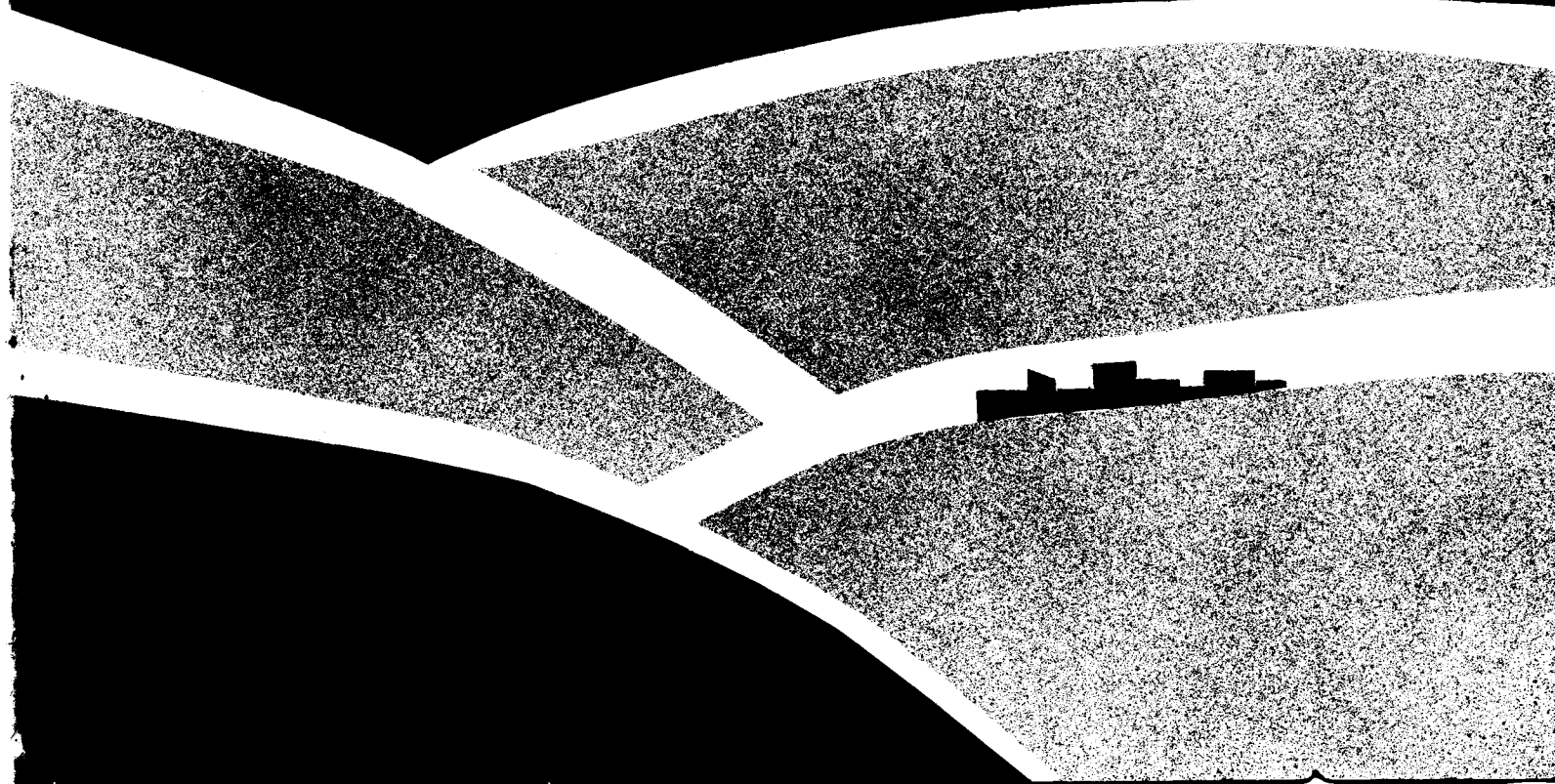




The Presbyterian Guardian

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The Changing Scene

HENRY W. CORAY

Alarm to the Unconverted

Some years ago a radio program titled "The Shadow" was aired weekly. Its opening lines always posed the question, "Who knows what evil lurks in the heart of man?" Anyone who has read *Alarm to the Unconverted* could answer, without qualification, "Joseph Alleine" (the book's author).

This little book is a Puritan classic. Recently reissued by Jay Green in paperback, it has appeared in more than 300 printings and, according to Mr. Green, "It is quite possible that over 500 editions have come forth." Obviously its influence has been and still is enormous.

That it has been used of God to lead readers to repentance and faith is indisputable. That it is in many ways a great book is undeniable. Joseph Alleine, gifted in his use of pithy incisive diction, makes his appeal to the unsaved with agony of soul and a burning compassion that puts most of us to shame. I know of no writer who has greater ability to turn the search light into the secret crannies of the heart and expose the hidden things of darkness than this Puritan scholar.

There are so many other excellencies between the covers of *Alarm to the Unconverted* that one feels almost guilty in daring to point up its flaws. Nevertheless, in the interest of truth and by way of warning this should be done and, I hope, in this case is being attempted with clarity and humility.

Confusing regeneration and conversion

In the first place, Alleine errs in identifying regeneration with conversion. Regeneration, or the new birth, is that radical change wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit. In it the subject is passive; one *is* born again, he does not give birth to himself. "Regeneration," says Abraham Kuyper, "is the implantation of a new life principle." It is prior to conversion and in order to it.

On the other hand, conversion includes two inseparable steps: "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). In conversion, as over against regeneration, the subject is not passive but active. Professor R. B. Kuiper used to say in class, "The Holy Spirit brings us to repentance and faith, but he does not repent and believe for us."

On page 26, Mr. Alleine quotes the phrase "born of the Spirit" (John 3:5, 6), which is certainly the act of regeneration. And Alleine immediately subjoins this with the proposition, "So then, conversion is a work above man's power." This is true; but the text applies not to conversion but to regeneration. This same confusion appears on page 30, page 62, and page 63. The interchangeable use of the two terms, regeneration and conversion, is regrettable and unfortunate.

Focus on man, not Christ

Randall Stewart in his *American Literature and Christian*

Doctrine charges novelists Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, and Theodore Dreiser—he calls them "amoralists"—with placing man so low on the scale of creation that they make him sub-human. I am sure that Alleine, in his zeal to set forth the doctrine of total depravity, did not intend to fall into that error. Yet at times it looks as though he comes perilously close to the brink.

For example, on page 27, you read: "Look back upon yourself, O Christian! Reflect upon your swinish nature, your filthy swill, your once beloved mire" (cf. 2 Peter 2). This is not good exegesis. It is doubtful if Peter here meant to compare our human nature, bad as it is, to that of swine; rather, he is using an illustration from the animal world to warn potential backsliders against defection from the faith.

The burden of Charles Spurgeon's message was, "For every look at yourself, look ten times to Christ." Alleine's directive might well be, "For every look at Christ, look ten times to yourself." Is this an overstatement, perhaps? Well, read the book. Our good brother seems to take special delight in dwelling on the terrible evil in mankind.

Page after page, chapter after chapter are devoted to opening up the Pandora's Box of the human spirit until the very air around us is filled with moral smog. At times, as in the discussion, "Labor to Get a Thorough Sight and Lively Sense and Feeling of your Sins," Alleine becomes positively masochistic; and presently you begin to feel beaten down, bludgeoned, empty, drawn and quartered.

Neglect of substitutionary atonement

The most serious weakness in the *Alarm*, I am persuaded, may shock Mr. Alleine's admirers when they ponder it. The defect is this: Having read the book twice carefully, I fail to find a clear, sustained, definitive, satisfying, scriptural exposition of the pivotal doctrine of the vicarious atonement wrought by Christ. (If I am wrong or have overlooked such a passage, I would appreciate anyone's pointing it out, and I will gladly retract this allegation.)

Is this to suggest that Alleine disbelieves that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures"? Not at all. He does believe that great vital truth and preached it, I am certain. And in all fairness, references to the cross do appear here and there. For example (page 120), Alleine says, "Glory to thee, O God the Son, who has loved me and washed me from my sins in Thine own blood" (cf. also page 28).

All I am saying here is that there is a sad imbalance in Alleine's presentation. One cannot put down the book without wishing that, having probed the chambers of human imagination with penetrating power and dredging up the vile reprehensible sins from within it, the author did not—may I say it?—give equal time to the sufferings of the Savior and the glory that followed. Had he done so you wonder, would not inquiries, out of their lost and helpless

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EILEEN VANCE

Sometimes it's really hard to get someone to come to church. For example, take the little girl who used to be our next-door neighbor. Sally was in second grade, same as my little brother. She was really a cute kid—long blond hair and a really big smile. And she was a good kid too—always obeyed her parents without a fight or anything. Not like my brother and me.

We used to invite Sally to come to Sunday school with us. Almost every Sunday we'd invite her. And sometimes we thought sure she'd come; but she never did.

I don't think she would have minded coming or anything. But it was her parents. They were nice, too. But my mom said that Sally's mother said you didn't need church to get to heaven. Anyway, they had this big boat. It must have had about 200 horsepower. They used to go out on their boat almost every Sunday. We'd hear them leaving early Sunday morning—about 5:30, I guess—and they wouldn't get home till after we'd all gone to bed. So Sally never came to Sunday school.

Our family used to talk about Sally and her family during dinner sometimes. We really felt bad 'cause they didn't know Jesus. We prayed a whole lot for them—but it never did any good 'cause Sally never came.

Once we were talking about Sally and my dad got the idea of asking our pastor if he could help us bring Sally and her family to Christ. So Mom went down to church to talk to him. The pastor suggested the idea of having something like a "Bible Club" for children in our home one day a week after school. That way Sally could learn about Jesus even if she didn't come to Sunday school.

condition, have been compelled more forcefully to look into the face of the crucified and risen Lord of Glory, and realize with more ecstatic joy that—great sinners that they are—Jesus is a greater Savior?

It is where sin *abounds* that grace *superabounds*. The stethoscope of the law calls for the therapy of Calvary. It is, after all, "the goodness of God" that leads to repentance (Romans 2:4).

The sickness of modern literature

English professor Gilbert Hight of Columbia University throws a luminous beam on modern fiction. He says, "The growth of immorality, especially among young men and girls, and in particular of deliberate cruelty, drunkenness and sexual promiscuity are vices which are not only condoned, but actually praised and enjoyed by the most admired characters in these assembly-line books and magazines. It frankly revolts me to know that the only American writer whose books have sold over ten million copies is Mickey Spillane."

Boy, that was a really neat idea and we would be like missionaries then. There were lots of kids on our street who never went to church or anything. So we talked about it for a long time. The youth minister at our church even called us up and said that he would get stories and pictures for us to use and help us get it started.

But the more we talked, the more we realized that a "Bible Club" would be a lot of work. It meant we'd have to prepare a story to teach every week during school. We'd have to have refreshments for the kids. Oh, and we'd have to go around the neighborhood inviting kids to come. My mom is pretty busy and she didn't think she could handle it. So we decided we'd have to forget about it. But we kept on praying for Sally.

I guess it was just a few weeks after that that Sally's family moved away. I think her father was transferred to another place by his company. I wonder what happened to Sally.

But it was really neat then. The people who moved into Sally's house already knew Christ—they went to the Baptist Church, though. But they had only been here two weeks when they started a "Bible Club" in their home on Tuesday afternoons. And it's really neat—about 20 kids come. We don't go, though. And I don't know too much about it, but Mom told Dad that they invited all the neighbors to come to a Bible study at their home on Thursday nights.

It sure is too bad they didn't move in before Sally left. Who knows? Sally and her parents might have been saved. It sure is hard.

Eileen Vance is not "her" real name. We can't vouch for the actual details of the story either. It was first printed in the newsletter of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Long Beach, California.

A further sidelight on current literature comes from the pen of the literary critic Edmund Fuller: "I believe that in the curdled disillusionment of the worship of the creature instead of the Creator we find the source of the ugliest, most loveless and despairing veins of modern writing."

Give us more Hights and Fullers, you colleges!

One of my countrymen, the Rev. Chang Mu Song, A clergyman of no mean ability in the pulpit, Eloquent, winsome and easy to hear— Nevertheless too frequently Becomes carried away With the music of his own voice And does not know when to terminate his sermon; So his congregation now secretly Refers to their leader as, The Rev. "On Too Long."

—The Old Chinese Philosopher

A Song of the Nativity

YE PILGRIMS, in the tale retold
What do your wondering eyes behold?
A babe which, scarcely given, gives,
Its every breath a grace that lives;
God turned to his own sacrament,
Spending his all, yet never spent;
Entering our kind and ours alone,
Flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone;
The uncreated Light of Light,
Heaven's noonday, swallowed by our night;
Guileless, incapable of wrong,
More than the lambs he lay among;
His smallness laden with our sin;
Born that his birth-cries might begin
Full thirty years of tragedy,
Each step a step towards Calvary.
And this is the high-holy spot,
Angels are sad to visit not!
Here undergird God's cords of gold
Our earth, and it from falling hold
Into the desperate abyss,
Where love not even a memory is.
This is the blest alighting-ground
Of grace, whence it shall circle round
With one wide-flung redeeming span
All sin and sorrow and pain of man,
And make new paradise streams flow,
That from God's throne through Eden go;
Yea cause all things now mute and dim
Again to shine and sing in Him.
If this ye in the manger see,
A promise and a potency
Of what was for the future willed,
Observe a thing even now fulfilled,
Well worth to open wide your eyes;
Close to the babe, transfigured, lies
She through whom God the Christ-gift gave
The world both and herself to save.
Lest thou the full-orbed glory miss,
Note well the mother's part in this.
The greatest masters of the brush
Put more here than the solemn blush
Of just awakened motherhood,
Trembling at its beatitude;
They tried to limn a mystery
Of God-encompassed ecstasy.

But God, who first the image drew,
Knows more than ever artist knew.

His work is the Madonna-face
With its uncopiable grace,

Where, as in a pellucid stream,
To Him his own eyes mirrored seem.

The light God saw in Mary shine,
The inmost shrine within her shrine,

The whitest flame within the flame,
Religion is its holy name.

From it proceeded the ground-swell,
Upheaved in her high canticle;

The feeling of unworthiness,
Not loath, but eager to confess

Itself but chosen instrument,
A chord through which God's music went,

Like pulses throbbing through the frame
Each to the heart-pulse whence they came;

A hymn unaging, ever new,
An organ-peal the ages through,

Chanting: "The handmaid of the Lord;
Me be according to thy word";

Made through a fine simplicity
Mindless of its own melody,

Anxious alone that God should hear
A virgin strain pleasing his ear,

Sensing as from within God's mind,
Why He exalts the humble kind,

Puts down the mighty from their seats,
The hungry with his fulness meets;

And, rising high above the thought
Of aught could in return be brought,

Perceives how all the blessed live
Only that God may give and give.

So Mary, with naught else to bring,
Made her sweet Psalm an offering,

Wherein the Lord such pleasure found,
He let it through the world resound,

To bless our ears each Christmas night
With notes like drops of liquid light,

So clear, we mean to hear in them
The very voice of Bethlehem,

As had by Mary's side we sat,
And drunk of her "Magnificat."

— *Geerhardus Vos*

Dr. Vos was a professor at the old Princeton Theological Seminary. He also delighted to praise his Lord in poetry. This poem was his Christmas message to students and friends in 1924.

The Presbyterian Guardian

Jesus, born in Bethlehem—or Nazareth?

WILLEM A. VanGEMEREN

Recently I received a brochure advertising a trip to the Holy Land. The idea was apparently to put the traveler in Bethlehem at Christmas. Apart from the question of whether Jesus was born in December, another question is being raised in many circles today:

Was Jesus born in Bethlehem? If the answer is negative, we may have to reconsider what stories to tell our children—certainly not the ones about the shepherds in Judean fields or about the hotel situation in Bethlehem.

Does it really matter whether Jesus was born in Bethlehem? Can you be a Christian and still believe that Jesus was born in Nazareth, that prosperous city of Galilee some 80 miles north of Bethlehem? The answer to that depends not so much on how you interpret the accounts in Matthew and Luke as it does on your view of Jesus himself.

In this article no argument is presented to show that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, since the Gospel accounts are quite unambiguous on the point. I do hope to show the close relationship between one's preconceived view of Jesus and his place of birth by referring to two outstanding Israeli authors: Abraham A. Kabak writes from the viewpoint of literature and is widely known among modern Israeli students; David Flusser, professor of religious history at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, expresses the academic viewpoint.

Abraham A. Kabak:

The Narrow Path, the Man of Nazareth

Born in Russia in 1883, Abraham Kabak enjoyed a Jewish religious education. In 1921 he settled permanently in Palestine and taught literature at the well-known Rehavia Gymnasium. Before he died (1944) he finished *The Narrow Path* (written in Hebrew and available in an abridged English edition from Massada Press in Tel Aviv, 1968). In this his outstanding historical novel, Kabak proposed to "tell unhappy people like myself that they are not abandoned orphans in the world of God and that they are not drifting dust. Anyone who bears within him the image of God is not drifting dust." Since its first publication in 1950, this book has been frequently reprinted and is still a best-seller in Israel.

In Kabak's physical description, Jesus stood out among his playmates because of his golden curls and blue eyes. Because he was so different in appearance from his brothers, the Nazareth children teased him and forced him to seclude himself. When Jesus was thirteen years old, he was confronted with the "facts" about himself:

"He was sitting by the well of Nazareth. Close to the well boys were playing. Behind him two women were washing the dishes and were quietly talking. . . . Suddenly his ear caught the words which made him shudder. They were speaking about him and about his mother. They mentioned the name of the Roman officer, Pandurra. He heard the word 'rape.' One of them said: 'Does he know or does he act as if he does not? . . . That poor Mary'—a giggle. As scalded by burning water Jesus jumped from his place; he fled from there and ran, ran very quickly home. He wanted to fall into his mother's arms . . . to cry out with all his might:

'A lie! A lie!' " (p. 60).

Jesus' father was an *'Am Ha'aretz* (a man of the land who did not acquaint himself with nor observe consistently the Jewish traditional laws). Though Jesus studied with a rabbi, he stood out not because of his insight into the law, but because of his independent spirit. "In fact," says Kabak, "he knew very little of the Torah" (p. 18).

An independent-minded Jesus

This autonomous spirit of Jesus expressed itself in two ways: First, he composed his own prayer, an uncommon practice in Judaism with its formalized prayers for every occasion. This prayer came to be known as "The Lord's Prayer."

Second, Jesus feared God in his own way by taking seriously the light commandments and by taking lightly the serious ones. Because his religious interests did not fit within the framework of Jewish orthodoxy, Jesus is pictured by Kabak as remembering his pilgrimages to Jerusalem with nostalgia. On the first one, he wandered into the hall of the Sanhedrin and recited verses before these men with their prayershawls and other paraphernalia that identified them as great teachers of the law. Though the response of these great ones was encouraging, the spanking from his distraught parents was not easily forgotten.

At a later time, Jesus questioned how one could find God in the midst of commercialized Jerusalem. It was much easier to find him in the Galilean mountains. In Jerusalem, God is enthroned and receives the obeisance of his servants; in Galilee, God is the good Father who leaves his throne to show his love to his creatures. Jesus also despised the gory scenes in Jerusalem with the blood-stained garments of the priests and the bleeding animals for sacrifice.

(Continued on next page)

NAZARETH



Society's outcast finds himself

Kabak takes pains to describe the psychological development of Jesus. Cast out of society in early youth and a non-conformist to the Jewish orthodoxy of his time, Jesus spent much time wandering in the mountains. Disturbed by the yoke of the Romans, Jesus is shown inciting his father and uncle and others to think of war as an important possibility. The failure of the Galilean revolt, in which Joseph died, left Jesus with no ideals and with very few friends. He was rejected in his own town of Nazareth, not because of his teaching about the kingdom of God, but because of his involvement with politics. After this apparent failure, Jesus grew in self-awareness, whereby he arrived at his revolutionary discovery.

Many years before Rabbi Hananiah had taught that each man must learn to employ the treasure given him by the Creator, which is simply the fact, "*I am.*" Jesus came to realize that man finds his "I" not by ceremonial observance, for "deliverance and salvation are open for every Israelite within his heart. . . . Suddenly Jesus straightened up, stood and looked surprised. An idea had cut through him: All of us are like (a) child, all of us are deserted, afflicted with sores. . . . Man can find the image of God in himself *only* by doing righteousness and mercy" (p. 122).

This was the revolutionary message, as Kabak describes it, that all men are created in the image of God and must demonstrate the "I" by love and respect for the "I" of someone else, even as God, the Great "I AM" (in Exodus 20:2), shows himself in love to his creatures. With this message Jesus went forth to the world as a changed man.

On his way to Jerusalem, Jesus stayed with John the Baptist, whose preaching on judgment and repentance was in sharp contrast to Jesus' thinking. His kind words to a prostitute—who, Kabak feels, had been waiting a long time to obtain the Baptist's approval for being baptized—exemplify Jesus' quite different attitude. He says to her, "Our Father in Heaven is a merciful Father, forgiving his creatures. . . . Trust in God. I am saying: Believe that your sins have been forgiven, for He is a merciful and compassionate God. He forgave you, woman" (p. 237).

In the last chapter of the book's first volume, Kabak depicts how John, preacher of judgment, came to recognize the superiority of Jesus' teaching of mercy and love. At Jesus' request, John was willing to baptize him. "One cannot refuse the greater. Tomorrow at noon come to the Jordan and I will baptize you, even though I am not worthy to loosen the string of your shoe" (p. 296).

Teaching the "inner experience"

In the second volume, Kabak presents us with the scene around the Sea of Galilee where Jesus is teaching his disciples. Capernaum, the city of fishermen, has become his headquarters since he was rejected at Nazareth.

Jesus' teaching emphasized the revolutionary discovery he had made while wandering in the mountains. Kabak imagines a conversation between Jesus and Judas Iscariot, who had been known to Jesus since boyhood in Nazareth. Jesus speaks on the problem of hatred: "You, Judas! The whole world has been created just for you. Think about this for a moment. You are the creature of God's hands. His exact likeness. More than this: you are a part of God Above. . . . You must respect yourself as God" (p. 358). And later, "You are despising, hating, crushing. . . . This will cease

when you get clear that *you* are the essence, that you are a part of God, that you are holy, because God is Holy. Immediately, hatred will cease" (p. 360).

Together with this teaching on the image of God, Kabak understands the teaching on the kingdom of God as an inner experience. "Who expects to see it not in himself . . . will never see it. . . . The Kingdom of Heaven is in you. . . . None is lost in God's sight, . . . *all* are protected in his shadow, the wicked and the righteous. . ." (p. 376).

Peter, the real traitor of Jesus

In Kabak's estimation, it was Peter that brought Jesus to his end. Whereas Jesus was deeply involved in his teaching on love and the kingdom within, Peter reduced this teaching by his readiness to see miracles in nature that he credits to the power of his Rabbi.

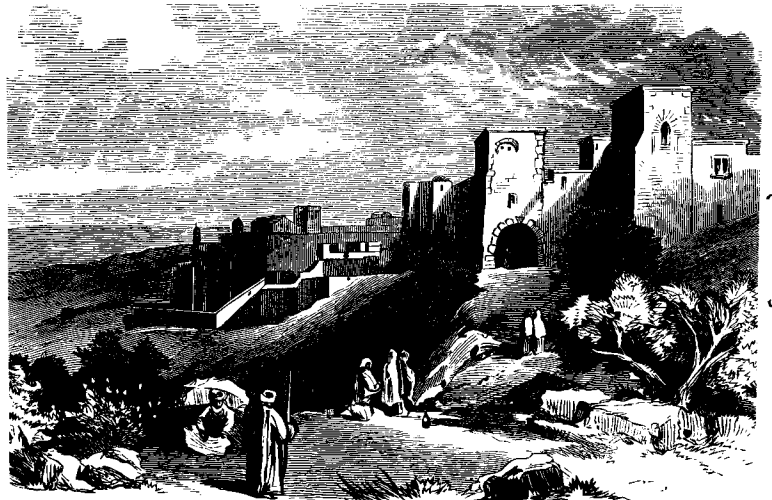
"I saw it, I saw it. . . . I was standing here a long time [at the shore], but I did not see you. . . . With my eyes I saw someone, Rabbi, dressed in a white garment . . . walking there on the water. . . . I focused my eyes, and suddenly you were standing before me on the dry land. . . ." To which Jesus replies: "Simon, Simon. How foolish you are. . . . Is it not enough that I am walking with you on the ground, that you want to see me also walking on the water?" (p. 384).

Having shown that Peter hallucinates, Kabak then records Peter's confession ("You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God") in a significantly altered version from that in Matthew 16. Peter observes: "Men will follow you, because they do not see *you*, but *whom* they want to see, *whom* they need to see . . . not one born of a woman, as they are, but a ghost . . . who is far from them" (p. 453).

At the climax of this psychological tension of a choice between a future for his teaching or for men's eagerness to see him as a "ghost," Jesus decides with Judas that his teaching is more important. "You must die, Jesus! It is either your life or your teaching. . . . More than you did in your life you will do by your death" (p. 528). Judas not only advised death, but carried out the plans for it with Jesus' permission (p. 529).

Thus Judas received the cooperation of Jesus in his plot and betrayed him to the Sanhedrin. The last words of

BETHLEHEM



Kabak's book—"My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?"—conclude the tragic death and, for Kabak, the life also of Jesus of Nazareth, that great Jew inspired with new and revolutionary thoughts that sadly became secondary to the popular views of his own person and his miracles.

This perspective of Jesus explains why Kabak regards the Gospel narratives as unreliable, since they retain the reinterpretation of Jesus' life and teaching from the mouth of that unreliable witness named Peter. With this view of Jesus the teacher and the Gospel record, Kabak has little problem in writing about Jesus and his "illegitimate birth" in Nazareth.

David Flusser:

Jesus, a Jew of His Time

Professor Flusser has demonstrated himself to be an extremely able scholar, writing on widely diverse topics. From his study of the Qumran materials, rabbinic literature and classical authors, Flusser proposes to dress Jesus in the garb of his time as an orthodox Jew. His book, *Jesus* (Herder and Herder, 1969) is a translation of the German, *Jesus in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten* (1968). The German title emphasizes the wide variety of illustrations.

Flusser argues that the story of Jesus' birth is unreliable because of the witnesses. We will see here also that one's preconceived ideas of Jesus determine one's view of the birth narratives themselves. "Jesus, then," says Flusser, "was a Galilean Jew, probably born in Nazareth" (p. 16). He may have been the oldest of a family of seven children.

The story of Jesus' debate with the rabbis in the temple is seen as that of "the precocious scholar . . . of a young Talmudist" (p. 18). In contrast to Kabak, Flusser views Jesus as a well-educated Jew, at home with the Old Testament and rabbinic traditions. "Jesus' Jewish education was incomparably superior to that of St. Paul's" (p. 18).

Since Kabak wrote his "biography" of Jesus, the written and material evidence from the Essene community at Qumran has aided Flusser in his reconstruction of the Jewish sects at the time of Jesus. He links the Essene baptism of repentance with that of John, and suggests that Jesus may have spent some time in the Qumran monastery (p. 25).

Revolutionary thrust in Jesus' teaching

Flusser does not intend to trace the revolutionary ideas of Jesus to some certain period in his development. But, agreeing with Kabak, he concludes that the revolutionary character of Jesus' teaching emerges in his preaching on "the radical commandment of love" (pp. 65-74), the call for a new morality (pp. 75-83), and the idea of the kingdom of heaven (pp. 84-92).

In his emphasis on love Jesus is seen as tightening up the law "not in respect to ritual, but in respect of the relationships between man and man" (p. 72). Concerning morality, Flusser approaches Jesus' teaching with the floodlight of Essene ideas: "The paradox of Jesus' break with customary biblical mortality was marvelously expressed in the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Mt. 20:1-16). . . . Here as elsewhere the principle of reward is accepted by Jesus, but all the norms of the usual concepts of the righteousness of God are abrogated" (p. 82).

In his teaching on the kingdom, Jesus is thought to stand close to the rabbis: "The kingdom of heaven emerges, indeed, out of the power of God, but is realized upon earth by men, and there are already individuals who live in the kingdom of God. Many, then, can and should work for the

realization of the kingdom" (p. 88).

The plot to kill Jesus came about through the clashes between Jesus and the temple hierarchy during the last week. Judas Iscariot went to the high priest and betrayed Jesus but "we do not know why he did all this" (p. 114). Jesus was captured, interrogated, and sent from one court to another. For Flusser, Jesus ceased to live when he uttered the words, "My God, My God (Eli, Eli), why hast thou forsaken me?" And Jesus died" (p. 132).

Conclusion: Which Jesus?

I have purposefully chosen aspects of the life and teachings of Jesus as they are viewed by these two prominent Israelis. The variety in their approaches can partly be explained by the differences between a literary and an academic approach to Jesus, and partly by differences arising from the time when these two books were written. Kabak wrote during the Second World War and Flusser more recently with the benefit of the Qumran studies.

Both writers, however, are in agreement that Jesus is the man of Nazareth who, filled with revolutionary ideas, became subject to his own interpreters. Peter's interpretations resulted in people flocking to see Jesus' "miracles," forcing Jesus to decide between his own future and the more important future of his teaching. According to Flusser, it is Paul who reinterprets Jesus' teaching with its setting aside of the ritual and ceremonial aspects of the Old Testament and who led the early Christian church to understand Jesus as the God-man, which Jesus himself never intended.

So the question is, Which Jesus? There is the *Jesus of Bethlehem*, the Incarnate Christ, who left his heavenly glory to become man, was born in Bethlehem, taught in Galilee and Judea, was crucified, died, was buried, and was raised again that he might reconcile sinful man with the Creator. Or, there is *Jesus of Nazareth*, a unique teacher who was misunderstood by his followers, who died and whose teaching was wrongly interpreted by the church; a Jesus that modern Judaism—with its appreciative reinterpretation of Jesus—and modern theologians of the church can both accept in a happy ecumenism.

For the Christian who has experienced the power of Jesus' teachings, of his resurrection, and of his Spirit-empowered and infallible interpreters who followed in his steps, there can be no problem in giving an answer to the question. The Jesus of Nazareth of man's imaginings is truly a "ghost" (as Kabak's Peter prophesied) with no life-giving Spirit to bring man beyond the vanity of human existence; he is only a wax statue reconstructed by the historian and given life by man's longing for some higher ideal. For the Christian, the answer is simple: Give us the Lord of Glory, the child of the virgin born in Bethlehem, according to the Scriptures!

Wim VanGemeren is a graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary, has studied in Israel with particular emphasis on the Hebrew language, and is presently engaged in doctoral studies at the University of Wisconsin. The two books he singles out for attention in this article are indicative of the thinking of modern-day Israelis concerning their countryman, Jesus of Bethlehem, and not much different from the limited respect of a Nicodemus who was interested in this "teacher come from God." May the Spirit who works where he wills to work be pleased to work in Israel also to bring about a new birth and new eyes to see the kingdom of God.

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The Southern Scene

Atlanta, Ga.—At a recent meeting here of the steering committee for a continuing Presbyterian Church, representatives from four conservative organizations within the Presbyterian Church, U.S. ("Southern") determined not to participate in a meeting called by the National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship to explore the possibility of a "national synod of genuinely Presbyterian and Reformed churches." The "national synod" concept had been suggested as a means for church fellowship and mutual help among different denominations, not requiring these bodies to come to the full agreement needed for organic unity.

The rejection of the NPRF invitation by the Conservative Coalition, representing as it does a large part of the truly evangelical remnants within the Southern church, leaves the idea of a national synod up to the "splinter" churches—the Orthodox Presbyterian, the Reformed Presbyterian Evangelical Synod, and the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenant), with possibly some interest from the Christian Reformed or the Reformed Church, U.S. (Eureka Classis). It is difficult to know the motivation behind this turn-down, but it would appear to be due to a concern—very strong among lay leaders in the Southern Church—to avoid any "ecumenical" involvements until they have succeeded in establishing a "continuing church" in the South.

Prospects for the such a "continuing church," one that would maintain the Westminster Standards and continue the traditional patterns of southern Presbyterianism, still seem clouded. There is general agreement among the restive conservatives to wait and see whether the "escape clause" will be maintained in the proposed plan of union between the PCUS and the ("Northern") United Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. (Several UP presbyteries and synods are on record as opposing any "escape" provision that would allow congregations to leave a united church with their property; recently one Southern presbytery has adopted a similar position.)

If the "escape clause" is deleted, many conservatives expect to leave the PCUS forthwith, taking their property and defending it in the courts if need

be. (The Tabb Street Church in Petersburg, Va. has already done this and will almost certainly have to defend itself in court. Two congregations in Savannah did so some time ago and managed to keep their property after the case went to the U. S. Supreme Court. But the legal complications still make it a moot question as to when or how a congregation may leave with its property intact. Congregations in the UPUSA have never succeeded in any case in doing this, though several have tried.)

Some of the now independent congregations in the South have come together to form the "Vanguard Presbytery." A representative of this group has been invited to sit in with the Steering Committee. One other presbytery in the PCUS has determined to leave as a presbytery and will almost certainly do so sometime in the spring.

In general, the situation is one where some groups have already left the parent denomination, some of these with their property, some with the property being challenged in court, and some without the property. Others are waiting to see whether they will be allowed to leave under an "escape clause." Others are preparing to leave, "escape clause" or otherwise. One congregation, the West End Church of Hopewell, Virginia, sought presbytery permission to be dismissed; this permission was granted and that congregation is now independent with full right to its property. The pastor, the Rev. Kennedy Smartt, has also been dismissed to the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. This is one of the few instances where a church has been given its "walking papers" by a presbytery in what can only be considered a friendly and generous atmosphere.

Jackson, Miss.—The Rev. Sam C. Patterson, president of Reformed Theological Seminary here, has disavowed any relation to the Steering Committee for a Continuing Presbyterian Church or to its plan for a separation from the present PCUS. In a statement in the *Clarion-Ledger*, the seminary's president said that he was opposed, for scriptural reasons, to a division or withdrawal from the parent denomination.

The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITOR
JOHN J. MITCHELL

All correspondence should be addressed to The Presbyterian Guardian, 7401 Old York Road, Phila., Pa. 19126

Congregations and their property rights

The editor of this publication is under no delusion that his writing up of news items is entirely free of bias; at best he only hopes the facts get through to the reader in spite of his own personal attitudes. The news media often claim objectivity; but all news reporting is colored by the opinions of the reporters. But for a Christian, obliged to conform his thought to his Lord (and admittedly failing to do so far too often!), to claim perfect objectivity or neutrality is presumptuous to say the least.

With that caveat in mind, perhaps the reader will consider with me two news items in this issue of the *Guardian*. One of these has to do with the decision of the Paradise Hills congregation to withdraw itself from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The other has to do with Bible-believing congregations in the Presbyterian Church, U.S. that long to be free of a denomination that seems bent on abandoning its Christian heritage.

Most readers of the *Guardian*, particularly those who remember the events of 1936 when the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was born, will feel strong sympathy for the plight of Southern Presbyterians today. We can be critical, I suppose, that they have not taken a stronger stand on some basic issue similar to that taken by Dr. Machen and others against the modernism of the old Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. It's easy to be somewhat judgmental of our southern brethren and their desire for an "escape clause" that will make the separation painless.

Even so, we are inclined to cheer these Presbyterians on as they seek to control their church properties, feeling quite rightly that these were paid for by the gifts of countless people who

would be dismayed at what had happened to their denomination and its leadership. If a congregation in the South, striving to be true to Scripture, can manage to leave a denomination that is forsaking those precious truths, and leave it while keeping its property for the cause of Christ, we are ready to rejoice with them.

But then, we look at this regrettable situation in San Diego, and our reactions tend not to be the same. We are inclined to resent the idea of a group of people leaving the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and taking away the property with them—property paid for by the giving of loyal Orthodox Presbyterians over a period of years. Is it simply a matter of whose ox is gored?

To be sure, the *Form of Government* of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church clearly grants local congregations full rights over their own property "without any right of reversion" to the denomination, unless the local church chooses to do that itself (Chapter XXV, 4).

So, there we are. Without presuming to judge the rights and wrongs of the situation for the Paradise Hills group, and recognizing their right to take their property (if they do it in a legal decision of the congregation), we can still ask whether it ought so to be. *Should* a congregation be able to do this? Is it right for Southern Presbyterians but not for Orthodox Presbyterians? Are there questions of moral obligations, apart from legal rights, in such cases?

Answer these questions as you will (and the *Guardian* is willing to hear your answers and to print them). But let us grant that never will such situations be simple ones, never will there be total agreement about what is right—at least not until our Lord returns to set all things right. But that is the point precisely: We are so often foolish and bullheaded, so often blind and determined to go our own way. Frankly, we believe that Southern Presbyterians should be separating from unbelief, property or no property. And frankly, we believe that the Paradise Hills congregation ought to stay in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and try to work out its differences with the presbytery, using the procedures that are guaranteed to them in the same *Form of Government* that guarantees their right to the property.

—J. J. M.



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CRC/RCA Get-together

Holland, Mich.—One hundred representatives from the Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Church in America met here recently to discuss their differences and their similarities. The Christian Reformed Church, though briefly a part of the older "Dutch" Reformed body, separated from it in 1857. The two churches, both composed largely of Dutch immigrants (many in the RCA having come before the American Revolution, most of those in the CRC having come in the 1850s or after World War II), have had some talks about cooperation in the past and do work together in some areas.

In general, the Christian Reformed Church has taken a stricter view of various issues over the years; it is, for example, strongly opposed to permitting members to belong to secret societies like the Masonic Order. The Reformed Church has traditionally allowed much more freedom to its local congregations, has approved the ordination of women as ruling or teaching elders, and is a member of the National and World Council of Churches.

The meeting in Holland found those present largely of one mind and sympathy. Concluding resolutions spoke of the "unity" present at the meeting, and

urged various steps be taken to further that unity. The meeting had no legislative power of its own, but its resolutions will undoubtedly be considered seriously by the respective synods of the two churches.

At its last synod in June, the Christian Reformed Church broke off conversations with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church looking toward possible merger, even as it approved the meeting with Reformed Church representatives that was just held in Holland, Michigan. Commenting on this turn of events, the Rev. Peter De Jong, Christian Reformed pastor in Dutton, Michigan, writes: "The thirteen-year old special efforts to achieve closer relations between the Christian Reformed and the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches are now being discontinued. Why? Because of the Orthodox Presbyterians' lack of confidence in our faithfulness to the Reformed faith. Significantly, the report of our Christian Reformed committee observed: 'Perhaps the most crucial issue concerns the infallibility and inspiration of the Scriptures' . . ." (*The Outlook*, Nov. 1972). In the same issue of *The Outlook*, its editor and former editor of *The Banner* (the official organ of the CRC), the Rev. John Vander Ploeg,

says, "It is distressing and significant that, while the CRC at this year's Synod . . . was so ready to enter into discussion with the RCA, at the same time our discussions with a doctrinally sound body like the Orthodox Presbyterian Church were terminated."

Both of these Christian Reformed ministers see this closing off of discussions with the OPC while opening them to the RCA as indicative of a trend within the CRC that disturbs them. It is hard to view it otherwise. It should be noted, to keep the record straight, that the same Synod of the CRC did invite the General Assembly of the OPC to consider appointing representatives to various study committees that would report to both churches; and that opening should be entered by the Orthodox Presbyterians. Nevertheless, the action to shut off formal conversations with the OPC, while beginning to open up toward the RCA, is surely evidence of some basic attitude within the CRC as to where its interests lie. And the assumption of those present at the Holland meeting that "unity" already exists is itself either the result of indifference to theological differences on the part of Christian Reformed representatives present, or of agreement with the looser theological stance present in the Reformed Church in America.

Your Question

We're told to love others, to serve others, to be unselfish. But with God it seems to be different. He demands everything for himself, all worship, all the honor and glory. Is God just off on some "ego trip" for himself? Is this right? — G. E. R.

First, let's agree that it is wrong for us to be self-centered. None of us is worth it.

But what about God? He does demand all glory for himself. He does insist that all things worship and serve him only. He is, in that sense, self-centered to the fullest extent imaginable.

Is this right for God, though wrong for us? Two things should be kept in mind. One is that only God deserves such total service from others. After all, he did create us; we did not create him. And he is perfect, while we have all fallen short by far. God alone is worthy of total service from others.

This column is for you, the reader. You may submit any question about Scripture's teaching that concerns you. We do not guarantee to answer every one, but we do promise to search out answers from those who love God's truth and know it best. The answers will be unsigned, and only initials will be used with questions.

We should also remember that God has shown us what love for others really is. God is "self-centered" and rightly so. But God is also out-going, far beyond anything we might do. "This is love, not that we loved God, but that he first loved us and sent his Son (to die!) to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). And God did this while we were enemies!

God alone can rightly demand everything for himself because of who and what he is. Yet even as he demands all honor and glory for himself, he gives us his love, even his Son. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:12). But the Lamb gives us life, so "whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). Praise God that he is the perfect sovereign and gracious Lord that he is!

The Elders of the Church — their scriptural qualifications

LAWRENCE R. EYRES

I have purposely refrained until now from discussing at length the qualifications for the eldership. Of course, passing reference to these has been made, but no more than the context demanded. This was done so that we might get a balanced view of the whole forest before examining the greatest tree in it. Elder qualifications represent that great tree amidst the forest of related matters that make up the total complex of government in Christ's church.

An elder must be a man

Happily, we have the scriptural qualifications listed in an orderly way in 1 Timothy 3:2-7, with some further enlargement in Titus 1:7-9. But before attempting to expound these passages, some matters of a preliminary and essential nature must be discussed.

The first of these is that elders must be men, and only men. This fact needs to be reaffirmed in these days when many Reformed and Presbyterian churches (not all of which are apostate) are buckling under pressure to admit women to the ordained teacher-ruler office.

Scripture is unequivocal on this point. Even if we were to allow that I Corinthians 14:34 ("Let your women keep silence in the churches . . .") is speaking to a peculiar local problem, yet Paul supports this strict prohibition on more general principles of Scripture (" . . . as also saith the law" —meaning the Old Testament).

To understand Paul's appeal to the Old Testament law, look at 1 Corinthians 11:3-9. Here Paul grounds his assertion that man is to rule the woman (not to be ruled by her) in the very order of their creation. "The head of (i.e., ruler over) every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man." Man's positional (*not* essential) superiority over the woman rests on the fact that God made the woman of man's own substance, and made her *for* the man.

Paul leaves the question beyond quibble in 1 Timothy 2:9-15. (And this is the first of the pastoral epistles, which lay down permanent rules for the government and conduct of the church.) Why does Paul say, ". . . if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (3:2)? Because he had just written, "*I suffer not a woman to teach, or to usurp authority over the man.*" And to make doubly sure he is stating an ageless principle rather than a temporary expedient, Paul refers again to the creation order.

The apostle gives as ground for this principle the priority of the man over the woman in creation, *and* the priority of the woman over the man in sin. The latter fact enforces the former, just because it is a reversal of the order of the created nature of the man and the woman; this only accentuates the rightness of the creation order contrasted with

man's tendency to rebel against the will of God as revealed in what he made them.

It ill behooves the church of Jesus Christ in this still-sinful world to fly in the teeth of the will of God revealed in his creation ordinance, especially in the choice of those who are exalted to the position of Christ's assistant restorers of what sin has destroyed. After all, is it not absurd to hold that *God* makes men bishops, and then to elevate to that high position those to whom God has forbidden the exercise of those ruling functions in his inspired Word?

An elder must be ———

Another preliminary general consideration has to do with one word with which Paul begins his list of qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:2-7: "A bishop (or elder) *must* be blameless . . ." Both in the English and the Greek, this little word *must* has the same force that it has in John 3:7, when Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye *must* be born again."

In other words, the Scripture is speaking (in both cases) of an *essential qualification*. New birth is mandatory for those who would enter the kingdom of God; blamelessness is absolutely required for those who would assume the office of the elder. There is no option; the candidate must be blameless.

Now the *must* belongs to more than just being blameless. Paul did not mean to say that "a bishop must be blameless, and it's a good idea — though not absolutely essential — that he also be such-and-such else also." This strong little word *must* applies equally to all the fourteen qualifications that follow. And again, we must remember that it is God who makes men bishops; neither Paul, nor Timothy, nor today's church has the least power or right to change the qualifications God has set forth. Our business is to observe the workings of grace in the lives of twice-born men, and to judge of their fitness for the office on the basis of *all* the qualifications given in Scripture.

These qualities will never be found in any but sinners. Not even elders are fully sanctified. Hence we should not expect that all elders will have all these qualifications in full development or perfect balance. One man may excel in one or more, whereas another's excellence appears where the first man's gifts (though present) do not especially excel.

This underscores the wisdom of Scripture's requirement that the church be ruled by a plurality of elders. "In the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Proverbs 24:6). I have observed, both on the sessional and presbyterial level, that small bodies tend to make erratic decisions. The very variety of gifts possessed among a session of elders is a matter for praise to God who stoops to take sinners into

partnership with him in the work of his kingdom on earth!

THE QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR RULE

Can we discern a pattern in the list of qualifications for the office of elder as laid down by Paul in his letters to Timothy and Titus? I believe we can. There are fourteen of them in 1 Timothy 3:2-7; numbers one through seven, twelve and fourteen are positive in form, while numbers eight through eleven and thirteen are negative.

Two of these positive qualifications stand out from all the rest. We speak of *ruling* and *teaching* elders. Accordingly, gifts for rule and teaching stand out above the others, reflecting the very nature of the work that elders must do. The other qualifications reflect the character of the men who perform these functions. So, gifts for teaching and rule are in a sense special, whereas the others are general.

These more general qualifications make clear that those who teach and rule must be mellowed, mature Christians. In fact, the very term *elder* says as much of itself. Nevertheless, Paul does not leave us to deduce these things from the terms *elder* or *bishop*; he spells them out for all to see.

The elder must first be blameless. This cannot mean sinless. Rather, we are looking for a man who, though indeed a sinner, habitually strives to walk by the rule of God's Word. A blameless man will not be found doing what he knows is plainly wrong. If, through ignorance or a moment when his guard is down, he does sin, he will repent instantly upon his awareness of having sinned against God. Should he give place to sinful anger (and who has never done so?), he will not let the sun go down on his wrath (Ephesians 4:26). If he wrongs another in any way, he will not need to be prodded to make right the wrong he has done. In a word, he will always walk as one who is aware that men will judge Jesus Christ by him. And it will be his prayer that men will *see* Jesus through him.

The elder must be the husband of one wife. Many have differed as to the precise meaning of these words. Must an elder be a married man? I do not think so. Paul, in virtue of his being an apostle, was also an elder (1 Peter 5:1). Yet Paul was not married, and pleaded good cause for his living in the single state. No church ought to refuse to ordain a man to the eldership simply because he is unmarried. I hasten to add, however, that I would not want to preside over a session made up entirely of bachelors!

The real force of the words is that elders must be chosen from among men who have only one wife at a time. If this statement sounds strange in our ears, we need to be reminded that in times ancient and modern the gospel has been preached to and received by those who do not live in strict monogamy. Whatever else may be said of such a situation, we are forbidden to look for rulers for the church from among those having more than one wife.

A man who has married for the second time (his first wife having died) may surely be an elder. The Bible knows nothing of man-contrived super-sainthood. Elders must be saints, and relatively mature ones at that; but super-saints, never! "It is not good that the man should be alone," the Lord God said at the beginning (Genesis 2:18). And Scripture fully expects that most elders will be married to one wife and thankful to God for having made it so.

But what of the divorced man, whether remarried or not? Can he be an elder? The answer depends on many

factors beyond the scope of this study. Satisfactory answers must be found to questions such as these: Was the divorce and (possible) remarriage accomplished before the man was converted? Were there biblical grounds for the divorce? Even if there were, did he contribute secondarily to the breakup of the original marriage? The least that can be said here is that all the more pains ought to be taken in discerning the tokens of a divine call to this man before he is admitted to the sacred office. And it is always wise, for prospective elders and for others also, to secure from the church itself a decree of divorce if that is justifiable, so that the good name of Christ may not be needlessly sullied before the world.

The elder must be vigilant, sober, and of good behavior. Due to the overlap of meaning in these three adjectives, they are better taken together. *Vigilant* may be understood as meaning "sober with respect to the use of wine." But since Paul also speaks of this matter later, it is better taken to mean "serious-minded" or "pertaining to one who is a down-to-earth realist, one not given to flights of fancy or living in a dream world."

The word translated *sober* definitely refers to soundness of mind, prudence, self-control. In Mark 5:15, the demoniac from whom our Lord cast out the legion of demons was afterwards found "sitting, and clothed, and *in his right mind*," this last phrase being closely related to the word in our text.

Of good behavior means one who exercises that sort of self-control that enables him to manage all the outward affairs of life. All three terms taken together mean that every elder ought to be one who has a good mind, able to look at things objectively and fairly. He must be able to rise above his own feelings about anyone, above his own prejudices. In a word, he must be a man of good mental discipline, able to control his own emotions. He must be one who, under modern pressures, does not easily panic or go to pieces. He must be able so to handle his personal affairs as to find time for everything that has a legitimate claim upon his time and attention. He must order his business, social, family, and kingdom affairs on the principle of first things first, last things last, and frivolous and useless things never. He must become skillful in "redeeming the time" the Lord gives him.

Let us consider one more positive qualification for the eldership in this installment. **The elder must be given to hospitality.** We can hardly overemphasize this. Mere hospitality had a most useful and necessary place in Bible times. The times have indeed changed so that mere hospitality may not be as needful as it once was, with motels and restaurants available to all. Nevertheless, our modern culture is giving way to the extent that mere hospitality is coming more and more to be a useful means of evangelism and nurture in Christian fellowship.

But hospitality does not mean just an open door to one's home. The hospitable man is one whose heart is first open to the lonely, the rejected, the alien among men of all kinds and in all conditions. Even if a man has a home and the means to extend outward hospitality, or even if he goes so far as to provide hotel accommodations at his own expense, and yet the man lacks a loving heart in all of this, he fails the test of biblical hospitality (1 Corinthians 13:2).

Hospitality is really a matter of faith, the faith without which no man can please God. It is a faith shown by its

works, the faith of the "good Samaritan" in our Lord's parable. This man was truly given to hospitality, to willingness to offer help because of his concern for the one in need. Elders of the church, and all who aspire to that "good work," "Go, and do thou likewise!"

In the next installment, the Rev. Mr. Eyres will conclude his discussion of the qualifications for the elder. With this he will have completed the series as it was originally planned.

But as the series developed, and as various aspects of the practical work of the elder were mentioned, the editor began to press Mr. Eyres to add some further "how-to-do-it" sections. We hope these will be available perhaps next spring—after the author takes a brief vacation from writing.

Also, since the series first began last spring, we have heard several reports of its value in many churches. In one congregation, three men felt that God might be calling them and, unaware that others had similar reactions, came to the pastor asking for further instruction. Both there, and in other churches, the material in the series has been used to instruct prospective elders. And we have heard from men already serving as elders who found the articles helpful and, according to some, embarrassing as they faced anew the demands of God's Word. But, thanks be to God, that Word also commands us to pray for those gifts and graces we need to do the work given us in the church of Jesus Christ (James 1:5, 6).

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John J. Mitchell, editor.

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Dr. and Mrs. Schaeffer at Geneva

LOIS SIBLEY

No, not that Geneva in Switzerland. It was like this: Dr. and Mrs. Francis Schaeffer came from L'Abri in Huemoz, Switzerland, to talk to students, faculty, friends, and neighboring pastors at Geneva College in the foothills of western Pennsylvania on October 9 and 10, 1972.

Geneva is a small liberal arts college, related to the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Covenanters). The college seeks "to develop the student's ability to know God and to relate himself and the created universe to God through the study of his Word and his works." Dr. Schaeffer had been invited to Geneva to further this goal.

Many of Geneva's students come from the immediate geographical area, but some are from as far away as Cyprus. There is a growing number of black students, most of whom are Americans. Also of interest to *Guardian* readers is the presence of over thirty Orthodox Presbyterian students.

The ministry of the Schaeffers

For several years, Dr. and Mrs. Schaeffer have been engaged in what is now a world-wide ministry to students and intellectuals who are seeking answers to philosophical questions. They are presently on a world tour, combining several speaking engagements into one trip so that they may not be away from home for too long a time. Before arriving at Geneva, they had been at Princeton (where Dr. Schaeffer preached in the Sunday morning service at the Princeton University Chapel). From Geneva they expect to travel to Texas, California, Hawaii, Japan, and on.

Wherever they go, the Schaeffers find "alumni" of L'Abri waiting to greet them and to bring them up to date on their experiences since they left L'Abri. Mrs. Edith Schaeffer, in her two talks at Geneva, mentioned by name, with requests for prayer, some of those they hoped to see again.

The Schaeffers are an interesting couple to observe. She is small and wren-like, with dark hair, and charms everyone with her smile and her explanation of the two pairs of glasses she carries—"one to read with, one to see you with." She favors turtle-necks, and wore a new, longer length, brown-and-white checked jumper and pant suit.

Dr. Schaeffer is short, with a tiny beard and longish hair. He has an almost esthetic quality to his face, definitely the look of a scholar. He wore a turtle-neck shirt also, but combined it with tan knickers, long green knee-socks, and a tan corduroy collarless jacket. They both seemed warmly dressed, perhaps because it's already cold in Switzerland. Even at Geneva it was in the 50's and breezy with the snap of fall in the air. One wonders what they will wear in Texas, California, and Hawaii.

Mrs. Schaeffer mentioned the morning they left Switzerland as being quite hectic. She had given a two-hour lecture (which she seems to do with much enthusiasm and little apparent effort), signed papers for a house

they were buying in the community, threw her clothes into a suitcase and rushed to the airport. She exudes energy and made it sound as though a fast pace in the midst of many people and much activity is an everyday thing with her, so that quiet moments with God are all the more precious and important.

The work at L'Abri

The Schaeffers' talks centered on the general subject of "Art," and were adapted from a series they had done in September during a special "Art Week" at L'Abri. Many people taped all the sessions, and these will be available soon through Chalet Cassettes in Bloomsburg, Pa. The Schaeffer's books are available through Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Ill., and Tyndale Publishers, Wheaton, Ill.

The opening session on Monday morning in the college fieldhouse was packed with perhaps 2000 people present. While most of these were students, many were visitors anxious to hear the man who has written "all those books." Both Dr. and Mrs. Schaeffer alluded to the fact that in the five years since their books have first been published, they are continually amazed at the numbers of people who have read them and heard about the ministry at L'Abri.

Edith Schaeffer has written two books: *L'Abri*, and *Hidden Art*. Francis Schaeffer is the author of: *Escape from Reason*; *The God Who Is There*; *Death in the City*; *Pollution and the Death of Man*, *the Christian View of Ecology*; *The Church at the End of the 20th Century*; *The Mark of the Christian*; *The Church before the Watching World*; *True Spirituality*; *He Is There and He Is Not Silent*; *Basic Bible Studies*; *The New Super-Spirituality*; and *Back to Freedom and Dignity*. The subject-matter ranges from descriptions of the work at L'Abri, to apologetics, to current issues, to very basic Christian characteristics, and (fitting no category) Mrs. Schaeffer's own approach to beauty in daily life.

Local pastors and their wives were invited to a coffee hour after the morning chapel talk. Dr. Schaeffer fielded questions deftly but succinctly, giving some insights into his ministry that are not found in his books. He noted that there were about 110 persons now living in the community at Huemoz, a small village half way up a mountain where the Schaeffers settled some eighteen years ago. The people live in fourteen chalets. There is a chapel, but no large dining room; the "families" live in individual chalets. There are also residential works of the same kind in Holland, France, and England, and non-residential missions in London, Amsterdam, and Milano as well as in the United States.

Three classes of people seem to find their way to L'Abri: really far-out youngsters, usually in their twenties or younger, possibly on drugs, involved in homosexuality, prostitution, or with some psychological problem; then, the children of evangelical Christians, who've "dropped out" of church but are still looking for answers; and

lately, more and more are professors, from colleges, universities, theological schools, or "Christian workers" who feel they don't know how to communicate with the twentieth century.

There are different ways a person may come—for ten days, free, as a visitor, to listen to tapes, study, and think; or as a Farel House student at \$3 a day for three months. L'Abri now turns away half of the persons who come simply because there isn't room enough for everyone.

L'Abri has one requirement: No one may send or recommend another. Each person has to come himself. It is not a school, though all study, and not a commune. It is a community. Each person studies four hours a day, works four hours a day, and there are lecture/discussions each evening. Statistics are not kept, but during a year between one and two thousand go through the doors of the L'Abri chalets, and from there all around the earth. The Schaeffers are continually surprised that, despite practically no human resources, money, or equipment, L'Abri has been used of God in the lives of so many.

Speaking on "Art"

Dr. Schaeffer's talks at Geneva were on "Art in the Bible" and "Some Art Norms." Mrs. Schaeffer reported on the work at L'Abri and spoke on "Art and Prayer." Some of this material will, no doubt, go into new books that each is writing.

On Tuesday evening, standing behind the lectern in the field house, Dr. Schaeffer unobtrusively removed his shoes and lectured in his socks. The few people seated at that end of the bleachers didn't seem to notice that the intellectual mind had ordinary tired feet.

Dr. Schaeffer pointed out that before creation God communicated with the Holy Spirit and the Son. Together they thought, planned, loved, were the Great Artist. God did not limit his art to religious subjects either, Dr. Schaeffer reminded us, pointing to the beauties of art forms in the Temple, even to "blue pomegranets" on the garments of the priest. Who ever heard of blue pomegranets? But these, with the pillars, the cherubim, the flowering almond, the vases of brass, were all forms of art

used by God to communicate with his people. From Old to New Testaments, the Bible uses art forms extensively.

God made the soul and the body, the whole man. When Christ died, he died to redeem the whole man. Christ is Lord of the Christian's whole life. When man fell, he lost his relationship with God and his dominion over the creation. The Christian must work to establish again that which he lost in the fall. Art can well be used in this attempt, claims Schaeffer.

Art and Prayer

Mrs. Schaeffer stressed the importance of communication in art. The different art forms used in poetry, music, sculpture, painting, are all means for communicating. We see in God's art forms how he wishes to communicate with us. As David notes: "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Psalms 19).

Each of us can be creative, can create art in our own way. It may be through new topics for conversation, new places to see, things to do, people to meet. It may be something as simple as candles and a centerpiece for the dinner table. There is no need to agonize about not "being fulfilled"—not if one is busy learning to live creatively in everyday ways.

One result of communicating in art is appreciation as art speaks to us. As God communicates to us we should thank him. As we make creative choices and share a diversity of ideas in art forms, we should thank him. A Christian can be proud and rejoice in his achievements in art, music, poetry, sculpture, etc. The Christian is, after all, a reflection of his Creator, the Great Artist, who looked at his creation and said, "It is very good."

Mrs. Sibley and her husband, the Rev. Laurence C. Sibley, live in Cleveland. They are working to open a book store that will supply Christian literature—and conversation and witness—to the student community there. They hope, and we pray, that the Logos Bookstore is open by the time this is published.

Here and There in The O P C

Oklahoma City, Okla.—Knox Church is rejoicing in the arrival of a new pastor, the Rev. James L. McFarland. A former minister in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, Mr. McFarland was received by the Presbytery of the Dakotas and installed as pastor of Knox Church.

Winner, S. D.—The Winner Congregation is also rejoicing in the presence of one to labor with them in word and doctrine. The church has called Mr. Glenn D. Jerrell to be its pastor. Mr. Jerrell, a licentiate of the Presbytery of New Jersey, had been laboring in Doylestown, Pa. since his graduation

from Westminster Seminary last spring.

Shreveport, La.—The Presbytery of the South has approved a provisional session to oversee a group in this area who hope to organize an Orthodox Presbyterian testimony in Louisiana. Readers with relatives or friends who may be interested in this work should contact the Rev. John H. Thompson Jr., Box 15826, Orlando, FL 32808.

Beaver Falls, Pa.—During the recent visit of the Schaeffers to Geneva College, members of the Ohio and Western Pennsylvania presbyteries of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, gathered informally

to discuss pros and cons of the possible merger of these two denominations.

Approximately a dozen members of the two presbyteries were present, with the Rev. Leonard Coppes of Calvary O. P. Church in Harrisville, Pa., serving as moderator. After the discussion, the presbyters with their wives shared a meal together. Members of the group expressed the hope that further discussions of this kind might be held during this important decision-making year in the life of the two churches.

Corvallis, Ore.—Florence B. (Mrs. Edward) Wybenga went to be with the Lord on September 16, 1972. Her husband, who died in 1965, had served as pastor to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Bend, Ore. for many years, and was a frequent writer for the *Guardian*.

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Here and There in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Hamill, S. D.—The Presbytery of the Dakotas at its regular meeting here determined to overture the General Assembly to change its standing rules relating to election of the Committee on Foreign Missions. As proposed by the presbytery, six members of the committee would be elected "at large" by the Assembly, and each presbytery would elect one. (The idea seems to be to gain better liaison between the committee and presbyteries. Why this should be desirable for Foreign Missions and not for all other committees is not explained.)

Philadelphia, Pa.—Dr. Stephen M. Reynolds, formerly at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, has requested transfer from the Presbytery of Philadelphia of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to the Bible Presbyterian Church. Dr. Reynolds is presently a member of the faculty of Faith Theological Seminary. His new address: Faith Seminary, 920 Spring Ave., Elkins Park, PA 19117.

San Jose, Cal.—The Rev. Robert D. Raglin, pastor of Covenant Church here, has been seriously ill of what was thought to be a major failure of the pancreas. But an exploratory operation revealed a much simpler problem, and Mr. Raglin is making satisfactory recovery. Prayer for his continued recovery is still needed.

Tinley Park, Ill.—The Rev. and Mrs. Leslie A. Dunn are now settled in the manse of Forest View Church as Mr. Dunn begins to labor at rebuilding a congregation here. The church was officially dissolved at its own request by the Presbytery of the Midwest. But a faithful nucleus remains and is prepared to work to reestablish the church. The Dunns' address: 15460 S. Oak Park Ave., Tinley Park IL 60477.

Los Angeles, Cal.—The Rev. Kent Hinkson, pastor of Calvary Church in La Mirada, was one of six speakers at a recent "Pro-Life" luncheon. He presented a biblical view of abortion, citing the statement of the last General Assembly that declared abortion to be a violation of the Sixth Commandment. Over forty state and federal law-makers and candidates were present at the luncheon.

Garden Grove, Cal.—The Garden Grove Church has called the Rev. Robert W. Newsom to serve as its Associate Pastor to work with the Cerritos branch. The group in Cerritos has been meeting together for some time, looking for a missionary-pastor, and eager to raise a testimony in their area. Mr. Newsom has been the pastor of Trinity Church in Newberg, Oregon. He and his wife are recent parents of a daughter, Suzanne Gail.

San Diego, Cal.—The Paradise Hills congregation has voted to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Southern California of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The majority of the congregation, together with its pastor, the Rev. Wallace A. Bell, feel that the presbytery has been remiss by having encouraged the start of a new group in the Bonita area; many of those in the Bonita group are members or former members of the Paradise Hills church. The presbytery, noting that the vote to withdraw was not in accordance with requirements for adequate advance notice, has appointed a committee to contact the members of the congregation, to point out the sin of possible schism, the questionable legality of the decision to withdraw, and to urge the people to seek a resolution of their difficulties within the denomination.

Rochester, N. Y.—The congregation of Covenant Church recently elected Mr. James B. Miner as a deacon. That's not particularly unusual, except for the fact that Mr. Miner happens to be in Ethiopia and not Rochester. He and his wife Beverly serve with the Compassion of Jesus Hospital in Ghinda under the Committee on Foreign Missions. The church's session asked the Rev. Arthur J. Steltzer, missionary in Ghinda, to examine Mr. Miner as to his qualifications for the office. This was done and, acting in behalf of the session, Mr. Steltzer ordained Mr. Miner on October 1 in Ghinda. (This does raise some intriguing questions: Does a local church have diaconal responsibilities that far from home? Does the Committee on Foreign Missions have, if not a right, at least a concern about the possible ordination of its personnel? Or perhaps most pertinently, should the General Assembly, acting in behalf of the whole church, arrange to ordain men like Jim Miner as "deacons at large"?)

Miami, Fla.—The Presbytery of the South at its regular meeting here examined Mr. Steven T. Bradford as a candidate for the gospel ministry and proceeded to license him to preach. Mr. Bradford completed his undergraduate work at Westminster Seminary in the spring of 1971; his address: Route 1, Box 55, Pompano Beach, FL 33060.

Houston, Texas—The Rev. Philip B. Jones, pastor of an independent congregation here, has informed the Presbytery of the Dakotas of his desire to renounce presbytery's jurisdiction for "socio-politico-economic" reasons stemming from his congregation's refusal to welcome a newly arrived white couple with an adopted child of mixed racial background. The presbytery had sought to counsel Mr. Jones concerning any policy of racial exclusion and has urged him to withdraw his request, but he has insisted on being removed from their roll of ministerial members. Final action on the request will not be taken until the spring meeting of presbytery.