich, Rufus Jones, C. H. Dodd, Glenn Clark. The author pleads for spiritual renewal of the Church. The real spiritual renewal of the Church will lead to clear discernment between sound and unsound scholarship and leadership. Should be read with caution and discernment.

POEMS FROM MY HEART, by Phyllis Michael. Zondervan. 1964, pp. 160. \$2.25. Home-spun Christian verse, well printed and illustrated with some good pictures. Not immortal literature but a worthy production, and would make a good gift item.

NOT SOMEHOW, BUT TRIUMPHANTLY! by V. Raymond Edman. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 214. \$3.95. By the former President of Wheaton College, this book is beautifully illustrated with photographs of some of the grandest natural scenery in America. The book contains a collection of meditations on power and effectiveness in the Christian life.

THE FULNESS OF CHRIST, by D. Stuart Briscoe. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 151. \$2.50. Meditations on Christ and the Christian life by an English Christian leader.

THE INEVITABLE ENCOUNTER, by Edward L. R. Elson. Eerdmans. 1962, pp. 68. \$2.25. A book of sermons by the pastor of the National Presbyterian Church, Washington, D. C. The sermons are mostly on personal relationship to Christ. The author enumerates several ways in which men have lost Jesus in the Church — by too much concern about statistics, by too much insistence on legal concepts and the administration of the law of the Church, in budgets and financial campaigns, in liturgy and forms, in bad personal relations with-

in the Church. He seems strangely blind to the fact that Christ can be and is lost in the Church when the denomination, its organs and leadership, promotes error instead of truth — another “gospel” instead of the true, saving Gospel of the Word of God. He says, “Anyone who has lost Jesus can find Him again in His Church” (p. 31). Alas, no one can find Him there if he is not there — if He has been supplanted by the pseudo-Christ of Liberalism or Neo-orthodoxy or present-day Existentialism. In other words, the author seems over-optimistic about the denominational church and fails to realize that churches can actually become apostate, after which Christ is not in them and cannot be found in them. The late Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney once said that the Gospel is being driven out of cathedrals and churches into city missions and Gospel halls — which is even truer today than when he said it.

QUOTABLE ILLUSTRATIONS, by Robert G. Lee. Zondervan. 1962, pp. 152. \$2.50. A book of apt illustrations. Ministers should never depend on this type of book, but may get some usable ideas from it.

THE SAVING LIFE OF CHRIST, by W. Ian Thomas. Zondervan. 1961, pp. 152. \$2.50. By a well-known British evangelist. A plea to Christians to take Christ seriously and step out in faith on His promises.

KEEPING THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS, by Handel H. Brown. Eerdmans. 1965, pp. 167. \$3.50. By a Florida Presbyterian pastor. We do not believe in the religious observance of Christmas, it not being any part of the appointed worship of God in Scripture. The present volume is a series of Christmas meditations or very brief sermons. The teaching is evangelical.

ABOVE OURSELVES: THE ART OF TRUE HAPPINESS, by James H. Jauncey. Zondervan. 1964, pp. 150. \$2.95. Twelve chapters on various situations and problems in the Christian life. Much good counsel is provided.

THE RAINBOW AND THE RESURRECTION, by Johnstone G. Patrick. Zondervan. 1962, pp. 159. \$2.95. Sub-title: “Meditations for Lent, Seven Last Words, Good Friday, and Easter.” The author, born and reared in Scotland, is now pastor of a Presbyterian Church near Pittsburgh. We do not believe in the observance of Lent, Good Friday or Easter, as these are no part of the appointed worship of God in Scripture. The teaching of the present volume is evangelical.

PROGRAMS FOR SPECIAL DAYS, by Leila T. Ammerman. W. A. Wilde Company. 1961, pp. 76. \$2.00. This book presents ideas, suggestions and materials for church school programs for special days. Several days are included that could better be left out of the church school — Valentine Day, Halloween, Washington’s Birthday, for example. Apart from these, there is some good, usable material.

POINTS FOR PARENTS, by Martin P. Simon. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 183. \$2.95. Sub-title: “Stories to help parents understand and guide their children.” With a genial sense of humor the author gives many stories and anecdotes, which pointedly bring home to parents their God-given responsibilities and opportunities.

ON BEING A CHRISTIAN, by Rosalind Rinker. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 160, \$2.50. The author was for several years associated with Eugenia Price, and also for several years worked with the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. The present volume is an earnest plea to know Christ and grow in Him.

DID JESUS RISE FROM THE DEAD? A LAWYER LOOKS AT THE EVIDENCE, by Albert L. Roper. Zondervan. 1965, pp. 54. \$1.95. The author is a Methodist layman and a distinguished member of the bar in his native state of Virginia. He examines the evidence for the resurrection of Christ and shows its strength. An excellent book for church libraries.

AVIS CHRISTIANSEN’S MOST LOVED POEMS, by Avis Christiansen. Zondervan. 1962, pp. 123. \$2.50. Christian verse by one who has been writing it since the age of ten. The book is of course copyrighted, and in addition to this much of the contents is copyrighted separately. This means that the poems cannot be reproduced in any form without special permission.

SELECTED SERMON OUTLINES, compiled by Charles O. Strong. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 120. \$2.50. The author is Professor of Homiletics, Central Baptist College, Arkansas. He disclaims originality and says he has gleaned these outlines from many sources, only part of which are specifically identified. The sermon outlines are for topical and expository sermons for the most part. No minister should simply take these and use them. But some good ideas and suggestions can be obtained from them.

REIGNING WITH CHRIST, by F. J. Huegel. Zondervan. 1963, pp. 88. \$1.95. The Christian’s mystical union with Christ and its implications. The teaching about grace and law (pp. 25-27) is over-simplified and therefore not wholly correct.

HART’S HYMNS, by J. Hart. Sovereign Grace Union. 1965, reprint of 1770, pp. 253, pocket size. 15 shillings sixpence or \$2.05. As we are committed as a matter of principle to the exclusive use of the Biblical Psalms as matter for praise in the public worship of God, we cannot endorse a hymnbook as such. The present reprint of an old book is, in our judgment, superior to many more modern productions. As religious poetry rather than as matter for public praise, the Christian will find much that is edifying here.

DAILY GOSPEL: 365 ONE MINUTE DAILY

DEVOTIONS, by Paul B. Smith. Zondervan, 1963, pp. 365. \$1.95. Each daily devotion contains two or three brief paragraphs. This type of "instant devotion" is not adequate, but may be helpful if used along with a regular program of prayer and Bible reading. The author is minister of The People's Church, Toronto, Canada, and is an enthusiast for evangelism and missions.

PRAYERS FOR EVERYONE, TO MEET EVERY NEED, by Earle H. MacLeod. Zondervan, 1962, pp. 84, pocket size. \$1.95. We do not believe in either ministers or people reading ready-made prayers from a book in their approach to the Throne of Grace. However, reading such a book may help the Christian to avoid a stereotyped monotony in his private or public prayer.

YOU CAN HAVE JOY, by Arnold Prater. Zondervan, 1965, pp. 120. \$2.95. The author is a Methodist pastor. Joy is to be found in knowing Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour and serving Him faithfully as our Lord.

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Correction

By an unfortunate error a paragraph was omitted from Chapter IV of Mr. Rankin's article on **The Lord's Great Controversy** in our January-March 1966 issue. On page 14 of that issue, near the bottom of the first column, after the sentence which ends "incorporated in the very nature and structure of the universe", the following paragraph should be inserted:

Of course sin brought with it the curse and the curse fell not only on the human race as such but also on man's natural environment. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake" (Gen. 3:17-19.) So ensued an additional access of divisionism in nature itself, in the disruption of harmonious relations among all living things.

The Editor wishes to express his regret for this omission. It is suggested that readers insert a note on the margin at the appropriate place in the January-March 1966 issue calling attention to this page in the July-September issue which provides the correction. — Editor.

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:

In Scripture we are enjoined to do our alms in secret, and also to render to Caesar (the civil government) that which is Caesar's. In computation of income tax, a deduction is allowed from

taxable income of the amount given to church, on submission of an official receipt. Is it proper for a Christian who wishes to live in accordance with Scripture to use such a receipt?

Answer:

The injunction of Scripture is found in Matthew 6:1-4. This teaching of our Lord is a warning against having a wrong motive for giving alms: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them . . ." The Pharisees evidently did this, even having a trumpet blown to call public attention to their announcement of almsgiving (verse 2). This was giving alms, not for the glory of God, nor for the benefit of needy people, but for the satisfaction of human pride, to "have glory of men."

That secrecy is not really required concerning contributions to the Church and the cause of the Gospel is shown by Acts 4:36, 27, where Barnabas, having sold a field brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. Evidently there was no effort at secrecy about who gave this money, nor did Barnabas try to contribute it anonymously. Similarly, in the next chapter, Ananias and Sapphira are questioned by Peter as to the amount obtained from their sale of property, and whether they had contributed the entire amount or not. This could scarcely have happened if giving was strictly secret or anonymous. Again, the poor widow who cast in two mites to the treasury, evidently made no secret of it, nor did Jesus treat it as secret.

Thus it seems clear that the Scriptural injunction to do not our alms before men is intended as a warning against ostentation and pride, and is not properly applicable to the income tax situation mentioned by our correspondent. The use of a receipt from a church treasurer, or a canceled bank check, as legal evidence of religious or char-

itable contributions, would be a legitimate practice since it would not proceed from pride or desire for ostentation.

— J. G. Vos

Question:

Was it possible for our Lord Jesus Christ, during the days of His humiliation, to commit sin? I have known this question to be argued in both the affirmative and the negative.

Answer:

The following statement by Dr. Louis Berkhof is a good concise formulation of Biblical truth on this question:

"We ascribe to Christ not only natural, but also moral, integrity or moral perfection, that is sinlessness. This means not merely that Christ could avoid sinning (*potuit non peccare*), and did actually avoid it, but also that it was impossible for Him to sin (*non potuit peccare*) because of the essential bond between the human and the divine natures. The sinlessness of Christ has been denied . . . but the Bible clearly testifies to it in the following passages: Luke 1:35; John 8:46; 14:30; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 9:14; I Pet. 2:22; I John 3:5." (*Systematic Theology*, One Volume Edition, page 318).

Note that Dr. Berkhof explicitly denies that it was possible for Christ to sin. This leaves us with the mystery, How could He be tempted, really, if it was actually impossible for Him to sin? We know of no fully satisfactory solution of this problem. We can only accept the teaching of the Bible in simple faith.

— J. G. Vos

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In writing for free copies of reprints, readers living in the U.S.A. should send a 5 cent stamp for postage. Canadian and overseas readers need not send stamps.

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A Christian Introduction to Religions of the World. 78-page paperback book by the Editor.

Published by Baker Book House, 1019 Wealthy St., S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, U.S.A. In Canada, available from: G.R. Welch Company, Ltd., Toronto. This material was published as a series of lessons in the July through Septem-

ber issues of 1964. Price \$1.50 per copy. Please do not send orders for this book to the Manager of this magazine. We do not have copies for sale. Order from Baker Book House or G. R. Welch Company, or through your local book dealer.

Acknowledgment and Announcements

The Management of this magazine wishes to acknowledge, with hearty thanks, the following contributions to the cost of publishing the magazine which have been received since our last issue went to press:

March, 1966: No. 1622, \$10.00.

April, 1966: No. 1623, \$5.00. No. 1624, \$25.00. No. 1625, \$5.00.

May, 1966: No. 1626, \$5.00. No. 1627, \$4.50. No. 1628, \$5.00. No. 1629, \$50.00. No. 1630, \$1.00. No. 1631, \$5.00. No. 1632, \$5.00.

June, 1966: No. 1633, \$10.00. No. 1634, \$1.00. No. 1635, \$10.00. No. 1636, \$7.30. No. 1637, \$5.00.

The generous contributions from friends which are listed above indicate serious concern on the part of the donors that **Blue Banner Faith and Life** shall continue publication. These gifts are deeply appreciated. Less than half the money needed is received from subscriptions and sales of back issues. For the rest, we are mostly dependent on contributions. You can help the world-wide ministry of this magazine by contributing as the Lord enables you.

Circulation of this Issue

1400 copies of this issue were printed. Of these 1359 were immediately circulated to subscribers and readers, leaving 41 copies which can be used as samples and to fill future orders for back issues. The distribution by countries was as follows:

U.S.A., 835. Canada, 137. Scotland, 76. Australia, 59. England, 56. Northern Ireland, 34. Japan, 31. South Africa, 23. Cyprus, 20. Ceylon, 14. New Zealand, 9. India, 6. Korea, 6. Taiwan (Formosa, Free China), 6. Eire, 5. Lebanon, 4. Wales, 4. Three copies each to: Netherlands, Syria, Greece, Hong Kong, Peru, Mexico. Two copies each to: Ethiopia, Indonesia, Sweden. One copy each to: France, United Arab Republic (Egypt), Switzerland, Southern Rhodesia, Chile, Brazil, Ghana, Costa Rica, Somali Republic, Panama Canal Zone. Total circulation 1359. Number outside U.S.A., 524. Number of countries reached, 36.

Important Announcement to Subscribers in Britain and Ireland

The Rev. Adam Loughridge, B. A., who has served for many years as agent of this magazine for Britain and Ireland, expects to be in the U.S.A. for a period of time and will therefore not be able to handle matters concerning "Blue Banner Faith and Life." The Rev. Hugh Wright, B.A., has very kindly agreed to act as deputy agent for the magazine during Mr. Loughridge's absence. Therefore until further notice readers in Britain and Ireland should address all subscriptions and correspondence concerning this magazine to: The Rev. Hugh Wright, B.A., 12, Knutsford Drive, Belfast 14, Northern Ireland.

J. G. Vos, Editor and Manager
3408 Seventh Avenue
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Somebody

Somebody did a golden deed;
Somebody proved a friend in need;
Somebody sang a beautiful song;
Somebody smiled the whole day long;
Somebody thought "'Tis sweet to live";
Somebody said "I'm glad to give";
Somebody fought a valiant fight;
Somebody lived to shield the right;
Was that "somebody" you?

(Author unknown)

Mock On, Mock On

By William Blake

Mock on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau;
Mock on, mock on; 'tis all in vain!
You throw the sand against the wind,
And the wind blows it back again.
And every sand becomes a gem
Reflected in the beams divine;
Blown back they blind the mocking eye,
But still in Israel's paths they shine.
The Atoms of Democritus
And Newton's Particles of Light
Are sands upon the Red Sea shore,
Where Israel's tents do shine so bright.

John Calvin on Church Music

"To sing the praises of God upon the harp and psaltery 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 dis sever 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.

PSALM 30

SAINTS' PRAISE. 7, 6, 7, 6. D.

J. K. Robb

1. O . Lord, by Thee de-liv-ered, I'll Thee with songs ex-tol; My foes Thou hast not
 suf-fered To glo - ry o'er my fall. O Lord my God, I sought Thee, And
 Thou didst heal and save; Thou, Lord, from death didst ran-som, And keep me from the grave.

2. His holy name remember;
 Ye saints, Jehovah praise;
 His anger lasts a moment,
 His favor all our days.
 For sorrow, like a pilgrim,
 May tarry for the night;
 But joy the heart will gladden
 When dawns the morning light.

3. In prosp'rous days I boasted,
 Unmoved I shall remain;
 For, Lord, Thou by Thy favor
 My mountain didst maintain.
 I soon was sorely troubled,
 For Thou didst hide Thy face;
 I cried to Thee, Jehovah;
 I sought Jehovah's grace.

4. What can my blood avail Thee,
 When in the grave I dwell?
 Shall dust repeat Thy praises?
 Thy truth and glory tell?
 O Lord, on me have mercy,
 And my petition hear;
 That Thou mayst be my helper,
 In mercy, Lord, appear.

5. And now to joyous dancing
 My sorrow Thou hast turned,
 And girded me with gladness,
 Who had in sackcloth mourned;
 That unto Thee my glory
 May ceaseless praise accord.
 Forever will I render
 Thanksgiving to the Lord.

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NUMBER 4

Genesis One — Is it Historical?	145
The Lord's Great Controversy	147
Religious Terms Defined	151
The End of the Ages: Studies in The Last Things	153
Prophecy, Time and Eternity	179
Reviews of Religious Books	183
Blue Banner Question Box	189

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The Beauty of Christ

By Esther Belle Heins

"He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him" — Isaiah 53:2.

We read, "He hath no form nor comeliness —"
What was this precious quality, unseen,
That His disciples knew, that gave access
To peace through Him, a humble Nazarene?
What drew men to their death, if need there be
That they might spread the glory of His Word?
What set its mark on time — changed history
When Jesus spoke and hearts were moved that heard?

We read, "He hath no form nor comeliness"
No beauty from which time exacts a toll
Nor that which lacks the Father's tenderness,
But lasting, glowing beauty of the Soul!
And Jesus, being God, thought it not loss
To leave His brand of beauty on the cross.

God Is Hospitable

By Esther Belle Heins

What hospitality our Lord gives man!
From sun-bleached highways and the noonday heat
His trees extend their leafy arms to span
A refuge for the worn, a calm retreat.
His forests welcome those bowed down with care,
Their trails are fragrant, shadowed deep with pine;
The little woodland byways challenge prayer,
Green temples built by God become a shrine.

Our Saviour, who is God's beloved Son,
Said, "Come to me, and I will give you rest."
His arms are wide, and God and He are One;
His valleys rich and deep that all be blest.
O love divine, that wrought Salvation's Plan!
What hospitality is offered man!

What Is the Answer?

By Edna Janes Kayser

Against the threat of fear and war
A million stars still shine above,
The sunset flares in blazing gold
As spring retells of God and love.
While maddened men direct false paths
And discord rages everywhere,
God holds the world within His hand
No thing can go beyond His care.

Opponents strike anew each day,
Leave devastation where they can,
As ancient landmarks slip away
And chaos grips the mind of man.
The earthquakes shake the world like toys
But God still sits upon His throne,
And perfect peace shall never be
Until earth's kingdoms are His own!
(Revelation 11:15)

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.
— William Blake

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Genesis One - IS IT HISTORICAL?

by Edward J. Young, Ph. D.

Professor of Old Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary

It is to be expected that earnest Christians would devote much time at the present day to a study of the first chapter of Genesis. We are living in a time when "science" has much to say about our earth and the solar system. It is a time, so we are told, in which old opinions and traditions will have to go by the board in order to make room for the newer knowledge. We know much now that we did not know hundreds of years ago, and consequently we must subject the first chapter of Genesis to an examination in the light of what "science" has taught us.

As Christians we should of course constantly study the Scriptures, and we should examine carefully every claim that is made against them. And certainly many claims are being made against them today. In this modern attack upon the supernatural — for any attack upon the Bible is in reality an attack upon the supernatural — the first chapter of Genesis comes in for much discussion. Many different voices are raised, telling us what we can and what we cannot believe about the first chapter of the Bible. In the midst of such strident claims and charges, it will be well to look briefly at the chapter and ask what the chapter itself has to say.

MYTHOLOGICAL LANGUAGE

There are those who have no hesitation in asserting that the first chapter of the Bible is myth or that it contains many mythological expressions. Now, in these days, when anyone uses the word "myth" we must ask just what he means by the term. Many of us can remember when in grammar school we read the fascinating myths of the ancient Greeks, stories that we at least did not believe, but which were perfectly entertaining and far less harmful than much that is peddled to our young people under the label of "literature" today. These old myths were interesting stories, and we enjoyed them.

When, however, it is sometimes said that the first chapter of Genesis is mythological it is not meant that the chapter is simply an interesting story that is not true. What is meant, apparently, is that in the first chapter of the Bible we have remnants of old myths, particularly myths that were found among the Babylonians and Sumerians. To take but one example, in the second

verse of the Bible, it is sometimes asserted, there is reflection upon an old battle against the dragon and against the chaotic powers of evil. If this is so, we may ask why such things are found in the Bible.

The answer that is sometimes given is about as follows. The Hebrews, we are told, could not speak of the creation in straightforward narrative prose. Instead they had to describe it in terms of myth, and for that reason we find reflections upon these myths in the Bible. The language has a mythological coloring, and so is not to be interpreted as straightforward history.

Today much is being written on this subject, and it is a matter which can be handled only by those who are competent in the ancient Hebrew and Babylonian languages. The present writer is convinced that there are no reflections upon ancient myths in the first chapter of the Bible, and he has sought to present his evidence for this position elsewhere.* (*Cf "The Interpretation of Genesis 1:2," Westminster Theological Journal, Vol. XXIII, May 1961, pp. 151-178.) One may well ask why the Hebrews could not recount the story of creation in straightforward narrative prose. Is the doctrine of creation really more mysterious than the doctrine of the Person of Christ or of the Atonement? God could have revealed the truth of creation in narrative prose, and as a matter of fact, that is precisely what He did do.

Whether we regard the first chapter as mythological or not, it is held often that the first chapter is not historical. This has been asserted even by some of Reformed persuasion, and in the opinion of the present writer, that is a tragedy. Before we ask whether the first chapter of the Bible is historical or not, we must determine what we mean by the word "history". There is no point in questioning whether Genesis is or is not historical until we have defined our terms. Oftentimes today the word "historical" is restricted to that which we can learn through our senses. We can go to Palestine, for example, and dig in the soil and as a result of our excavations come to the conclusion that Tell el Ful (Gibeah of Saul) actually existed. We have certain checks which will support our conclusions. Therefore, we conclude, that Gibeah was a historical city.

And, inasmuch as we have the excavations before our eyes, we are willing to regard the Scriptural statements which speak of Gibeah as historical. Or, because we think that in a certain sense we can control the sources, we are willing to acknowledge that there is historical core to the Exodus account of the departure of the people from the land of Egypt.

In the Bible, however, there are certain matters which we cannot check. What about the resurrection of Christ from the dead? Our scientific investigation is rather helpless in the face of this mighty miracle, and hence, we may be tempted to deny the possibility of miracle and to find an escape from difficulty by saying that the resurrection belongs to the realm of *Geschichte* instead of that of plain history. Now, it is perfectly obvious that no man was present at the creation, and so the first chapter of Genesis is not an eyewitness account. It is not a report of what happened, given to us by someone who through being present on the scene had firsthand knowledge of what took place. Is it therefore not historical?

For our part, we feel that it is necessary to break with this all too prevalent interpretation of the world "history." We prefer to designate as historical anything that actually did take place. Thus, we would call the exodus from Egypt historical, because we believe that, just as the Bible says (not as Noth, Von Rad and others say), there was an exodus from Egypt. And we regard the resurrection of Christ as historical, for we believe that on the third day the body of the Lord Jesus emerged from the tomb. A mighty miracle was performed, and we believe that it occurred just as Scripture says that it did. The reason why we believe in the historicity of the resurrection is simply that the Bible says Christ arose. We affirm also that the first chapter of Genesis is historical, for it relates those things which actually took place. But how could man know that? Certainly man could not be on hand to see what was going on. How then can we possibly be sure that this first chapter of the Bible tells us what did take place? We can be sure of that because this first chapter of the Bible is the Word of God. It is a revelation from Him; it is part of those sacred Scriptures which are God-breathed (II Timothy 2:15). Of course no man was present to report the creation, but why may not the God of truth have revealed the truth of creation to man. "He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel" (Psalm 103:7).

We are face to face with the old question of revelation. He who believes that the God of Scripture has given to man a special revelation will have no difficulty in believing that God revealed to man the content of the first chapter of the Bible. Those who think that God cannot reveal truth by means of propositional statements are simply unbiblical in their attitude. If we

accept the Bible as the Word of God we shall have no hesitation in asserting that the historical may include what God has revealed to man. And so it is with the first chapter of Genesis.

GENESIS ONE IS HISTORICAL

As soon as we begin a careful study of the book of Genesis we realize that the first chapter is historical. The book of Genesis is divided into two major parts. The first of these comprises 1:1-2:3 and the second 2:4-50:26. That the second part purports to be historical is without question. It may be designated "The Generations," for each section thereof is labeled "Generations". Many times we read "These are the generations of . . ." Thus, this section is genealogical, and its main purpose and design is to trace the line of the chosen people from its earliest beginnings until the descent into Egypt where the people are to grow into a mighty and powerful people. Whatever else may be said about Genesis, there is no question but that it purports to relate an account of people who actually lived and of events which really happened. Genesis is a historical book, if ever there was one.

Now, the first section serves as an introduction to the second. We may label it "The Creation." Indeed, Genesis is unique in that it is the only document coming from the ancient world that has a genuine account of Creation. It is true that there are so-called creation accounts which come from different lands, but in reality these are not creation accounts at all. None of them has a clear-cut statement of genuine creation such as is found in Genesis. The *Enuma elish* (so-called Babylonian account) is really not a creation account at all. Whatever references there may be to creation are at best of a secondary character. Very different, however, is the first chapter of Genesis. Here there is a straightforward statement of the fact of absolute creation. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." How thankful to God we should be for those words! How good he is to have given us this simple and direct statement about the origin of all things! And how utterly unlike this statement are the gross polytheism and vagueness that characterize the old world accounts of the beginning of all things.

Now, when we examine this first chapter of Genesis we make the discovery that it bears an integral relationship to the second part of the book. This is not the place to point out that fact in detail but one or two observations will be in place. We may note that the constant emphasis in the first chapter upon everything being very good is practically meaningless, unless taken in connection with what follows. Why this unusual stress upon everything being good unless to prepare us for the account which relates how everything became very bad. Here is clear evidence that the first chapter of Genesis bears an integral

relationship to what follows. One who reads the second chapter of Genesis carefully will note also how it presupposes what has already been related in the first chapter. In itself it is incomplete. Then too, the appearance of the term LORD God in the second chapter, as has so often been pointed out, is intended to show that the LORD is the God, mentioned so frequently in the first chapter. This line of evidence, of course, could be multiplied. It leads, however, to a rather striking conclusion.

If the second part of the book of Genesis is historical, relating the genealogy of the chosen people, and if the first part of the book stands in integral relationship to the second part, then it follows that the first part of the book must also be historical, relating those things which actually took place. How could the first part be legendary, for example, treating of things that did not occur, whereas the second part is historical, and these two parts are bound up together. Conceivably, such a thing might be possible in the abstract, but when we consider the nature of the interlinking evidence, we realize that just as the second part of Genesis relates those things which really occurred,

so also does the first part. And what proves that we are right in this conclusion is the fact that the New Testament refers to events mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis as actually having taken place.

How wondrous is this first chapter of the Bible! How we should read it with humility of heart. Here we do not have the thoughts of the Hebrews. Their own thoughts on the beginnings of things were in themselves probably no better than those of the Babylonians. Here, however, we have precious Word of God, the very truth which almighty God, in his infinite wisdom, has seen fit to reveal unto us. Let us read this remarkable and unique chapter over and over again with hearts filled with love and gratitude toward him who in the beginning did create the heaven and the earth.

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The Lord's Great Controversy

By the Rev. John C. Rankin

VI. The Grace of God

The material considered in the chapter preceding represents one side of the divine contention. There is, however, another and a greater. We may describe it for the present as that attitude and spirit in God in which He appears as the friend of sinners, the Saviour of sinner-men.

In the plan of God for the salvation of men, sinners are called, regenerated, converted and saved by Christ and gathered into the kingdom. Those who otherwise would be, and who one time were, enemies are transformed into friends of God, servants and friends of Jesus Christ.

The penitent and repentant believer knows that "there is none righteous" except Christ, that "Salvation is of the Lord," and that the only way of salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ. He knows what the Bible means when it says that "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

The striking contrast between the two modes of the divine contention to which we refer is beautifully expressed in "the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." In this **modus contenderi** of the Lord the rocky steeps become a pleasant and a fruitful plain, and God Himself

brings forth the inscription for it "with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it" (Zech. 4:6, 7).

God in His grace — that is the Lord's great way of working, and we may add that His main dependence is upon it. This is His way, but let no one say that there is no contention in it, for it constitutes the very heart and soul of God's warfare against Satan and sin. This, par excellence, is the divine contention. It is incomparably God's great **modus contenderi**.

All progress and extension of God's kingdom represents advance in the conquest of the hearts of men for Christ, His cause and kingdom and His Church. It is even comparable to the invasion and conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, except that it is of quite another and a different kind, is carried out in an altogether different spirit and on a global rather than a provincial scale. It is the supreme manifestation of God's own worldwide, age-long conflict in His warfare for the souls of men.

1

The Theology of Grace

"The law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). The

message of God's grace is characterized by the fulness of the revelation of His truth. And theology is only the interpretation, organization and re-expression of the Bible teaching and God's great self-revelation.

For one thing, we learn that God is sovereign in His grace. "O come let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand" (Psalm 95:7).

When God redeems a sinner that sinner is redeemed. When He applies His grand redemption, the one who was lost is found, and he who was dead in sin is now alive unto God. God's will for our salvation is accomplished, for God is sovereign in His love. Not all the machinations of Satan, the enticements of sin and the false teachings and influence of brilliant and learned, it may be, but erring leaders, and unbelieving friends can change the believer's basic position in relation to Christ.

For salvation is first of all an unconditional election to the grace into which we are received. Furthermore, the cross was Christ's own particular, definite and limited redemption. As Paul says: "the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). And repeatedly we are told that Christ loved us and gave Himself for us, "loved the church and gave himself for it," "loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Eph. 5:2, 25. Rev. 1:5).

We are further taught that the grace of God is irresistible and wholly efficacious in its working in the elect and issues in the eternal security of them that believe who really have no choice except to persevere.

Christ "died for us." He "purchased the church with his own blood." "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." "Our sufficiency is of God" (1 Thess. 5:10. Acts 20:28. 2 Tim. 2:19. 2 Cor. 3:5). Any way we look at it, the salvation of God is every whit actual, and not at all potential. For it was God manifest in the flesh who suffered for us in His flesh and it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

2

Riches of Grace

Paul in Ephesians speaks of God's work of salvation as being "to the praise of the glory of his grace" and further says that "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. . . . And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" and goes on to declare the ultimate objective and final goal of

His salvation of us by His grace, "That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness and love toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:6; 2:4-7).

The grace of God to sinners is of course completely and perfectly Christ-centered. The focal point of all that it contains is nothing other than the person, life and work of Jesus Christ. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9). The very Word of God itself is inadequate to declare the praises of the wonder and glory of His grace. Eternity itself will not suffice.

And yet we must do our best and try to gather up something of the ripe results of the believer's testimony to the grace of God toward us sinners for Jesus' sake.

One form of the expression of it which comes back across the years is the following:

Jesus I am resting, resting
 In the joy of what thou art;
 I am finding out the greatness
 of thy loving heart.
 O how great thy loving kindness,
 Vaster, broader than the sea;
 O how marvelous thy goodness
 Lavished all on me.
 Simply trusting thee, Lord Jesus
 I behold thee as thou art
 And thy love, so pure and changeless,
 Satisfies my heart:
 Satisfies its deepest longings
 Meets, supplies its every need,
 Compasseth me round with blessings —
 Thine is love indeed.

(Author unknown)

Witness the many songs of praise to Christ — songs which irrespective of any question as to the propriety of their use in the public worship of God certainly redound to the glory and praise of Jesus Christ.

Think of the many hundreds and thousands of songs that have been written and sung to the Redeemer's praise by those who have known Him and known "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." For example the songs represented by the following first lines:

"O could I speak the matchless worth"
 "Jesus, the very thought of thee"
 "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds"
 "The King of love my shepherd is".

One of the many faithful ministers of Christ, one time pastor of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Waterloo, Iowa, now gone to his reward, was Oscar Holkeboer. Reflecting on the phrase, "so great salvation," of Hebrews 2:3, "How

shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" he said, "To measure the greatness of this salvation is to measure the greatness of the love of God. It is great because it is the achievement of a great Saviour. It is great because it entailed a great sacrifice — it was purchased at infinite cost. It is great because it embraces all who believe on Christ through all the world and through all the history of mankind. It is great because Jesus saves to the uttermost heights of glory and from the lowest depths of despair. It is great because it is a free gift of grace — it is not merited and cannot be earned by the sinner, nor need it be. It is great because of the incomparable blessings it brings, and because of the unutterable woe from which it provides escape" (*The Presbyterian Guardian*, August, 1949).

3

The Meaning of Grace

Having come so far let us now address ourselves more fully to the question, What is Grace?

Two things are at once to be said. Grace is God's love for sinner-men, His wholly free and undeserving and loving favor to those who are not only unworthy of His mercy but deserving only of His wrath and curse to all eternity. Such is man's sin and ill-desert, but God has found a way whereby He may "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). Which brings us to the second thing. God's way of salvation in the bestowment of His grace is what is generally known as "the atonement." The cross of Christ is pivotal and central in God's grace.

The meaning of grace is inseparably connected with the meaning of sin. The knowledge of this grace of God is bound up with the apprehension of the awfulness of sin as God sees it. Sin is that to which salvation is directed and for which it is provided as the full and all-sufficient remedy. We must know the answer to the question, What is sin?, before we can truly apprehend the answer to the question, What is grace?

The germ of an all-out rejection of God dwells in every sin. God says: "Thou shalt not." But we do what God says we shall not do and, so doing, what do we do? Is it not in effect to say, Who is God? What does God and His law amount to? What difference does it make what He says? In other words, is it not an expression of thorough-going disbelief and utter indifference to and defiance of the whole idea of God and those things that are His?

(1) The Problem of Evil

The problem of evil is, as it has ever been, the great problem affecting the case as between God and men, both on the level of ordinary individual thinking and experience and on the higher levels of philosophic thought. But the teaching of

God's Word concerning sin and its consequences effectively disposes of this. Those who know the facts concerning sin have no difficulty taking all in the way of evil, including sin itself as its own punishment, in their stride.

Heartrending, utterly distressing, things happen all around us in this present world. Cars and trains collide or leave the road, airplanes crash; homes, hotels and orphanages burn and their occupants in them. Young and old are taken by accident, disease and death and "take off" not into "outer space" but into eternity itself. Millions perish in storm and flood and by war and starvation: all these and many other evils, all in the just judgments visited upon us by our King and Judge. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7f).

And beyond God's judgments on us here — Dives, tormented in the flame, begs for just a drop of water to cool his tongue, and beyond that the impenitent hear the words that seal their eternal destiny (Luke 16:19-31. Matt. 25:41-43). Still the world stands, our lives move on to their appointed end, God's will in the course of history is realized, and "the wrath of God is revealed" (Rom. 1:18). "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God" (Rom. 11:22).

The believer knows that there is no valid objection to any and all evil visited upon the sinner either here or hereafter and that evil, rightly understood, presents no obstacle to true and living faith. For sin is an infinite offense against the Infinite; but "where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Christ "was made sin for us, who knew no sin" and suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

Believers remember that "there is none righteous, no not one," "salvation is of the Lord" and "neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

"Sin has been attended with two ruinous results. It has exposed the race to condemnation and it has debased its nature. Salvation is therefore a twofold deliverance" (*Summary of Christian Doctrine*, by Francis L. Patton, page 73. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1925). By reason of sin we are compelled to carry the burden of guilt — we who are "dead in sin" and who are "utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil" (*Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapter VI, Section 4).

Sin, therefore, must be forgiven, guilt removed and the sinner raised up in the resurrection power and life of the risen Christ. The cross of Christ is God's answer to the **problem of sin** in every way; His great remedy for the guilt of sin as also the heart of His deliverance from the power of sin.

(2) The Divine Motivation

But it is "the **grace** of God that **bringeth** salvation." In and through and with and behind it all is that attitude and spirit in God of His mercy and grace, His kindness and love from which salvation springs. Grace is God's motivation in His great work of redemption. It is that blessed disposition in God in which and by virtue of which He appears in the character of the Saviour-Friend and Lord of sinner-men.

In this character God appears as "just" and yet also at the same time "the justifier of the ungodly" (Rom. 4:5). It was "while we were yet sinners," and "when we were yet without strength" that "in due time, Christ died for us." "Justified by his blood we shall be saved from wrath through him." It was as sinners lost in sin and guilt, renegades and outlaws against the rule of God or, as Paul says, "when we were enemies" that "we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:1-11).

The inexorable demands of the perfect law and justice of God lay heavily upon us leaving us helpless, and crushing out our very life. But the grace of God changes everything as between ourselves and God. The demands of law and justice are fully satisfied in the suffering-obedience of our perfect Substitute. The love of God was fully manifested in the divine substitution accomplished in the finished work of Calvary.

(3) A Core of Hardness

But the grace of God is not the maudlin affection represented by the modernistic doctrine of the universal Fatherhood of God. The love of God is kind and softens the heart. But it is not soft, at least not as soft as its modern advocates would have us believe. Many today deify love, and worship and bow down to the great god "Love," in rejection of the Bible teaching of the God of both justice and love.

But God, the only living and real God, is not the all-loving and non-holy-and-righteous God of modern unbelief and unrighteousness. God is not a doting parent, an indulgent "Father-god," whose Fatherhood is characterized by a weak affection and a grandfatherly fondness.

The love of God is conditioned by a core of hardness, an element of firmness which we need to recognize and reckon with. This basic element is His perfect righteousness and justice in it. The love of God is sovereign, irresistible and efficacious. And it is love indeed, but it is God's — the love of the high, the holy and the just. It is righteous through and through. Hence it is not as so many of today would like to think, something utterly soft and yielding and complaisant.

(4) Grace and Sin

So the prior consideration in connection with

the question, What is Grace? is the question, What is sin? The Bible says it is "the transgression of the law" and the Westminster Shorter Catechism defines it as "Any want of conformity or transgression of the law of God." In connection with the question of what sin is there is also the question of what it deserves. The Bible says that it deserves "the wrath of God," and the Catechism: "Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse both in this life and that which is to come."

However, there is more to be said about what sin is and what it deserves, and that is that in its inner nature in all its stark reality it is **an infinite offence against the Infinite**. The enormity of sin in its ultimate significance arises not from the nature of the sinner so much as it does from the nature of Him against whom it is committed. We sin and we are finite. But God is infinite, and consequently every sin partakes of something of the infiniteness of Him against whom we sin.

We need to consider how and to what extent sin offends our Maker. Why is sin the utterly mortal offense that it is? Because every sin in effect negates the Deity. It in effect mocks and is a mockery of His very existence, which He would not have at all if sin could have its way. Of course it contravenes the absolute authority of God and in particular His right to rule and govern all the thought and life of His moral creation. But it goes beyond that, and the deeper meaning of all sin is **the assertion that God is not**.

Hence in effect it says to God: "Be gone; you are just a trumped-up bugaboo; and, for all I or anyone can know, you are simply non-existent." This being the case it should not be too hard to see why it is that in the just judgment of the Lord sin has made us "liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever" (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q. 19).

So it is incumbent upon us to take the measure of sin if we would apprehend to the full the measure of the grace of God. And it is comforting to know as Paul says: "But not as the offense, so also is the free gift." See Romans 5:15-19, and verses 20 and 21, "Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

So we repeat what has already been said and emphasize it with all the power of emphasis at our command: **We must know the answer to the question, What is Sin? before we can truly apprehend the answer to the question, What is Grace?** For the immeasurable greatness of God's grace is occasioned by the immeasurableness of our sin against Him.

(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.

EXHORTATION. The act of presenting to a person motives calculated to move him to action in the performance of duty. Christian doctrine is to be accompanied and followed by Christian exhortation, that the hearers may be stirred up to a practical profession of Christianity.

EXTREME UNCTION. One of the non-Biblical sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church, in which those about to die are anointed with oil and prayed for by the priest.

FAITH. The dependence of a person on the truthfulness and reliability of another person.

OBJECT OF FAITH. That on which faith terminates and rests. All faith has an object, and this object is, ultimately, a person. The immediate object of faith may be a proposition or a doctrine (Heb. 11:3), but the ultimate object of faith is the person on whose testimony we believe the proposition or doctrine. Thus faith in the Bible is ultimately faith in God whose revelation the Bible is.

FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST. "Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel" (S.C. 86).

HISTORICAL FAITH. A mere assent to the facts of the Gospel as a matter of history, as that Christ was born in Bethlehem, crucified on Calvary, etc., without personal trust in Christ for salvation. Historical faith is necessary for salvation, but not sufficient without personal trust.

TEMPORARY FAITH. A faith which superficially resembles saving faith, but which does not proceed from a heart renewed by the Holy Spirit, and which therefore cannot endure persecution or tribulation for Christ's sake. Such temporary faith often results from artificial "high pressure" methods of evangelism, which induce many to profess faith in Christ who later fall away from this profession to their former worldly life.

FALL OF MAN. The lapse of the human race from its original state of moral perfection to a state of sin and misery, which took place by the sin of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in eating the forbidden fruit.

FATE. The heathen notion that all events are determined by a blind, impersonal, irresistible force which operates regardless of the free agency

of men. This is very different from the Calvinistic doctrine of foreordination, which teaches that the infinitely wise, loving, righteous, personal God has determined all that comes to pass, including the motives, decisions and acts of all free agents such as angels and men.

FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM. Five truths of the Calvinistic system of theology which were affirmed by the Synod of Dort (Netherlands, A. D. 1618-19), in contradiction to the five articles of the Remonstrants or Arminians. The "Five Points of Calvinism" are: 1. Unconditional election; 2. Limited or particular atonement; 3. The total depravity of the sinner; 4. The irresistibility of saving grace; 5. The final perseverance of the saints. These "five points" are NOT a brief summary of Calvinism, as they are often wrongly said to be; they are merely five truths by which Calvinism is distinguished from Arminianism.

FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD. The knowledge of God by which, from all eternity, He has known all things that will ever come to pass. This foreknowledge of God is based upon His own decrees of foreordination, and is not in any way contingent or dependent upon acts of His creatures. (See Westminster Confession of Faith, II. 2).

FOREORDINATION. God's determination, from all eternity, of every fact in the universe, including every event that takes place in time. (God's foreordination is not based upon His foreknowledge, but upon the counsel of His own will. Eph. 1:11. Westminster Confession of Faith, III. 1, 2; Shorter Catechism, 7).

FORGIVENESS OF SINS. The act of God (included in JUSTIFICATION), by which the sinner's guilt is no longer imputed (reckoned) to him, and the corresponding penalty is therefore not inflicted upon him. Forgiveness of sins is possible only because of the atonement of Jesus Christ, the sinner's Substitute, to whom the sinner's guilt was imputed by God, and by whom the sinner's penalty was vicariously borne.

FORMALISM. That perversion of Christianity in which emphasis is placed upon the mere external observance of the ordinances of worship, while the heart remains unaffected by the power of godliness (2 Tim. 3:5). Formalism affects all churches, not only those with an elaborate ritualism, but also those which insist upon Scriptural purity of worship.

FREE AGENCY. The capacity of rational beings, including man, for making decisions and performing actions in accordance with their own nature or character, without constraint from outside their personality. (The term "free agency" is more correct than "free will", for the latter may imply that the will can choose independently of the person's nature or character, which is not true. Free agency means only freedom of the personality from **EXTERNAL** constraint; it does not mean freedom of the will from the personality as a whole. The unsaved sinner is a free agent, but because his nature is sinful, his free decisions and acts are always sinful too).

FUTURE LIFE. The "world" or "age" to come, which will follow the present age in which

we are now living. The present world is the world of **HISTORY**; the future world will be the world of **ETERNITY**. Scripture divides the life of man into "this world (age)" and "the world (age) to come" — Matt. 12:32; Eph. 1:21; etc. The future life is "the life which is life indeed" (1 Tim. 6:18, ARV).

GNOSTICISM. The general name given to the teachings of a number of sects, in the time of the early Church, which claimed possession of a deeper knowledge of truth than was possessed by the orthodox Church and its members. Gnosticism was largely derived from heathen religion and philosophy. It taught that the God who created the world was not the Supreme Being, and that evil is identified with matter.

Some Noteworthy Quotations

Our faith, and all right worship of God, depend, in no small degree, upon our knowledge of the doctrine of predestination.

— Martin Luther

I do maintain that the Shorter Catechism, with its marvellous comprehensiveness and its faithfulness to Scripture, with its solemnity and its tenderness, is the truest and noblest summary of what the Bible teaches that I have ever seen.

— J. Gresham Machen

We are indebted to God for the good works we do, and not He to us.

— The Belgic Confession

The highest privilege of New Testament saints is to be partakers of the inheritance promised to Abraham.

— Charles Hodge

There is little we touch but we leave the print of our fingers behind.

— Richard Baxter

I see mustering within the ranks of the Church of God men who say they hate all creeds, meaning that they despise all truth, men who would fain be ministers amongst us and yet tread under foot all that we hold sacred, not teaching at first the fulness of their infidelity, but little by little gathering courage to vent their unbeliefs and heresies. Credophobia is maddening many. They appear to hope there is something good to be found in Atheism, or devil worship, — indeed in all religions except the only true one.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

Let us have comfort, for despite all that can be done by men and devils not one elect soul shall

be lost, not one soul redeemed by blood shall be snatched out of the Redeemer's hand. Christ shall not lose so much as a grain of glory, neither in earth nor in heaven.

— Charles H. Spurgeon

Church membership today often means nothing more, as has well been said, than a vague admiration for the moral character of Jesus; the Church in countless communities is little more than a Rotary Club.

— J. Gresham Machen

The Bible is fitted and intended, when rightly used and improved, to be far more extensively useful and effectual, as a rule or standard of faith and practice, than men commonly suppose or experience.

— William Cunningham

It is an evidence that we are gracious men if we can look upon the lives of others that are better than we, and love and esteem them glorious.

— Richard Sibbes

Spiritual convincing is not total in this life, but always leaves in the heart some dregs of doubting. As a ship that rides at anchor is tossed, but the anchor holds it, so it is with the soul that is convinced weakly; it is sure of the main, yet it is tossed with many doubts and fears, but the anchor is in heaven.

— Richard Sibbes

Every sin is a kind of cursing God in the heart (Job 1:5), an aim at the destruction of the being of God, not actually, but virtually; not in the intention of every sinner, but in the nature of every sin. That affection which excites a man to break His law, would execute him to annihilate His being if it were in his power. A man in every sin aims

to set up his own will as his rule, and his own glory as the end of his actions, against the will and glory of God; and could a sinner attain his end, God would be destroyed. God cannot outlive His

will and His glory; God cannot have another rule than His own will, nor another end than His honor.

— Stephen Charnock

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 phase, **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 Testa-

ment 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, be-

hold, 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 fulfillment 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?
8. 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 pro-

phesies 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.

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 char-

acter 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 fulfillment 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 kingdom 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 con-

cern 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. 4:19 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. 14:30), 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 persecution (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 this issue of the magazine, p. 154, 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, believes 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 travailling in pain?

7. According to Postmillennialism, what agencies will bring about the coming of the future Kingdom of God?

8. According to Postmillennialism, what conditions 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 con-

cerning 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 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 right-

eousness 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 believe (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 millennium 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? Is it 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 doctrine 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 re-

forms 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 found-

ed 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 kingdom 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 instantane-

ous. It is the beginning of a new spiritual life, and the beginning of anything cannot be a gradual 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 Gospel 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 doc-

trine 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 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 sword 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 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 our-

selves 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 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. So 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 1, **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 2, 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, Gaebelein 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 Fulfilment 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

Prophecy, Time and Eternity

By J. G. Vos

"But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." — 1 Cor. 13:10.

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." — Heb. 13:14.

Biblical prophecy is an immense subject. Rather than risk getting lost in such a large forest, I shall limit this article to one specific aspect of the subject, namely, the Biblical philosophy of prophecy in relation to time and eternity.

The term "prophecy," properly speaking, does not necessarily refer to prediction of the future. Much of what the Biblical prophets had to say concerned their own day and age. The prophet was an authoritative spokesman for God. He came to men with a message of truth and duty from God. Thus the prophet's function was the opposite of the priest's function. The prophet represented God in approaching man; the priest represented man in approaching God and effecting reconciliation between sinful man and the holy God.

The prophets did predict future events, however, and predictive prophecy is such a prominent feature of their work that the term "prophecy" has come to be used, in popular speech, as equiv-

alent to "prediction of the future." In this article the term "prophecy" is to be understood in this common, popular sense, as meaning prediction of the future.

Before proceeding further it would be well to note that the Bible stresses the **objective**, God-given character of prophecy. This is exactly the opposite of the modern view that is being taught in large theological schools all over the world. This modern view regards prophecy as essentially **subjective**. It is regarded as a product of the mind of the prophet. The prophets are regarded as men of genius, men with outstanding analytical powers, who could discern and interpret the trends of the times. It is denied that they were able actually to predict definite events in the distant future.

Such modern scholars speak of the prophets as having "felt," "realized," "discerned," "understood," "been convinced," etc., etc., that certain things would happen. The prophets themselves, on the other hand, introduced their messages by the formula "**Thus saith the Lord . . .**" or words with an equivalent meaning. We should realize that the Bible itself sets forth the objective view of prophecy. Note, for example, 2 Peter 1:21, where Peter is speaking of the prophecies of the

Old Testament: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Peter here defines the **source** of prophecy both negatively and positively:

(1) **Negatively**: it did not come by the will of man. It came, indeed, through the instrumentality of man, through the personality of man, but the impulse which started the process was not a decision of the human will — the prophecy came not by the will of man.

(2) **Positively**: holy men of God spake as they were moved — carried along — by the Holy Spirit.

The real source of prophecy, then, is God. Man is the channel, but God is the source. The modern subjective view of prophecy is destructive of Christianity as divine revelation.

Views of prophecy may differ widely because views of the nature of God and the nature of the Bible differ widely. It is absolutely useless to discuss interpretations of prophecy with anyone unless there is first a common ground of basic understanding and agreement as to the nature of God, the supernatural character of Christianity, and the character of the Bible as objective, infallible divine revelation.

Many errors in views about prophecy are really rooted in unbelief as to the foundations of Christianity. For instance, someone who believes that the Bible is the record of the evolutionary development of man's religious life will have a very different view of prophecy from that of someone who believes that the Bible is the record of God's redemption of man from sin.

I. Time will be Followed by Eternity

God's order is: 1. Creation. 2. History. 3. Consummation. The doctrine of Creation is unique in the Biblical religion. It does not exist in any other religious system in a pure or consistent form. All other systems tend either to regard the universe as eternal, or to regard it as coming into existence of itself. (It may be objected that the religion of Islam holds the doctrine of creation. In reply it can be said that, like almost everything in Islam that is good or true, this has been borrowed from Jewish and Christian sources). Scripture alone teaches creation *ex nihilo* ("Out of nothing") by the almighty power of God. This is the root of the **supernaturalism** of the Bible. Every doctrine in the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation depends absolutely on the doctrine of creation as stated in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

There was a beginning. God never had a beginning, but the universe had a beginning. It has not been in existence from all eternity — it had a beginning. We do not know how long ago the beginning was, but we know that there was a

beginning. The Biblical concept of creation implies that **historic time** — the great world-process which we call "history" — does not exist of itself, but only by the power of God. Moreover history is not eternal in either direction. It had a **beginning** and it will also have an end.

Only the Bible teaches the **created** character of history. Therefore only the Bible provides a real basis for the idea of an "end of the world" or a consummation or **end of history**. The ancient classical view of history, as held by the Greeks, Romans and others, was that it is eternal — a series of endlessly repeated cycles — endless motion without any real goal ever being reached. A golden age is followed by a silver age, and so on to the end of the series, after which it all starts over again. This has always been going on and it will go on forever, with no beginning, no ending, no real progress and no goal. The Bible, on the contrary, teaches that there will be a goal. Time will be followed by eternity. Eternity is not a mere continuation of time. It is something which exists alongside of time but on a higher level, and it is essentially different from time. In eternity clocks and calendars as we know them will be meaningless and useless. Eternity cannot be measured in terms of days, hours or minutes. Eternity is always imminent, it is always just ahead of each and every one of us. None of us is ever more than an earthly lifetime from eternity. Therefore so far as we as individuals are concerned, the end of history is always imminent for each and every one of us. None need wait ages and ages to participate in the life of eternity. All of us will participate in the life of eternity in just a few years — just as soon as the death of our physical body takes place. Our physical body is our only connecting link with the world of time and space. When the body is no longer able to function, the person has become an inhabitant of eternity. For him, history is already over.

II. Eternity is the Ideal and Absolute Fulfilment of Religion

"We know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." What we call "heaven" or "eternity" is the perfect, absolute, ideal fulfilment of religion. Owing to the existence of sin, there can be no perfect people and no perfect world within the process which we call "history", but only beyond it.

Among Christian people there are various views about the Millennium (the vision of the thousand years in Revelation 20.) Some hold that this will be before the second coming of Christ, others that it will be after the second coming of Christ; some that it is present, others that it is still future. But all agree that the Millennium will be **temporary**, and all agree that it will be **imperfect** — it will not last forever, and

it will include sin and death. Therefore the Millennium, whatever view we may take of it, cannot be the absolute fulfilment of the religious ideal. For the absolute fulfilment will only be "when that which is perfect is come."

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob realized full well that the **ultimate** fulfilment of God's promises to them lay not in Canaan but in eternity. They looked for the better country, which is the heavenly one.

Any system which makes anything within history the **ultimate** object of Christian hope is unbiblical and regards the temporal too highly and the eternal not highly enough.

Biblical prophecy is like a telescope which peers far down the avenue of time and even beyond the farthest rim of time and on out into the mysterious realm of eternity that lies beyond time.

It is a mistake to assume that all prophecies must be completely and absolutely fulfilled within the confines of time or history. The fact is that many prophecies of the Bible look out beyond the rim of time into the infinite reaches of eternity that lies beyond time.

It is a recognized principle of interpretation that prophecy may have a multiple fulfilment. It may have its fulfilment in successive stages on different levels of existence. Thus there may be a relative fulfilment and an absolute fulfilment. This can be seen, for example, in the interpretation of such texts as "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" and "all shall know me, from the least unto the greatest."

How do the waters cover the sea? They cover it **absolutely**. There is not a square inch of the sea that is not covered by the waters of the sea. Hence this prophecy predicts a state of affairs where the knowledge of the Lord will be absolutely universal. "All shall know me" — not many, not the great majority, but **all**. When shall this be? If we are inquiring as to the absolute, exhaustive fulfilment of the prophecies, it must be in that ideal and perfect order of things which we call "heaven" or "eternity."

Yet these and similar prophecies may also be fulfilled partially and relatively through the centuries of history. Some of them, at least, have been fulfilled and we can see that they have been fulfilled to a certain extent — much more than, say, 1,000 years ago. But it is not legitimate to infer or assume that the **absolute** fulfilment of such prophecies must be within history, that is, before the end of the world. The analogy of Scripture teaches, rather, that such prophecy looks far beyond the limit of historic time and out beyond, into the absolute realm of eternity.

It is well for us to remember that prophecy is given in terms of conditions which existed when

the prophecy was given, but fulfilled in terms of conditions which exist when the prophecy is fulfilled. This is illustrated by a story told by Dr. Albertus Pieters in one of his books. Back in the nineties a father very much wanted his son to abstain from the use of tobacco. He promised the boy: "Son, if you will not smoke or use tobacco in any form until you are 21 years old, I will give you a horse and a new buggy for a present on your twenty-first birthday."

The boy wanted the reward, so he kept the bargain. When the 21st birthday arrived, the father said at breakfast, "Son, you will find your birthday present out on the front lawn." The young man went out, and there he found what used to be called a sports roadster. You see, it was about 1910 or 1912, and since the agreement had been made the automobile had been invented and had come into use. Do you suppose the young man said to his father: "Dad, you just can't do this to me. You promised me a horse and buggy. Now I want you to keep that promise and give me the horse and buggy as you promised."

Was the gift of an automobile a true fulfilment of the father's promise? Would a gift of a horse and buggy in 1912 have been a true fulfilment of the promise made in 1895? The promise was given in terms of the horse and buggy era, but the fulfilment was in terms of the automobile age. I am inclined to think that the young man accepted the car without raising any objections.

This story illustrates an important principle of Bible interpretation. When the Bible predicts that in the ideal state of the future "the lion shall eat straw like the ox," this does not mean that there will be vegetarian lions either on earth or in heaven. It is a prediction that the destructive forces of nature will be changed or abolished. The prediction is stated in terms of conditions which existed when the prophet lived. Lions were a real menace then. It will be fulfilled in God's own way in the future.

The Old Testament predicts that in the ideal state of the future, the "new heavens and new earth" (Isa. 65:17), children will not die until they are 100 years old. The same passage adds, "For as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people" (Isa. 65:22). This is a prophecy given in terms of conditions existing at the time of the giving of the prophecy. It will be fulfilled in terms of conditions existing at the fulfilment. The New Testament shows us that it means **eternal life**, the life that can never die, "for there shall be no more death." It is given in terms of time; it is fulfilled in terms of eternity.

If we will remember that the temporal is always imperfect, owing to the presence of sin, we will realize that only eternity can bring the absolute fulfilment of the religious ideal. Even a state vastly more perfect than exists today, if it

exists within the temporal order, will still contain sin and so be imperfect, therefore, it cannot be the fulfilment of religion.

III. The Arrival of the Eternal Order will be Catastrophic

By saying that the arrival of the eternal order will be catastrophic we mean that it will be sudden, not gradual; a revolution, not an evolution.

The Bible speaks of the great redemptive facts in terms of supernatural realism. Christ's resurrection, His ascension, His coming again are not "spiritualized" in the Bible but are treated as literally real. Many people object to this at the present day because they are intoxicated by scientific thought which regards nature as all that exists, and they shy away from the idea of the supernatural as something superstitious or unscientific. A recent writer on the teachings of the Apostle Paul, for example, says that Paul's statements about Christ coming again with a shout, at the last trump, etc., as described in 1 Thess. 4:16, must be stripped of their Jewish imagery if we are to discern their real meaning. What is really meant, it is said, is merely that good will overcome evil in the end. Such scholars have developed an allergy to the supernatural. They try to reduce it to the smallest possible minimum. And to that extent, their thinking is alien to the spirit of Biblical Christianity.

One of America's greatest theologians, Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield, said that Christ's ascension must have made this earth lighter by so many pounds weight, however crude this idea may seem to some people. Christ after His resurrection ate broiled fish and a piece of honeycomb. The idea that the resurrection body and the life of eternity will be thin, filmy, unreal or ghost-like is foreign to Bible teachings. Eternity and heaven will be more, not less, real and substantial than what we experience here on earth. It is this present life that is thin and filmy — in heaven things will be really solid and substantial.

All this implies what the Bible plainly teaches, that the second coming of Christ and the end of the world are not some vague mystic experience but a literal fact. He cometh with clouds; every eye shall see Him, even those that pierced Him.

The denial of this Biblical realism springs, basically, from unbelief in the supernatural character of God's redemptive program. Those who do not believe that Jesus Christ really rose from the dead, but only that His spirit (or only His influence?) lives on, will of course not believe that He is literally coming again and that every eye shall see Him.

Bible-believing Christians are agreed as to the reality and literal character of Christ's second coming and the supplanting of history by eternity,

whatever differences of interpretation may exist concerning other matters of varying degrees of importance.

Scripture links the end of history with the return of Jesus Christ. History will end with the visible, personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth. This is of the very essence of Christianity. This return of Christ will mark the boundary line between the temporal and the eternal, between world history and the vast eternity that lies beyond world history.

Jesus Christ is not a product of history. He said, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above. Ye are of this world; I am not of this world." Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem and lived a human life in historical time, but he came from the great beyond, and at His ascension he left the realm of historical time to re-enter the realm of eternity.

Since this was the case, the product of Christ's redemptive work cannot be adequately measured or described in terms of time or history. The product of Christ's redemptive work is not only historical but **eternal**, and it must necessarily overleap and outlast the temporal order.

In Nebuchadnezzar's vision the stone cut out of the mountain without hands grew until it filled the whole earth. It stood for the Kingdom of God. But there is more. It outlasts the world and it alone stands forever. The clock of history will finally cease to tick, but the product of Christ's redemption will live on in its glory and wonder. Heaven and earth shall indeed pass away, but His words shall not pass away.

The coming of the eternal order cannot be a gradual process. In the nature of the case it must be sudden and catastrophic. This is obviously true in the life of an individual person. Earthly life may last many years, but there comes a certain definite moment when it ceases and the person has entered upon the life of eternity. Death is instantaneous as truly as birth is instantaneous. Death occurs all at once at a particular time. One moment the person is a resident of time and space; the next moment he is a resident of eternity.

The same thing must be true of the world as a whole. History does not gradually merge into the eternal order of things. It cannot, because of the radically different character of the two conditions. There are not only moral and spiritual but also physical and cosmic changes involved. The difference between the realm of time and the realm of eternity is a difference of kind, not merely a difference of degree.

Time, space, physics, chemistry — all these things that condition life as we experience it here and now — all these will give way to a higher level or plane of existence which will be essentially **different**. That will be our true destiny — what we were being prepared for all our life long.

But it will be different. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

What should be our attitude to God's future program? Some would not wish eternity to dawn because they are absorbed in what they are doing in time. Not until I graduate from college! Not until I attain my life's goals in this world! Not until America has become a truly and fully Christian nation!

But is this a right attitude? Do we want "that which is perfect" to be delayed so that we can longer enjoy "that which is in part"? Is the **relatively perfect** so important to us that we want the arrival of the **absolutely perfect** deferred to make room for it? ? Where is our **ultimate** Christian hope anchored? "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

The boundary line between time and eternity is set by God, not by us. This is true, whether we are speaking of an individual person's life or of the world as a whole. God sets the boundaries. This is a prerogative of His sovereignty.

And eternity always takes absolute priority over everything in time. Nothing we are doing here is so important that it must delay the launching of God's program of eternity. The **relatively perfect** may not delay or impede the **absolutely perfect**. This the early Christians realized. We find it reflected, for example, in the end of the Bible: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The poem entitled "What Then?" by J. Whitfield Green stresses the fact that eternity is imminent and inevitable. It is appended here.

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 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 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 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?

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 limits of 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 "Blue Banner Faith and Life."

THE LIFE OF ELIJAH, by A. W. Pink. The Banner of Truth Trust, London. 1963 Reprint, paperback, p. 313. 6s.

In a popular account of Elijah's life, Pink gives an analysis of God's dealings with His prophet. Pink discusses God's means of supplying the prophet's needs, and applies these principles-of-supply to us. Pink's typology is sometimes strain-

ed, but the book is soundly written to encourage us to trust the Lord.

—Edward A. Robson

EVANGELISM AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD, by J. I. Packer. Inter-Varsity Press, Chicago. 1965, Paperback, p. 126. \$1.25.

Dr. Packer presents in this book "relevant principles for determining any evangelistic stra-

tegy." The first principle he discusses is that God's ways are not ours. The Bible contains mysteries which human systems or speculations cannot organize. God is wiser than man.

In dealing with questions of God's sovereignty and human responsibility, Packer discusses antinomy in biblical revelation. An antinomy is not a paradox. Nature exhibits an antinomy in light; it behaves as waves and particles. An antinomy is neither dispensable nor comprehensible. For example, God uses men as means for achieving His purposes; yet, in the last analysis, nothing depends on man.

Evangelism and the Evangelistic service are so stereotyped in our day that this is the only context in which many would see the Great Commission being obeyed. Packer, however, defines Evangelism:

"Evangelism is to be defined not institutionally in terms of the kind of meeting held, but theologically, in terms of what is taught, and for what purpose." (p.57) ". . . an act of communication with a view to conversion. In the last analysis, therefore, there is only one means of evangelism: namely, the gospel of Christ, explained and applied." (p.85)

Finally, Packer discusses the absolute necessity of a sovereign Lord as the only hope for success in Evangelism. We are to live and work by the light of God's revealed will, and not to guess about matters He has kept secret.

For the general Christian reader, Packer's work is very important; for the minister and the student it is required reading.

—Edward A. Robson

THE PLIGHT OF MAN AND THE POWER OF GOD, by D. M. Lloyd-Jones, Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 225 Jefferson Ave., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. 1941 Reprint, p. 94, \$2.50.

A series of lectures from Romans 1 are the contents of this work. The thoughts on Romans 1:18, 'the wrath of God revealed from heaven,' are very poignant. The Jewish captivities of the O. T. Times, the destruction of Jerusalem in the N. T. Times, two major wars (now Korea and Viet Nam) in the twentieth century, pain, suffering, labor, sorrow, sweat, and the inditement of Scripture all reveal the wrath of God. Jones deliberates on the solution of this problem in his last lecture. The only solution is the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God. It is recommended that you read a library copy of this book.

—Edward A. Robson

THE ANATOMY OF ANTI-SEMITISM, by James Daane. Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 255 Jefferson Ave., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. 1965, p. 84, Paperback. \$1.45.

This work is a collection of five essays by Dr. Daane on problems facing contemporary Christianity: The Christian and the Jew, the Negro, and a relative rather than an absolute system of morality. The reading is worthwhile, but not at the price for which this book is selling.

—Edward A. Robson

THE CROSS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, by Leon Morris. Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 255 Jefferson Ave., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. 1965, pp. 454. \$6.95.

The Cross in the N. T. is a book-by-book discussion of the New Covenant literature on Christ's atonement. Atonement in the N.T. means that in His death Jesus took the place of sinners: Christ died as our substitute.

The atonement was necessary because of sin; the benefits of the atonement are righteousness, peace with God, and Joy in the Holy Spirit. The atonement is effective because Jesus is God and man. He alone is the mediator between God and man, who satisfied God's justice and bore our infirmities, without sin.

Dr. Morris assumes the authenticity and substantial reliability of the Gospel. He makes many valuable comments on N T Greek, O T prophecies, and the Septuagint.

A sample of Dr. Morris' style and thought is taken from his comments on the Cross in Hebrews:

"The uniqueness of His sacrifice is brought out in various ways. . . . Our writer stresses that it was offered but once. He uses a strong word which means 'once for all' (Heb. 9:26,28.), and an even stronger compound of the same word (Heb. 7:27; 9: 12; 10:10) And he points out that this one offering has permanent effects . . . in the light of Christ's offering 'there is no more offering for sin.' (Heb. 10:18) . . . Taking all this together, words could hardly express more emphatically the utter finality of Christ's work of sacrifice." (pp. 290, 291)

This book will aid any preacher to avoid stagnation and the superficial in preaching; and it will repay the efforts of those who study it.

—Edward A. Robson

THE REFORMATION OF THE CHURCH, by Iain Murray. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern St., London W. 1, England. 1965, pp. 414, paper cover. 15 shillings or \$2.50.

This book is a collection of Reformed and Puritan documents on church issues, from 1550 to 1662. Each preceded by editorial notes by Mr. Murray.

In the introduction Mr. Murray points out the difference between the authors of these documents, and the authors of the ecumenical movement in that the former, while they did not belong to one group or claim perfect understanding of scripture,

yet they did believe that God's word is the only rule of faith and life and that Christ is the only Head of the church, while with the latter, the truths of the Bible seem to be of little importance.

I found this book very interesting.

Some of the headings are: Rule for Reformation, The Word of God, The Need of Reformation, New Testament Church Govt., The Unity of the Church. Authors—Martin Luther, Wm. Cunningham, Thomas Wilcox, Charles Hodge, Edmund Calamy, and many others.

—Alan Burns

AN ALARM TO THE UNCONVERTED, by Joseph Alleine. The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern St., London, W.1, England. 1964, pp. 148, paper cover, 4 shillings sixpence.

The author of this book was born into a Puritan family at Devizes in Wiltshire, in 1634. After studying at Oxford and Corpus Christi College where he took his B.A., he entered the ministry as an evangelical preacher.

The book contains chapters on conversion, such as Mistakes About Conversion, The Necessity of Conversion, The Nature Of Conversion, The Marks of the Unconverted, etc., and through all the book are Bible quotations and texts.

It is said that more than one great evangelist had his views moulded by this book, among them George Whitefield, and Charles Spurgeon.

—Alan Burns

PROTESTANTS ON THE ROAD TO ROME, by W. J. Grier. Evangelical Book Room, 15 College Square East, Belfast, N. Ireland. 1963, pp. 13, paper cover. Sixpence.

This book is subtitled "Alarming Evidence of Dangerous Trends" and it is just that. It relates short extracts from many of the church publications, and happenings, in the religious activity of the British Isles; and shows how the ecumenical movement is aided by many Protestant leaders.

These men blindly follow on the road to Rome, never hearing the many statements by Rome, to the effect, that since they were commissioned by Christ when He made Peter the first head of the church, all strayed brethren must return to the Papal Authority.

This book closes with this advice, "Therefore, Pray Without Ceasing."

—Alan Burns

HANDBOOK OF BIBLE HISTORY - BOOK III, THE GOSPELS by George Stob. William B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Ave., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502. 1963, pp. 178, paper cover. \$2.00.

This is Book III in a series for Bible Study in the home. In each chapter he gives first the story, then the teaching, and third, three groups of questions suitable to three different age groups.

It is the author's hope that parents and children alike will broaden their knowledge of the Bible through these studies. He has used them in his church school, Home Bible Study, and as a group or society Bible study guide. It is full of suggestions for such an effort.

—Herbert A. Hays

FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE (Symposium). The Evangelical Magazine, Providence House, 3 Speke Road, London, S.W. 11, England. pp. 80, paper cover, 3s. 6d.

This is a series of five papers read at the Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference, December 18 & 19, 1962. The subjects covered are: William Perkins and the Origins of Puritan Casuistry, by I. Beward, M.A.; The Puritan Conscience, by Rev. J. I. Packer, M.A., Ph.D.; Thomas Boston of Ettrick, by D. J. Innes, M.A.; Some Aspects of John Owens Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ, by Rev. F. R. Entwistle, B.A.; and Puritan Perplexities, Some Lessons, from 1640 - 1662, by Rev. D. M. Lloyd-Jones, M.D., MRCP.

These five papers could not be reviewed in this short space. Packer says that the real concern of the Puritan was a concern about God — "a concern to know Him truly and serve Him rightly and so to glorify and enjoy Him."

The most important thing for any man is that his conscience be "enlightened, instructed, purged and kept clean." He then presents the Puritan Idea of Conscience; The Place of Conscience in Puritan Christianity; and The Puritan Conscience in Action.

In the light of present day teaching on sin and morality, this one paper makes the book worth its price.

—Herbert A. Hays

YOUR GOD AND YOUR GOLD, by Leslie B. Flynn, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506. 1961, pp. 137. \$2.50.

The author, a Canadian, received his high education in the U. S. from such schools as Moody Bible Institute; Wheaton; and Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

In presenting a discourse on the Christian and his money, he emphasizes that not only is the tithe the Lord's, but that the Lord owns all that the Christian possesses, as well as the Christian himself. He asks three questions pertinent to the Christian's joy and happiness: 1. Money talks— but what does it say? 2. Can you justify your expense account? 3. Where will your money spend eternity?

Every Christian, whether he believes in tithing his income, or not, should read this very readable and enlightening book, that he may broaden his vision concerning the privilege and responsibility of his stewardship.

—Herbert A. Hays

THE SUPREME COURT AND PRAYER IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL, by J. Marcellus Kik. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., P. O. Box 185, Nutley, N. J. 07110. 1963, pp. 40, paper cover. 75 cents.

The subject of this book is not a dead issue, even though the book is three years old. While this reviewer found himself disagreeing at times with the author, he has given us a very enlightening dissertation on the subject.

One aspect of the subject clearly set forth is the fact that it is not a clear cut issue between so-called "liberals" and "evangelicals."

The discourse, although dealing with a legal matter, is so written that it is fairly easy to read. Every Christian should read it.

—Herbert A. Hays

STUDIES IN GENESIS ONE, by Edward J. Young, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., P.O. Box 185, Nutley, N. J. 07110. 1964, pp. 105, paper cover. \$1.50.

This book is for scholars like Dr. Young. A student like the reviewer may benefit from it. Dr. Young is a linguist, and as he uses Hebrew and French and German, often without translating his work, this reviewer is left in the dark. The scholarship of Dr. Young is not to be questioned, and the book, a series of three studies, is profound and scholarly. It would be much more readable had he translated all his quotes.

Dr. Young accepts Genesis one as a revelation from God concerning the origin of all things. In his own words, "I have simply endeavored to take the Bible as it stands, and sought to interpret its first chapter."

—Herbert A. Hays

Brief Notices of Recent Books

The following notices are all by the Editor of "Blue Banner Faith and Life." The addresses of the various publishers are given at the end of the notices. All these books are hardbound unless "paperback" is stated in the notice.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE FLOCK: A MEMORIAL TO THE REV. WALTER SCOTT, by W. MacLean. Westminster Standard. 1966, pp. 96, paperback. 4 shillings sixpence. A tribute to the memory of a faithful minister who witnessed for the truth, including Scriptural purity of worship. Rather small print, but a worthwhile message.

WHAT JESUS HAD TO SAY ABOUT MONEY, by Frank C. Laubach. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 63, paperback. \$1.00. On Dr. Laubach's theological position, see our April-June 1966 issue, page 84. In the present booklet Dr. Laubach deals with several parables of Jesus, but with disregard of basic principles of Biblical interpretation. In a number of places unguarded statements give the impression that we are saved by good works. For example, Dr. Laubach concludes his treatment of the Parable of the Good Samaritan with these words: "Half the world is going to bed tonight hungry. Help them and thou shalt have eternal life!" (p.51).

THE DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER, by Legh Richmond. Reiner Publications. 1965, pocket size, paperback, 52 pages. A reprint of an old tract, originally published about 1800. The pictures are so extremely "dated" that they would better have been omitted. The message is Biblical and earnest — a remarkable conversion and an evangelistic plea.

SERMONS FOR THE TIMES, by Jonathan

Ranken Anderson. Published by A. E. Alexander. No date, pp. 77, paperback. 2 shillings sixpence postpaid. The author of these sermons died in 1859. The titles are: "A Testimony for Truth," "The Fountain of Salvation," and "The Nature and Fruit of Messiah's Offering." The theology is sound and the messages earnest, though the style naturally is that of a century ago.

A GREAT SCOTTISH CHURCHMAN: DR. ANDREW THOMSON, by R. Strang Miller. Westminster Standard. 1961, pp. 62, paperback. 3 s. 6d. Foreword by Professor A. M. Renwick of Free Church College, Edinburgh. A biographical sketch of a prominent witness for the Reformed Faith in Scotland. The subject of the sketch lived 1778-1831.

NATURE AND GRACE, by William Moore. Rev. R. S. Miller, Publisher, 2 Alabama Road, Blenheim, New Zealand. 1961, pp. 32, paperback. 3 s. A booklet of Christian poetry. The author died in 1888. The theology is evangelical and the material edifying. The literary style will not appeal to all readers, and will impress some as ponderous.

THY GOD REIGNETH: THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL MESSAGE FOR THIS HOUR TO WESTERN CHRISTENDOM. Anonymous. Published by Mrs. D. M. Tainton, 304 Heimar Ct., Rissik St., Sunnyside, Pretoria, South Africa. No date, pp. 40, paper cover. 15 cents. Mainly a plea for observance of the seventh day as the Sabbath. Along with this are some dubious eschatological teachings and some questionable interpretations of texts in Daniel and other parts of the Bible.

TWO CONFESSIONS, by J. M. Kik, M. Di Gangi and J. C. Henry. Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co. 1966, pp. 56, paper cover. 50 cents. The Westminster Confession of Faith compared and contrasted with the proposed Presbyterian Confession of 1967. Clear and convincing. Highly recommended.

THEY WILL NOT BOW! by L. J. Bass, Faith Times, Box 97, Tulsa, Oklahoma. No date, pp. 32, paper cover. No price stated. An account of Christian witness and suffering behind the Iron Curtain.

AN ACCOMPLISHED REDEMPTION, by W. J. Grier. Sovereign Grace Union. 1965, pp. 13, pocket size, paper cover. 9 d. A Scriptural and edifying message on the finished work of Christ.

THE MILLENNIUM, WITH AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION TWENTY, by William E. Cox. Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co. 1964, pp. 67, paper cover. \$1.25. This is a scholarly work, containing a rather extensive bibliography of the subject. Representatives of all views on the Millennium are quoted. The author's own position is that commonly called Amillennialism or non-millennialism. Recommended.

THE HEIR OF HEAVEN WALKING IN DARKNESS AND THE HEIR OF HELL WALKING IN LIGHT, by J. C. Philpot. Old Faith Contender. No date, pp. 47, pocket size, paper cover, no price stated. The author was a Strict Baptist minister in England. He died about a century ago. A striking and edifying sermon on Isaiah 50:10, 11.

THIS I CONFESS, by Nicholas J. Monsma. Baker Book House. 1962, pp. 65, paper cover. 75 cents. For communicants' classes in preparation for public profession of faith. It is built around the form of queries used in the Christian Reformed Church, but all who love the truth will find this material worth studying.

KARL BARTH'S DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY, by John M. L. Young. Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co. 1962, pp. 30, pocket size, paper cover. A brief but competent and scholarly study of Karl Barth's doctrine of the Trinity, showing clearly how it differs from historic Christian orthodoxy. Recommended heartily.

WHAT IS THIS CALVINISM? by G. E. Lane. Sovereign Grace Union. No date, pp. 18, pocket size, paper cover. 9 d. A brief but cogent exposition of Calvinism or the Reformed Faith, showing its Biblical character and the falsity of alternative interpretations.

KARL BARTH AND EVANGELICALISM, by Cornelius Van Til. Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co. 1964, pp. 33, paper cover, 60 cents. In this day when many are telling us that Barth has become orthodox (or "more orthodox" or "less unorthodox") this booklet which turns the searchlight of Scripture truth on Barth's present theological

position is most timely. Gives a brief sketch of Barth's life and work, and analyzes his teachings briefly. Strongly recommended.

TALKING ABOUT JESUS WITH A JEWISH NEIGHBOR, by Albert Huisjen. Baker. 1964, pp. 54, paperback. \$1.00. Subtitle: "A Keynote in Personal Jewish Evangelism." Shows how to bring Christian truth to a Jewish neighbor, and how to use key passages of the Old and New Testaments in this special form of evangelistic effort.

THE SAVIOR AND THE CHURCH: A STUDY MANUAL OF NEW TESTAMENT REVELATION, by Arthur E. Pontier. Baker, 1962, pp. 83, paperback. 75 cents. An outline study of the historical contents of the New Testament, intended for children's catechetical classes.

MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY? by Adolph Bedsole. Baker. 1965, pp. 67, paperback. \$1.00. Messages on the Seven Last Words of Jesus on the cross. The author is a Baptist pastor in Florida. These are really brief sermons, evangelical and edifying.

THE LAST CALL TO THE GODLY REMNANT, by Philip Mauro. Reiner Publications, 1965, pp. 64, paperback. 75 cents. An earnest plea for Christian consecration and Biblical living. In part it is geared to conditions and problems in the Brethren movement. The origin of the Brethren movement is compared to Israel's return from the Babylonian Captivity (page 23) and it is stated that the Brethren withdrew from "the sects of Christendom" (p. 24) — statements which we regard as over-simplified and therefore partly erroneous. However there is much that is needed and truly edifying in this booklet.

NEVER PERISH, by J. C. Ryle. Sovereign Grace Union. No date, reprint, pocket size, paperback, pp. 50. 1 shilling. An exposition and defence of the doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints, by the well-known evangelical Anglican bishop of a century ago.

PEACE AND TRUTH. Sovereign Grace Union. April 1965, pp. 36, paperback, no price stated. An issue of the magazine of the Sovereign Grace Union. Contains several good articles expounding, defending and applying Biblical truth. An article entitled "The Authorized Version Under Attack" (pp. 56-60) impresses the reviewer as lacking in a grasp of the nature and principles of New Testament textual criticism in the hands of believing scholars.

CALVIN AND TRADITION, by W. Stanford Reid. Sovereign Grace Union. 1966, pp. 22, paperback. 2 shillings. A scholarly study of the position of the Reformer John Calvin on tradition in relation to the authority of Scripture.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR TEEN-AGERS, by R. W. McIntyre. Baker. 1965, pp. 40. 50 cents. Somewhat colloquial, not to say breezy in style, this booklet seeks to impress teen-agers

with the authority and importance of God's moral law.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING, by L. R. Shelton. Old Puritan Press, P. O. Box 6057, New Orleans 14, Louisiana. Simple, direct, earnest — an exhortation and encouragement to godly and spiritual living on the part of Christian people.

A LITTLE EXERCISE FOR YOUNG THEOLOGIANS, by Helmut Thielicke. Translated from the German by Charles L. Taylor. Foreword by Martin E. Marty of *The Christian Century*. Eerdmans, 1962, pp. 41, pocket size, paperback. 95 cents. A plea to theological students to take theology seriously and respond to it by personal spiritual commitment. Not everything in it is directly relevant to the American scene. The author evidently does not regard traditional "higher criticism" of the Bible as destructive of the Christian faith. Those who have always believed that theology is to be taken seriously and to issue in personal spiritual commitment will wonder as to the situation or intellectual climate which called for the book.

A CRUCIFIX, OR A SERMON UPON THE PASSION, by Thomas Adams. Reiner Publications. 1962, reprint of 1630, pp. 30, paper cover. No price stated. A Puritan sermon reprinted. Edifying and quite readable.

THE METHOD OF GRACE, by George Whitefield. Westminster Standard. 1961, reprint of 1741, pp. 29, paper cover. 1 s. 3d. This sermon by the Calvinist evangelist Whitefield is combined with "A brief account of the revivals of the 18th Century, particularly at Cambusland, Scotland." The doctrine is Biblical. The text of the sermon is Jeremiah 6:14. Unfortunately the print is rather small and the paragraphs long, giving an appearance of pages very tightly packed with print. This sermon by Whitefield disproves the common assertion that Calvinism is the enemy of evangelism.

HIS PEOPLE, by William Tiptaft. Reiner Publications. 1965, reprint of 1829, pp. 28, paperback. 35 cents. A sermon on Matthew 1:21. Originally an Anglican, the author became a Strict Baptist minister. The sermon sets forth Biblical truth earnestly.

APPROACHES TO THE REFORMATION OF THE CHURCH (Symposium). The *Evangelical Magazine*. No date, pp. 72, paperback. 4 shillings. A series of studies in Reformation Church history, by six British scholars. Notable among these are the Rev. James I. Packer, who writes on "Luther", and Rev. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, on "Ecclesiola in Ecclesia" ("Little Church in the Church"). Other articles are on Zwingli, the Anabaptists, Cranmer, John Knox. The roots of denominational division are searched out and the remedies attempted in Reformation times are examined. In our day of free and easy ecumenicalism, with its light-hearted

sacrifice of truth for the sake of organizational union, this is a very relevant publication.

FAMILY, STATE AND CHURCH: GOD'S INSTITUTIONS, by Paul Woolley. Baker, 1965, pp. 48, paperback. \$1.00. Originally a series of lectures delivered at the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary, Denver. After setting forth the divinely-ordained character of family, state and church, the author discusses a series of practical contemporary problems on the American scene, chiefly dealing with controversial areas of contact or relationship between Church and State, such as "Marriage and Divorce Laws," "State Assistance to Private Schools," "The Public School and Religion," "Sunday Closing Laws." With much of what the author advocates we are in hearty agreement, though we must differ at some points. The author manifests a very healthy tendency to demand Scriptural proof or warrant for some things which most American Christians tend to assume uncritically as indubitable truth. Our readers will not agree with all of Professor Woolley's positions and conclusions, but they will be led to think and to search the Scriptures as a result of reading this little book.

THE PROBLEM OF ELECTION, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church. 1966, pp. 46, paperback. Free on request. A series of radio broadcast sermons on the doctrine of Election. Defends sovereign election as Scriptural truth and answers usual objections against it. Pleads with the sinner to humble himself under God's way of Salvation.

VISIONS OF HEAVEN AND HELL, by John Bunyan. Reiner Publications, 1966, reprint, pp. 63, paperback. 75 cents. Bunyan on the eternal outcomes of life. Heartily recommended.

BRANDS PLUCKED FROM THE BURNING, by Tom L. Daniel. Tabernacle Baptist Church. 1966, pp. 45, paperback. Free on request. Radio talks on Zechariah 3:2. Earnest evangelical appeal.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE FAITH: I. THE WORD OF GOD, by G. E. Lane. Sovereign Grace Union. No date, pp. 16, paper cover. 9d. A brief statement, from the orthodox viewpoint, of the nature and functions of the Bible as the infallible Word of God.

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY, by Lester DeKoster. Eerdmans. 1966, pp. 46, paper cover. 75 cents. An examination and criticism by the Librarian of Calvin College. He finds the John Birch Society committed to a naturalistic philosophy, and holds that the Society's goal of "defeat of the Communist conspiracy" cannot cancel or excuse the anti-biblical nature of its principles in the field of theology and philosophy. He finds Mr. Welch, the principal leader of the organization, a promoter of "evolutionary humanism, with its Unknowable God and complete absence of Jesus Christ" (p. 33).

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? by Milford

Hall, Sr. Primitive Publications, Route 2, Elon College, North Carolina. No date, pp. 79, paper cover. 50 cents. A sermon on Matthew 22:42. Exalts Christ as the only Saviour of sinners, and pleads with men to come to Him. Rather long for a sermon.

FORGOTTEN YESTERDAY, by Adel Pryor. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 152. \$2.50. A novel for young people. Combined with mystery and romance is an appeal for vital Christian faith and commitment.

VENGEANCE AFOOT, by Virginia Whitman. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 177. \$2.95. For youth of junior high age. An American in Mexico witnesses the mistreating of a kidnapped seeing-eye dog. This leads on to a story of mystery and adventure, which embodies a Christian witness.

SPORTS ALIVE! by James C. Hefley. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 120. \$2.50. For young people, especially boys. Many true stories of athletic achievement coupled with positive Christian witness.

THE HIGH ROAD, by Faith Shannon. Zondervan. 1966, pp. 146. \$2.50. A young girl, reared in a minister's family, experiences some rude shocks in the life of a large secular university. These led to heart-searching and new commitment.

THE SEARCHING HEART, by Ralph W. Neighbor. Zondervan. 1964, pp. 187. \$2.95. A young woman with plenty of money but an unsatisfied heart finally finds satisfaction and meaning in life through knowing Christ.

Addresses of Publishers

Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502.

The Westminster Standard, 183 Rutene Road. Gisborne, New Zealand

Reiner Publications, Swengel, Pennsylvania 17880

Bible Truth Depot, c/o Reiner Publications, Swengel, Pa. 17880

A. E. Alexander, 6 Glasgow Road, Dumbarton, Scotland

The Evangelical Magazine, Providence House, 3 Speke Road, London, S.W. 11, England

Old Faith Contender, R.R. 2, Elon College, North Carolina

The Sovereign Grace Union, 6-8 Linkfield Corner, Redhill, Surrey, England

Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Box 185, Nutley, N. J. 07110

Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern St., London W.1, England

Tabernacle Baptist Church, P. O. Box 1757, Waco, Texas 76703

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:

Are verses 9 to 20 in the 16th chapter of the Gospel of Mark found in the two earliest manuscripts? Please explain this matter.

Answer:

The last twelve verses of the Gospel of Mark as it appears in the King James Version (Mark 16:9-20), are lacking in the two earliest parchment manuscripts (Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus). These two Greek manuscripts date from the fourth century after Christ, that is, they

were written about 300 years after the time of Christ. They are considered of prime importance among the witnesses for the Greek text of the New Testament.

Several other early Greek manuscripts also lack these verses. Some of the ones that contain verses 9-20 have a marginal note stating that these verses are lacking in older Greek copies. In some manuscripts the section containing these verses is marked by asterisks or other signs used by ancient scribes to mark a spurious addition.

Verses 9-20 are found, on the other hand, in

most of the later manuscripts, through the middle ages and down to the time when the invention of printing made further copying of manuscripts unnecessary.

A number of Greek manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark have a different ending following verse 8. This may be translated as follows:

"But they reported to those around Peter all that they had been told exactly. And after these things Jesus himself sent forth through them the sacred and incorruptible message of the eternal salvation from the east even unto the west." Some Greek manuscripts have this form of ending in addition to verses 9-20. According to the testimony of Jerome (fifth century) there existed in his time some Greek manuscripts having verses 9-20 with an addition after verse 14, as follows:

"And they excused themselves, saying, This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan who does not permit the truth and power of God to prevail over the unclean things of the spirits. Therefore, they said to Christ, Reveal thy righteousness now. And Christ answered them, The hour of the years of the power of Satan has been fulfilled, but other things are drawing near. And I was delivered unto death for those who have sinned, in order that they may return unto the truth and sin no more, so that they may inherit the spiritual and incorruptible glory of the righteousness which is in heaven."

Those who wish a more complete and detailed account of the ancient manuscript evidence concerning the ending of the Gospel of Mark are referred to **The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration**, by Bruce M. Metzger. Oxford University Press, New York and London, 1964, pages 57 and 226-228. The weight of the evidence is certainly against the genuineness of Mark 16:9-20.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

Does Psalm 5:5,6 teach that God actually hates the wicked, and hence all unregenerate persons?

Answer:

Yes, but by His common grace God also loves all unregenerate and wicked persons in this world with a general (non-redemptive) love, and the elect among them with a special (redemptive) love.

In God, love and hate co-exist for those still living in this world. In the case of the reprobate, the love will be temporary and the hate will be eternal; in the case of the elect, the hate will be temporary and the love will be eternal. In heaven there is no hatred; in hell there is no love. Those who enter heaven and hell are finished products; in this life people are still in process of becoming what they will ultimately be, and still have the opportunity to repent.

The common statement that "God loves the sinner but hates the sin" is a non-biblical abstraction. The sin has no existence apart from the sinner. The sin is the sinner in relation to God. The correct statement would be, "God loves the sinner in spite of the sin."

—J. G. Vos

Question:

Does Psalm 150, with its mention of worshipping God with various kinds of musical instruments, warrant the introduction of these instruments, and even orchestras and concerts, into divine worship in the church?

Answer:

Historically, the standard Reformed interpretation of this and similar Scripture passages (Calvin, Girardeau, etc.) is that the instruments mentioned are symbolic of joy in the Holy Spirit. Few would want to introduce dancing and high sounding cymbals into church worship now! What people want is the piano or pipe organ. In Bible times, such instruments as are mentioned in this Psalm were used only in the Temple service, in connection with the blood sacrifices, never in the synagogue worship (on which Christian church worship was patterned). In Christian history, instrumental music was unknown in church worship for hundreds of years after the time of Christ and the apostles. Thomas Aquinas (died A.D. 1274) opposed it in his day as "Judaistic."

—J. G. Vos

Question:

Can instrumental music in congregational worship be justified as an aid to singing?

Answer:

The universal experience of churches introducing it is that vocal singing deteriorates or is nearly drowned out by the instrumental music. Those churches which on the basis of conscientious adherence to principle exclude instrumental music often have excellent congregational singing which impresses visitors with its volume and quality. Of course, there is always room for improvement. To return to the precise question raised, if the Reformed understanding of the regulative principle of worship is valid, and the end does not justify the means, it is wrong to introduce into the worship of God that which He has not appointed in His Word, whatever practical benefits might appear to be involved.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

Are we justified in introducing non-canonical hymns on the ground that the Psalms do not contain the name of Jesus?

Answer:

Rightly understood, the Psalms are full of

Christ, and the word "anointed" in the Psalter could in several places properly be translated "Christ." The church under the apostles and for centuries thereafter evidently did not feel that our Saviour was slighted by the exclusive use of the Psalms in worship. That was the purest and most powerful age of Christianity. Next to it in purity and power was the age of the Protestant Reformation — again a period of Psalm-singing.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

What is the teaching of the Bible on the subject of modesty in women's dress, and is this teaching being practiced by Christian women today?

Answer:

Scripture in various places enjoins that women shall wear modest clothing (1 Peter 3:3; 1 Tim. 2:9). Apart from this class of Scriptures, such injunctions as Romans 14:21 should lead to caution about modest apparel.

However, what constitutes modest or immodest apparel is partly a matter of cultural conditioning and background. It depends partly on the social and cultural conditioning of the population. Modest apparel in Britain or America means one thing, in the Congo or the Amazon jungle it may mean something else. Missionaries no longer insist that their converts in tropical Africa dress like Christians in England or America.

In general, it may be a safe conclusion that women's clothing should be such as not to attract attention to the wearer, and not to arouse lustful thoughts in persons of the opposite sex. Also there should be consideration given to the opinion and feelings of the mass of one's fellow-Christians.

Traditional women's costume in Japan covers the body almost completely, yet is considered among the most beautiful and graceful in the

world. On the other hand, some forms of scanty dress in Europe or America may actually occasion greater temptation than complete nudity would (which would also, of course, be intolerably objectionable).

The great danger is that Christian women will not go by Scripture and conscience but by the whims of the fashion designers in Paris or elsewhere! Those whose aim is to please God will know how to dress properly.

—J. G. Vos

Question:

In the parables of the Treasure hid in the field, and the Pearl of Great Price (Matthew 13:44-46), are the treasure and the pearl identical in meaning, and what or who do they represent?

Answer:

Our Lord said that **the kingdom of heaven** is like unto treasure hid in a field, and that **the kingdom of heaven** is like unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls. Expositors generally have taken these two brief parables together and held that the treasure and the pearl have the same meaning. Note that in each case, possession was obtained only by the sacrifice of all other assets on the part of the seeker. The kingdom is therefore the supreme value, in comparison with which all other values fade into insignificance. It is thus the **summum bonum** or greatest possible good, the sum-total of all that is good and precious. This must be the possession of God Himself as our God, in a saving covenant relationship (including, of course, salvation by free grace in Christ). Compare Genesis 15:1, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." See also Psalm 73:26; 119:57; 142:5; Lam. 3:24. This greatest possible good is free — it is God's gift, not man's achievement — but none can have it except those who value it above all other goods combined.

—J. G. Vos

Acknowledgments and Announcements

The Manager of this magazine wishes to acknowledge, with hearty thanks, the following contributions to the cost of publishing the magazine which have been received since our last issue went to press:

June, 1966: No. 1638, \$2.50. No. 1639, \$4.50.

July, 1966: No. 1640, \$5.00. No. 1641, \$40.00. No. 1642, \$3.00. No. 1643, \$15.00. No. 1644, \$28.00. No. 1645, \$10.00.

August, 1966: No. 1646, \$10.00. No. 1647, \$5.00. No. 1648, \$1.00. No. 1649, \$10.00. No. 1650 (Canadian \$18.50), \$17.21.

September, 1966: No. 1651, \$25.00.

These generous contributions from friends indicate serious concern that **Blue Banner Faith and Life** shall continue publication. These gifts are deeply appreciated. Less than half of the money needed is received from subscriptions and sales of back issues. For the rest, we are mostly dependent on contributions. You can help the world-wide ministry of this magazine by contributing as the Lord enables you.

Circulation of this Issue

1400 copies of this issue were printed. Of these 1385 were immediately circulated to subscribers and readers, leaving 15 copies which can be used as samples or to fill future orders for back issues.

The distribution by countries was as follows:

U.S.A., 849. Canada, 138. Scotland, 86. Australia, 61. England, 54. Japan, 34. Northern Ireland, 31. South Africa, 23. Cyprus, 21. Ceylon, 14. New Zealand, 9. 6 copies each to India, Korea, Taiwan (Formosa, Free China). Eire, 5. Lebanon, 4. Wales, 4. 3 copies each to Netherlands, Syria,

Greece, Hong Kong, Peru, Mexico. 2 copies each to Ethiopia, Indonesia, Sweden. One copy each to France, United Arab Republic (Egypt), Switzerland, Southern Rhodesia, Chile, Brazil, Ghana, Costa Rica, Somali Republic, Panama Canal Zone. Total circulation 1385. Total outside U.S.A. 546. Number of countries reached: 36.

Recommended Tracts

The Editor wishes to recommend heartily to our readers the following two tracts, both of which are obtainable at \$2.50 per 100 from Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Missouri 63118.

A Brief Catechism on the Theory of Evolution, by Paul A. Zimmerman. 11 pages, pocket size. By an author who is thoroughly informed on current scientific thought. Every church should have a supply of these for college, high school and even

elementary school students who are being told by confident teachers that organic evolution is "proved fact" which no educated person can reject or even question.

Can Man Create Life? by Rod O'Connor. 9 pages, pocket size. Shows the bearing of Bible truth on present-day scientific efforts to synthesize living cells from inorganic matter. Ends with a telling plea to recognize the importance of attaining eternal life by God's saving grace.

Reprints Available

In writing for free copies of reprints, readers living in the U.S.A. should send a 5 cent stamp for postage. Canadian and overseas readers need not send stamps.

Psalm 98, tune Desert. Metrical version of Psalm 98 with music of the tune Desert, on single sheets which by folding once can be pasted in Psalter or other book of similar size 5 copies or less, free. In quantities: 25 for \$1.00. 50 for \$1.50. 100 for \$3.00. All postpaid.

What is Christian Education? Booklet by the Editor. Single copy, free. In quantities, 10 cents each or \$1.00 per dozen, postpaid.

Christian Education for Christian Youth. Pamphlet by the Editor. Single copy, free. In quantities, 2 cents per copy, postpaid.

Surrender to Evolution: Inevitable or Inexcusable? Reprint of article by the Editor, published April 1966 in the magazine. Single copy, free. In quantities, 10 cents per copy, postpaid.

Ashamed of the Tents of Shem? Booklet on Psalmody and worship by the Editor. Single copy, free. In quantities, 5 cents per copy, postpaid.

The Offense of the Cross. Evangelistic and Gospel tract by the Editor. Single copy free. In

quantities, 2 cents per copy or \$1.00 per 100, postpaid.

God, Man and Religion. Booklet by the Editor, on the underlying assumptions of different views of Christianity. Single copy, free. In quantities, 10 cents per copy or \$1.00 per dozen, postpaid.

A Christian Introduction to Religions of the World. 78-page paperback book by the Editor. Published by Baker Book House, 1019 Wealthy St., S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, U.S.A. In Canada, available from: G.R. Welch Company, Ltd., Toronto. This material was published as a series of lessons in the July through September issues of 1964. Price \$1.50 per copy. Please do not send orders for this book to the Manager of this magazine. We do not have copies for sale. Order from Baker Book House or G. R. Welch Company, or through your local book dealer.

The man who in the present crisis of the world has in his heart no burning desire to take the stand as a witness on the Lord's side, and to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and that as he shall answer to God at the great day, has little ground to believe that he has a divine call to the ministry, and least of all to the ministry in the Covenanter Church.

— R. J. Goerge

Index of Blue Banner Faith and Life for 1966

Acknowledgments and Announcements, 41, 85, 140, 191

Basic Principles of Covenant Theology (J. G. Vos), 99

Blue Banner Question Box, 38, 138, 189

Christian and the Jigsaw, The (Paul E. G. Cook), 3

Christianity for the Twentieth Century? (I. Murray), 5

Death of Death, The (J. G. Vos), 15

End of the Ages, The (Series of Bible Lessons), 153-179

Ephesians, Studies in the Epistle to the (Series of Bible Lessons), 25-34, 63-80, 109-128

Faith's Triumph (I. Murray), 61

Genesis One — Is it Historical? (E. J. Young), 145

Inspiration (R. M. More, Jr.), 57

Instrumental Music in the Public Worship of the Church (J. L. Girardeau), 9, 52

John Calvin on Church Music (J. Calvin), 141

Kingdom of Truth, The (J. G. Vos), 91

Law of God for the Modern World, The (Series of Bible Lessons), 16-25

Lord's Great Controversy, The (J. C. Rankin), 13, 54, 95, 147

Metrical Psalms with Music, 42, 88, 142, and back cover of this issue

Outnumbered Foe, An (I. Murray), 60

Poems and Poetical Quotations

Beauty of Christ, The (E. B. Heins), 144

Better Resurrection (C. G. Rossetti), 2

Cross of Christ, The (E. B. Heins), 44

Friend of All Friends (E. J. Kayser), 44

From Everlasting to Everlasting (E. B. Heins), 90

From House to Home (C. G. Rossetti), 2

God is Hospitable (E. B. Heins), 144

Hand of God, The (E. B. Heins), 90

Love of Christ (C. G. Rossetti), 2

Mock on, Mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau (W. Blake), 140

Mysteries of God (E. B. Heins), 90

Only a Word of Anger (Anon.), 86

Shadows (E. B. Heins), 44

Somebody Did a Golden Deed (Anon.), 140

Song for Every Land, The (E. B. Heins), 44

What Hath God Wrought! (C. G. Rossetti), 90

What is the Answer? (E. J. Kayser), 144

Prophecy, Time and Eternity (J. G. Vos), 179

Recommended Tracts, 192

Religious Terms Defined, 16, 62, 107, 151

Reprints Available, 41, 86, 139, 192

Some Noteworthy Quotations, 15, 63, 108, 152

Surrender to Evolution: Inevitable or Inexcusable? (J. G. Vos), 45

What Does it Mean to Abstain from All Appearance of Evil? (J. G. Vos), 57

Index of Book Reviews and Notices in Volume 21, 1966

Abandoned to Christ (Maxwell), 133

Above Ourselves (Jauncey), 137

Accomplished Redemption, An (Grier), 187

After the Storm (Chitwood), 85

Alarm to the Unconverted, An (Alleine), 185

All the Books and Chapters of the Bible (Lockyer) 134

All the Doctrines of the Bible (Lockyer), 134

All the Parables of the Bible (Lockyer), 134

Amplified Bible, The, 135

Anatomy of Anti-Semitism, The (Daane), 184

Apostle to the Illiterates (Mason), 133

Approaches to the Reformation of the Church (Symposium), 188

Avis Christiansen's Most Loved Poems (Christiansen), 137

Baptism not for Infants (Watson), 36

Basic Introduction to the New Testament (Stott), 131

Bible for Today's World, The (Criswell), 135

Billy Graham: the Pastor's Dilemma (Hulse), 132

Bit of Honey, A (Thorn), 83

Boundless Horizons (Wilson), 84

Brands Plucked from the Burning (Daniel), 188

But God! (Edman), 83

Calvin and Tradition (Reid), 187

Capital Punishment (Carey), 131

Case for Calvinism, The (Van Til), 82

- Challenge of World Communism in Asia, The (Saunders), 133
- Christ Above All (Lee), 84
- Christ and Architecture (Bruggink & Droppers), 80
- Christ and the Church (Moody), 83
- Christ and the Hypocrite (Daniel), 131
- Christian and the John Birch Society, The (De Koster), 188
- Christian Heroes of Today (Mainprize), 83
- Christian View of Modern Science, A (Reymond), 35
- Church Growth in Mexico (McGavran), 83
- Climax of the Ages, The (Tatford), 131
- Comfort for Christians (Pink), 131
- Cross in the New Testament, The (Morris), 184
- Cross Through the Scriptures, The (Huegel), 135
- Crowded to Christ (Maxwell), 83
- Crucifix, A (Adams), 188
- Cry to the Wind (Vogt), 84
- Daily Gospel (Smith), 137
- Daily Manna Calendar for 1966 (Monsma), 37
- Dairyman's Daughter, The (Richmond), 186
- Danger, Saints at Work (Rees), 132
- Dare to Live Now! (Larson), 136
- David Brainerd: Beloved Yankee (Wynbeek), 83
- Dawn of a New Era (Lee), 37
- Dead Sea Scrolls, The (Mansoor), 82
- Deeper Life for You (Freeman), 136
- Descent of the Dove (Williams), 129
- Did Jesus Rise from the Dead? (Roper), 137
- Dwight L. Moody's Daily Meditations (Moody), 83
- Ephesians, Epistle of Paul to the (Foulkes), 129
- Essays on the Death Penalty (Symposium), 132
- Established by the Word of God (Coleman), 131
- Evangelicalism, the New Neutralism (Ashbrook), 37
- Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God (Packer), 183
- Extraordinary Living for Ordinary Men (Shoemaker), 84
- Faith Alive (Meckel), 84
- Faith and a Good Conscience (Symposium), 185
- Family, State and Church: God's Institutions (Woolley), 188
- Fathers of the Bible (Dame), 81
- Five Pioneer Missionaries (Symposium), 129
- Folly of Fools, The (Daniel), 131
- For Every Red Sea (Crawford), 84
- Forgotten Yesterday (Pryor), 189
- Foundations of the Faith: The Word of God (Lane), 188
- Fountain Sealed, A (Epp), 85
- Fulness of Christ, The (Briscoe), 136
- Game and Party Ideas (Carlson), 133
- General Without a Gun (Ludwig), 85
- George Whitefield's Journals (Whitefield), 130
- Glad Moments with God (Simon), 136
- Go Home and Tell (Smith), 133
- Go! Revolutionary New Testament Christianity (Kingsley & Delamarter), 133
- God's Election in John 3:16 (Shelton), 131
- God's Plan for the Future (Strauss), 134
- God's Regeneration (Daniel), 131
- God's Son (Ramsay), 134
- Going Steady with God (Mow), 135
- Great Scottish Churchman, A (Miller), 186
- Hammer of God, The (Hunter), 84
- Handbook for Christian Writers (Anderson), 133
- Handbook of Bible History: the Gospels (Stob), 185
- Hart's Hymns (Hart), 137
- Heart of the Faithful (Ecenbarger), 136
- Hearts in Conflict (Pryor), 84
- Hebrews and I, II Peter, Commentary on (Calvin), 81
- Heir of Heaven Walking in Darkness, The (Philpot), 187
- Hell: God's Eternal Punishment (Daniel), 131
- Hellbent for Election (Speshock), 133
- High Road, The (Shannon), 189
- His People (Tiptaft), 188
- Holy War, The (Bunyan), 132
- How to Enjoy the Christian Life (Mainprize), 133
- How to Teach One and Win One for Christ (Laubach), 84
- Humanitarian Curtain, The (Bunzel), 133
- I Believe in the American Way (Jauncey), 84
- Incomparable Book, The (Smith), 131
- Inevitable Encounter, The (Elson), 136
- In the Footsteps of the Flock (MacLean), 186
- In the Midst (Gilmore), 136
- I was a Mormon (Anderson), 85
- John's Wonderful Gospel (Powell), 134
- Karl Barth and Evangelicalism (Van Til), 187
- Karl Barth's Doctrine of the Trinity (Young), 187
- Keeping the Spirit of Christmas (Brown), 137
- Knowing God's Secrets (Hunter), 132
- Last Call to the Godly Remnant, The (Mauro), 187
- Law or Grace (De Haan), 85
- Leading Religions of the World (Stilson), 84
- Let's Go to India (Terry), 85
- Leveling with God (Cook), 134
- Life and Philosophy of Christ, The (Fraser), 134
- Life of Elijah, The (Pink), 183
- Lifting Up for the Downcast, A (Bridge), 131
- Little Exercise for Young Theologians, A (Thielicke), 188
- Living Above (Carlson), 85
- Living Can Be Exciting (Meckel), 84
- Living Miracles (Hefley), 35
- Lost Herd (Roam), 85
- Loveliest Story Ever Told, The (Campbell), 129
- Magic in Marriage (Jauncey), 136
- Man's Highest Wisdom (Daniel), 131
- Manual on Management for Christian Workers (Ford), 84

- Men Made New (Enlow), 34
 Method of Grace, The (Whitefield), 188
 Millennium, The (Cox), 187
 Miracle of America, The (Ford), 85
 Missionary Principles (Allen), 132
 Moments of Meditation from Matthew Henry (Bennett), 136
 Morning and Evening Devotions from the Bible (Spurgeon), 134
 My God, my God, Why? (Bedsole), 187
 Mystery of Iniquity, The (Daniel), 131
 Nature and Grace (Moore), 186
 Never Perish (Ryle), 131, 187
 New Patterns of Church Growth in Brazil (Read), 83
 Nothing to Win but the World (Cooper), 135
 Not Somehow, but Triumphantly! (Edman), 136
 Old Fashion Home, The (Daniel), 131
 On Being a Christian (Rinker), 137
 On the Damascus Road (Johnston), 135
 Origin of the Solar System (Whitcomb), 35
 Parables of the Old Testament (Norden), 81
 Passion and Death of Christ, The (Spurgeon), 132
 Peace and Truth (Sovereign Grace Union), 187
 Peloubet's Select Notes for 1966 (Smith), 36
 Pentecost and After (DeHaan), 84
 Pictures of Jesus with Simple Stories (Bryant), 83
 Piece of Blue Sky, A (Berg), 84
 Play Ball! (Hefley), 85
 Plight of Man and the Power of God, The (Lloyd-Jones), 184
 Poems for Mothers (Michael), 132
 Poems from my Heart (Michael), 136
 Points for Parents (Simon), 137
 Practical Christian Living (Shelton), 188
 Prayer in the Space Age (Hall), 132
 Prayer: the Christian's Vital Breath (Van Dooren), 132
 Prayers for Everyone, to Meet Every Need (MacLeod), 138
 Preaching and Teaching from Ephesians (Howard), 81
 Problem of Election, The (Daniel), 188
 Programs for Special Days (Ammerman), 137
 Protestants on the Road to Rome (Grier), 185
 Psalm 139, a Study in the Omniscience of God (Young), 129
 Quotable Illustrations (Lee), 137
 Rainbow and the Resurrection, The (Patrick), 137
 Reformation of the Church, The (Murray), 184
 Reigning with Christ (Huegel), 137
 Revelation, Expository Sermons on, Vol. III, IV (Criswell), 135, 136
 Roman Catholicism Today (Carson), 132
 Romance Along the Bayou (Bell), 84
 Romans, Epistle to the (Richardson & Chamblin), 36
 Ruth: the Satisfied Stranger (Mauro), 130
 Saving Life of Christ, The (Thomas), 137
 Savior and the Church, The (Pontier), 187
 Scar, The (Bell), 85
 Searching Heart, The (Neighbor), 189
 Second Corinthians, Commentary on (Hughes), 82
 Secret of Hidden Ranch (Whitman), 85
 Selected Sermon Outlines (Strong), 137
 Sermon Suggestions in Outline Form (White), 133
 Sermons for the Times (Anderson), 186
 Shoemaker who gave India the Bible, The (Kieffer), 83
 Sourcebook of 500 Illustrations (Lee), 135
 Speaker's Treasury of 400 Quotable Poems (Pentz), 34
 Speak Up! Handbook for the Public Speaker (Daniel), 132
 Special Days and Occasions (Apostolon), 81
 Sports Alive! (Hefley), 189
 Stories to Live By (Wilder), 84
 Story of the Christ Child, The (Morris), 35
 Studies in Genesis One (Young), 186
 Suki and the Invisible Peacock (Blackburn), 35
 Supreme Court and Prayer in the Public School, The (Kik), 186
 Survey of the Old Testament, A (Fraser), 134
 Talking About Jesus with a Jewish Neighbor (Huisjen), 187
 Ten Commandments for Teen-Agers, The (McIntyre), 187
 Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Vol. III) (Kittel), 130
 They Will not Bow! (Bass), 187
 This I Confess (Monsma), 187
 Thy God Reigneth (Anon.), 186
 Trail, The (Bell), 136
 Treasures of Darkness (Milligen), 85
 Two Confessions (Kik, DiGangi, Henry), 187
 Vacation Bible School Materials (Great Commission), 87
 Vengeance Afoot (Whitman), 189
 Visions of Heaven and Hell (Bunyan), 188
 Walk with God Between Sundays (Halverson), 136
 We're Never Alone (Guder), 82
 What is this Calvinism? (Lane), 187
 What Jesus Had to Say about Money (Laubach), 186
 What Think Ye of Christ? (Hall), 188
 White Panther, The (Swinford), 85
 Works Count Too! (Pickell), 136
 You Can have Joy (Prater), 138
 You Can't Lose for Winning (Moody), 136
 Your Child from Birth to Rebirth (Mow), 135
 Your God and Your Gold (Flynn), 185
 Zondervan Pastor's Annual for 1966 (Austin), 135

PSALM 91

GERMANY. L.M.

L. van Beethoven

7. Thy dwell-ing place is God Most High-For, Lord, Thou art my ref - uge nigh-

No e - vil shall on thee be sent, Nor an - y plague come nigh thy tent.

8. Because His angels He commands
To bear thee safely in their hands,
To guard thy ways, lest left alone,
Thou dash thy foot against a stone.

9. Thou shalt tread down the lion's wrath,
And crush the adder in thy path;
On lions young, on serpents dread,
Thy trampling feet unharmed shall tread.

12. Yea, great salvation give will I,
With length of life will satisfy.
On him I honor will bestow,
To him My full salvation show.

10. Because he set his love on Me,
From danger I will set him free.
Because to him My name is known,
On high I'll set him as Mine own.

11. As oft as he shall call to Me,
Most gracious shall Mine answer be.
I will be with him in distress,
And in his troubles I will bless.

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The children of believing and professing parents are church members by their birth; it is as such that they are entitled to baptism. And being baptized they are to be considered in the

preaching of the Word, in public prayer, in family visitation, and in every form of pastoral oversight. "Feed my lambs" (John 21:15).

— R. J. George