

# The Presbyterian Guardian



**IN THIS ISSUE:**

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## Letters

### More Catechism needed

Last week the Rev. Benson Male told me that the Shorter Catechism with proof-texts had been translated into Arabic and that 22,000 copies had been printed. He handed me a copy with a picture of himself in it. I said, "Ben, much as I would like to take it, I simply have no time to read it today!"

Naturally, I thought of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Could we have 22,000 copies printed (in English), enough for each family to have a copy?

Could we have a minister, perhaps retired, or a team of retired pastors, give a brief exposition of each question and answer? Would those who mimeograph our local church bulletins consider placing an insert into it weekly?

Perhaps also our pastors could preach a series of sermons, based on Scripture, but guided by the order of topics discussed in the catechism.

Mr. Male told me that a group of Arab people requested instruction in the truths of Christianity. "What would you like me to use as a guide, the Bible?" "Of course the Bible, but what we need is guidance through the Bible; it often reads as a series of loosely related stories. Please, Mr. Male, teach us the Shorter Catechism." That is what he is doing now. With some enthusiasm he said to me, "The Shorter Catechism is the best evangelistic instrument I know."

This pleased me no end. For I long knew that it is the best *organizational* instrument the Reformed Churches have. When the Russellites [Jehovah's Witnesses] and their many fellow deviates come to my door in teams armed with tracts, they quote the Bible. Do you believe in God? Of course we do. Do you believe in Jesus the Son of God? Of course we do. But when you, courteously, point out that the Mohammedans also believe in God, the pantheists also believe in God, etc., etc., but not in the God of John 3:16, they are in a great hurry to leave.

Dr. Machen told me that his mother taught him the Shorter Catechism and

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Page 2

that he recited it to her at the tender age of ten. There are Shorter Catechism Christians and non-Shorter Catechism Christians.

Just now I spoke of the many *isms* of our day; but time flies. The *Confession of 1967* is evidence enough and more to prove that there are many who boast themselves as being adherents of the Westminster Creeds, but who have perverted the gospel. They say, Lord, Lord; but the Lord knows them not. They are shepherds who eat but do not feed the sheep. Will someone write a new *Against the Heresies* for today?

Cornelius Van Til  
Philadelphia, Pa.

### Too many "labels"

The book review, "A Fresh Wind," is noted [*Guardian* of June 1976]. The author's labels — Separatist Fundamentalism, Open Fundamentalism, Establishment Evangelicalism, and New Evangelicalism, to which he adds the Young Evangelicals — would seem to be quite an accurate description of the present scene.

But I have often wondered how much damage has been done by this labeling. Would it not be far better for all of us who claimed to be saved by God to be concerned with one thing: Are we being biblical in our living? The biblical approach is the only important factor.

We who accept the doctrinal system of the Westminster Standards as a faithful presentation of biblical truth must be certain our views of separation, of evangelism, of the church, etc., are biblical. And by "biblical" we mean consistent with the Reformed faith. Anything less than this is error and should be avoided, whether we are young, middle-aged, or old.

This is the way the "wind" should blow.

Leonard T. Van Horn, pastor  
Centreville, Alabama

### McIntire's "Mistakes"

A Bible Presbyterian minister recently wrote to the *Guardian* [Aug/Sept. 1976], chiding the editor for discourtesy to Dr. McIntire in bringing up the issue of McIntire's opposition to many things conservative, if they were not identical to

(Continued on page 7.)

The Presbyterian Guardian  
Cover Photo - Religious News Service

# Does God mean for the church TO GROW?

Thomas S. Champness

*The following paper is a condensed version of a talk given at a special public meeting of the Presbytery of the South of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church at which church growth was the main concern.*

The last time I spoke at a popular service in presbytery was in Bend, Oregon. Driving home afterward with a fellow pastor, I couldn't resist the temptation to ask him what he thought of my sermon.

"Oh, the sermon was OK," he replied. "The trouble was you had too much hay on your fork!"

The problem with a topic like "The Biblical Basis for Church Growth" is that it's far too much hay for just one fork. Since we have to impose limits, I propose to speak on what just one book of the Bible has to say about church growth, and I propose to use the book of Genesis.

## Church growth in Genesis

A certain professor of church history once said: "The church of Jesus Christ was founded in Adam, organized in Abraham, reorganized by Jesus Christ, and purified in the Reformation." If the church was founded in Adam, that is, if the people of God are basically one people throughout all history, then Genesis has something to say to us about church growth.

Take the one word "seed" and trace its use through Genesis. The first six occurrences (Genesis 1:11, 12, 29) refer to the seeds of plants and trees. And we are impressed with the fact that seed is something very abundant in God's creation. A single plant or tree may produce hundreds of seeds in just one season. God made plants and trees with the ability to multiply.

It is in the first preaching of the gospel (Genesis 3:15) that God first applies the term "seed" to human beings. There God says, to Satan, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel." Two kinds of seed are sharply distinguished—the children of Eve (believers) and the children of Satan (unbelievers). Here also one Seed is singled out to give a capital blow to Satan in a day yet future to Adam and Eve.

*It is God's purpose to create an innumerable seed, and his power that makes it certain to happen.*

The two opposing seeds quickly manifested themselves in the history of mankind. Cain showed himself to be a seed of the serpent by his murder of his brother Abel. Later, when Eve gave birth to Seth, she said, "God has appointed me another seed in place of Abel; for Cain killed him" (Genesis 4:25). The woman's seed is given by God's gracious appointment.

After the flood, Noah and his sons are commanded to "populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it" (Genesis 9:7). God promised that Noah's seed would not be cut off again by the waters of the flood (verses 9-17). In fact, God stated his purpose to bring the descendant of Japheth "into the tents of Shem,"

*The sovereign God declares that his church will grow, and become a multitude that no man can number.*

indicating that the non-Semitic peoples would enter into the covenant blessings promised to the line of Shem.

## The promised seed

The most remarkable promises of God about the multiplication of the woman's seed—which is to say, about church growth—occur in the life of Abram. God promises to make from this one man a great nation through which blessing will flow to all the families of the earth (Genesis 12:1-3). Indeed, God goes so far as to say, "I will make your seed as the dust of the earth; so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your seed can also be numbered", (Genesis 13:16).

Not only dust, but also the multitude of stars are used to teach the magnitude of God's plan for the growth of his church (Genesis 15:5). It is in this same context that God "passes between the pieces," threatening his own self-mutilation if he fails to keep his covenant promises (verses 7-21). The symbol becomes reality at Calvary, where the Seed of the woman bore the curses of righteous judgement in order to bring the full covenant blessing of Abraham to all the families of the earth.

Now Abram is given a new name, Abraham, "the father of a multitude." The Lord says, "I will make nations of you" (Genesis 17:5, 6). Just what was this church God organized in Abraham? It was the church catholic or universal, the world-wide body of believers to whom God has reckoned righteousness by faith. This is Paul's theme in Romans 4 and Galatians 3.

The promises of church growth are  
(Continued on next page.)

repeated to Abraham's son Isaac (Genesis 26:1-5) and to his son Jacob: "Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 28:14). Indeed, when Jacob feels that his life is threatened, he pleads before God this very promise (Genesis 32:11, 12).

### Preserving the seed

In the story of Joseph, the entire family of Jacob is threatened with extinction by famine. But Joseph is the great preserver of the seed. The grain he put in his brothers' sacks was seed that preserved *the* seed, for Jesus Christ was in the loins of Judah.

Later, Joseph said to his brothers, "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to *preserve* many people alive" (Genesis 50:20). All the resources of divine providence are brought into action for the preservation of the seed. Humanly speaking, would there be a Christian church today if Judah had starved in Canaan?

The biblical basis for church growth — what is it? It is God's sovereign purpose to create for himself a *seed* as numerous as the dust of the earth, the stars of the sky, and the sand of the seashore. That is God's purpose, and it is God's almighty power that makes it certain to come to pass.

Does God intend that his church should grow? Genesis fairly shouts at us that this is the case. What reason is there for pessimism about the growth of the church? The sovereign God declares that his church *will* grow, that it will multiply and become a great multitude that no man can number.

We have God's word on that! Why should we doubt it? And why shouldn't we, who are Abraham's seed today, have a part in bringing it to pass?

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*The Rev. Mr. Champness is pastor of the Redeemer Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Georgia.*

## Preparing THE SOIL

*Harvie M. Conn*

How do you prepare the soil for growing churches? On January 9, 10, 1976, the Presbytery of New Jersey of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church hosted a seminar that brought over fifty leaders from twelve of its sixteen churches. Led by Ruling Elder Paul Patterson of Covenant Church in Vineland, the seminar sought to break down the roadblock mentality to church growth.

That stubborn resistance to church growth is summarized in many of these proverbs as supplied by the delegates: "I like a small church; it's more friendly." "I can't keep track of all the people who come now." "Our community is already church-saturated." "Quality, not quantity." "God isn't interested in results, just faithfulness." "We've never done it this way before"—the seven last words of the church! "Can we really expect the Reformed faith to be popular?" "In these last days, God calls out a 'remnant' church."

### Background

Preparations for the seminar began many months before when students involved in the Missions course at Westminster Seminary secured the cooperation of twelve of the presbytery's sessions in making a statistical analysis of each church from 1960 to 1975. A preparatory survey, using statistics from the General Assembly minutes, was augmented by a survey questionnaire that each session was asked to fill out.

Teams of two or three students then met each of the sessions for sometimes lengthy discussions of the survey and

more careful study followed. The student reports were then completed and sent to the sessions for their own evaluation.

Of basic help in this initial stage was the booklet by Vergil Gerber, *How to Keep a Church Going and Growing* (Regal Books, Glendale, Calif.). Those coming to the seminar were asked to study those surveys made available to them by the session. One teach of students also prepared a church-growth survey of the entire presbytery which was mimeographed, distributed, and discussed at the seminar's second hour-long session.

A second stage in the preparation was the mailing to the delegates of *How to Grow a Church* by Donald McGavran and Win Arn (Regal Books, Glendale, Calif.). Though there were some difficulties involved, for the most part the delegates received their books at least a month in advance of the January seminar.

### Getting perspectives

The seminar itself was divided into six sections or modules, building on materials supplied in the book, and augmented with biblical and theological perspectives supplied by various lecturers.

The session began on Friday evening with a presentation by the Rev. George Haney, General Secretary of the denomination's Committee on Home Missions, titled: "The Biblical Base for Growing Churches." What is the scriptural foundation for growth? Should evangelism and outreach have a central place in the church? These were the questions Mr. Haney sought to answer.

During most of Saturday, the remaining five modules were presented. The opening session, on "Removing the Fog," conducted by the Rev. Harvie M. Conn of Westminster Seminary, dealt with non-growth excuses and an analysis of the presbytery's growth patterns, using the students' survey as a basis.

The Rev. Albert G. Edwards, pastor from Westfield, led the session on "Seeing the Possibilities," opening new vistas of possible ministry. An hour or more followed dealing with "Leadership for

Growth," as the delegates grappled with how a church can maximize its lay leadership.

A fifth session focused on "Discovering Responsiveness" as the group looked together for growth possibilities in their unique environments. For all of these sessions, the discussion guide to *How to Grow a Church*, by Win Arn (Gospel Light Publications) provided considerable help. (This guide was designed to accompany the book of the same name that was given earlier to the participants.)

The climax of the seminar came with the final session, led again by Mr. Haney, on "Planning Strategy for Growth." Each delegate was asked to fill out by himself a worksheet setting forth goals of church growth in three areas—personal goals as a result of the conference, goals for his congregation, and goals for the three geographical areas into which the churches of the presbytery most easily fitted. Time was then given for groups of six people to share all their goals and then draw up commonly shared ideas for their congregations and areas. In the final minutes of the sessions, one reporter from each of the groups then shared their findings with the entire seminar.

### Following through

The third stage of the seminar is going on now. The Home Missions Committee of the presbytery, some four months later, sent to each of the delegates a copy of his own worksheet, reminding him of the obligations he planned for himself and for his church. The Committee is now planning sessions in four regional areas of the presbytery with the churches of that area to discuss their findings and augment planning for church growth as a result of the seminar.

What kind of goals emerged? Eleven of the twelve churches plan the starting of evangelistic Bible studies and/or seed churches within the year. Sixteen of the delegates planned the starting of Bible classes in their own homes or were to urge their congregations to begin "house churches" during the year. Over half spoke of increased personal evangelism goals. "Spend at least one day a week

in personal evangelism"; "Everyone in my church bring someone new to church once a month" — these were typical of many of the comments.

Especially exciting was the concreteness of the goal planning: "5% increase during the year"; or "10%" or "30%"; "50/100 souls won to Christ during the year"; "30-50% growth in the presbytery during the year." Nine of the churches surveyed planned such specific programs.

Does such a seminar produce a heavy stress on quantity, not quality, as often feared? At least twenty delegates pledged more time in prayer for church growth. Seven spoke of the need for more time spent in visiting members of the local church and in cultivating Christian gifts and their use in the fellowship. Sixteen or more spoke of the need for increased fellowship among the area churches.

Will such a program work? Certainly the four goals of the seminar itself were amply fulfilled. The growth of the presbytery and its churches was analyzed. A biblically constructed plan for church growth in each congregation was set forth. Positive, concrete goals for each member church were laid. A model for providing a similar seminar in each church of the presbytery was laid out and encouraged.

What can God do with people who pray and plan? It is still early to say. But there are hints. One of the churches of the presbytery organized within a month of the seminar a Church Growth Committee using members of the congregation, young and old, men and woman, officers and non-officers. From this committee has begun to appear a monthly bulletin insert bearing, as its name, the number of people to be contacted during the year for the gospel. The goal was set by the congregation at their annual meeting in January. For this church, it will be "204 or More."

A May report of the bulletin notes that seven young people from the church's youth program, the Awana Club, accepted Christ at a recent meeting. Still to come is an evangelistic conference in October, a Bicentennial presentation by a sixty-voice gospel singing group, a July 4th Sunday night service led by the church's young people, a Deeper Life

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***Planning for church growth:  
Does this put stress on quantity,  
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Will such a program work?  
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who pray and plan?***

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Conference in February of next year. The Evangelistic Committee of the church is now preparing lists of people outside the church for contact by church members. An evangelistic Bible class has been inaugurated in a nearby town.

When a young woman says that she will "learn especially how to evangelize by doing it," and a pastor speaks of "establishing two or three home Bible study groups this year," one cannot but feel that ground is being plowed for God's harvest. When another writes, "Relying on God's help, I want to schedule a visit to at least one person a week . . . and plan to speak of spiritual matters," one hears laughter in heaven (Luke 15:10).

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*If others are interested in the planning of a similar seminar, the author of this article will be happy to offer any help he may give. It is hoped that a seminar packet may be prepared for use by the churches in the future. You may contact him at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA 19118.*

### Contacts Desired

If you know anyone in the vicinities of Medford, Grants Pass, or Roseburg, Oregon; Pocatello, Idaho; or Kalispell, Montana, who may be interested in worshipping an Orthodox Presbyterian Church, please notify the Northwest Presbytery Missions Committee, 118 N.W. Newport, Bend, OR 97701. Phone: 503-389-7040.

## A Letter from Aunt Polly

Dear younger friends,

The senior Gaffins returned from Taiwan four months ago. Since then we have been having many happy times with friends and family.

On the great American holiday, "the Bicentennial Fourth," we were with our daughter's family in Paducah, Kentucky. In the morning and afternoon of that memorable day we attended services of worship and praise to our God. At noon we had a picnic dinner (real Kentucky fried chicken!) in the city park with Christians of that city. A Christian congressman spoke to us. He told us how much need there is for Americans to pray earnestly for the leaders in our government.

Before we left Taiwan, we were thinking of the many people we wanted to visit here in the States, and we began praying that the Lord would guide us in getting to see them. Some of them live in out-of-the-way places, so we asked the Lord if it was his will to let us find a car in San Francisco.

We arrived in that city in the early evening on June 3. That very night, Uncle Dick received a phone call from a member of our church in Sunnyvale. He had a car he thought we could use, and he wished to give it to us! He knew about our desire because he had heard the request for it at prayer meeting in his church.

We are still so thankful for the comfortable Plymouth station wagon that God provided for us. We are thankful that our heavenly Father led us to pray and led our friends to pray and that he opened this family's heart to answer when we all prayed together.



Since then we have traveled along for many miles through our beautiful country — in sunshine and thunder storms, across the Mojave desert, and over the highest point of the Appalachian mountains. And always we are rejoicing in God's giving us this opportunity.

Recently Uncle Dick and I enjoyed riding through South Dakota, visiting some of our churches, seeing and hearing how God has blessed them, and telling them how God has blessed his church on Taiwan. As we rode along we saw great fields, long and wide. Their colors were soft and pleasing to look at. Some were grayish brown or black where they had been freshly plowed by the faithful farmers. Others were a soft green as the newly planted winter wheat was just coming up.

And we saw cattle grazing on darker green fields of grass. Bleached khaki-colored cornfields were everywhere and so were fields of brown-ripe soy beans. Here and there were clumps of yellow and gold trees. All of this was for us to enjoy freely because others had done their work well. God had arranged all this beauty and bounty in his time.

Fall, we call it. It made us think of another great American holiday, Thanksgiving Day. It will soon be here.

God has done so much for us, our country and our church. We must make this Bicentennial Year's Thanksgiving a very special one by counting all our blessings (don't be a murmuring Israelite!), counting them one by one.

And when we come to count the blessings that God has given our church, don't forget the big, big one the Lord has given us for Taiwan — a whole new family of missionaries, the Robert Marshalls. They have just set off for Taiwan. We have prayed for a long, long time that God would give us new missionaries. He has done that. Now let us all thank him.

Lovingly in Jesus,  
"Aunt Polly"

*The Richard B. Gaffins, Sr., have "retired" from missionary service in Taiwan after many years of faithful labor both there and in mainland China earlier. Pray for them as they seek the Lord's answer to their place of service in the years ahead.*

## Marshalls commissioned for Taiwan

On October 8, 1976 in Bridgeton, New Jersey, the Rev. Robert L. Marshall was formally installed as a missionary to Taiwan under the joint sponsorship of the Committee on Foreign Missions of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery of New Jersey.

The Rev. Richard Gerber, moderator of the presbytery, conducted the service. The Rev. Calvin A. Busch preached from Romans 10:14-15. The charge to Mr. Marshall was given by the Rev. John P. Galbraith, general secretary of the foreign missions committee. The Rev. Bruce F. Hunt, recently retired from missionary service in Korea, charged the presbytery. After the service a time of fellowship was enjoyed in the Bridgeton Church, of which Mr. Marshall has been the pastor for some years.

The Marshalls will spend a month with their respective families in Kansas before moving on to Taiwan where they expect to begin missionary service in November. The presbytery will present about half of the support with the hope that eventually the total financial needs will be met from within the presbytery.

*Editor's note:* This is not the first time in the history of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church that a presbytery sent out a foreign missionary, but it is the only recent example. It does, even so, constitute a new development in the support of foreign mission efforts since the denomination adopted the Combined Budget system for its denominational giving to home and foreign missions and Christian education.

For some time, presbyteries have been actively supporting their own home missions efforts without going through the Combined Budget, even though part of a home missionary's support might be coming from denominational funds in the Combined Budget. This is the first instance of support for a foreign missionary outside of the Combined Budget, and could initiate a general breakdown of the whole concept of giving to the denomination's total, three-pronged gospel outreach.

(The report above was kindly furnished by Mr. Busch, pastor of Emmanuel Church in Whippany, New Jersey. Mr. Busch is retiring as of December 31. Mr. Hunt, meanwhile, has "retired" to take up a position as stated supply for Calvary Church in Manassas, Virginia.)

## LETTERS

(Continued from page 2.)

Dr. McIntire's precise position. The writer said, "All men make mistakes sometimes."

Well, McIntire made another "mistake" when he recently slandered the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as having "no call to the battles." The truth is, Dr. McIntire just once complimented an OP minister on the front page of the *Christian Beacon* for raising the "best issue yet" on the American scene [in the *Beacon* of November 1955]. And so impressed was Dr. McIntire with what had been done by this OP minister that he broke off the meetings he was having in another state to travel at once to the scene, that he might get in on a piece of the action. I know about it, because I was that minister, even though Dr. McIntire made another "mistake" by calling me "Kellogg."

Through the years I have also labored with Dr. McIntire to persuade him to retract a particularly vicious attack on Westminster Theological Seminary, made in connection with the dedication of a building in Wilmington, Delaware, for Faith Theological Seminary. I carefully pointed out to him exactly what falsehoods had been printed. But he has refused to make this retraction. This is no mere "mistake."

Edwards E. Elliott, pastor  
Garden Grove, Calif.

## The Converting Word

In the face of all the current inerrancy conflicts, infallibility debates, "battles," etc., I would make this comment: I was converted while reading my wife's Bible. The Word of God, quick, powerful (Hebrews 4:12), performed its life-saving work, not being the least bit hindered or enhanced by any scientific knowledge on my part. It's like Jesus said: "Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice" (John 18:37). The Word of God demands, and rightly so, to be heard and believed.

So I personally feel that whatever applause the Bible has recently won in the courts of science has only gone a long way to having men walk by sight rather than faith. Modern science will cause me neither to believe nor disbelieve.

Let the world probe and investigate, I have no fears. Let them study and critique. I will rather, by God's grace and the power of his Spirit, hear, believe and obey.

Timothy D. Titus  
New Castle, Penna.



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# The great need: Believers with a living THEOLOGY

James A. Hughes

Today there are basically three groups claiming to believe the Bible: (1) the Fundamentalists; (2) the Evangelicals; and (3) the Calvinists.

Modern *fundamentalism* is primarily Arminian in theology and premillennial in eschatology. Its stress is on defense rather than on proclamation. And there is the tendency to equate separation with reformation.

Modern *evangelicalism* is also primarily Arminian in theology and premillennial in eschatology. Its stress is on evangelism and on infiltration instead of separation, and it emphasizes proclamation instead of defense. And it shows a concern for the social issues.

Modern *Calvinism* is primarily Calvinistic or Reformed in theology and non-premillennial in eschatology. It stresses doctrine, principally the sovereignty of God — but often at the expense of Christian life. Unlike the other groups, it has historical roots in the theology of the Bible. But it has lost a sense of the history of Calvinism, especially the principles relating to church-and-state and to the form of worship.

In their historic framework, fundamentalism, evangelicalism and Calvinism were all out of one biblical Christian faith. But today this is not the case. It is only Calvinism that really has biblical roots. Arminian theology is not the theology of the Bible; so modern fundamentalism and modern evangelicalism lack a truly biblical foundation.

Of the three groups, evangelicalism is by far the largest. Most of those claiming to believe the Bible today would be found

in this camp. Its theological spokesman is Carl Henry, though its most prominent figure is of course Billy Graham.

Fundamentalism is a smaller movement, comprised mostly of those of baptistic leanings. Some would label it a splinter-group, because of the numerous divisions that have taken place within the movement during its relatively short history. It takes a conservative political stance, which apparently it views as allied with conservative theology. Carl McIntire is its most prominent spokesman.

Calvinism is also a small movement. It does not seem to have a prominent spokesman. Some avidly follow the theologian-philosopher Cornelius Van Til, while others walk with the lawyer-philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd.

There are some spokesmen who are difficult to classify. The most prominent of these is the apologist Francis Schaeffer. He seems to be a bridge between Calvinism and evangelicalism, with both groups seeming to claim him as their own.

## Need for unity in truth

Certainly ideally there should be one group of Bible-believers, one movement and not three. There are things in each of the groups that need to be considered by the others. The stress of fundamentalism on separation and defense is necessary. And so is the stress of evangelicalism on proclamation and on concern for the social issues. And equally necessary is the stress of Calvinism on doctrine. All these things need to be considered.

All these strands should be brought together. It is not defense without proclamation, nor is it proclamation without defense. It is both. And separation, as distinct from isolation, is also important. It is separation *from* error and *to* the truth—but *in* the world—that is vital. And there must be the living of the Christian life on a solid theological basis. There must be the life, but it must be built on sound teaching. And this Calvinism offers.

All three groups must be brought together if there is to be a united witness challenging the culture of our day. But they must be brought together on sound theological principles.

## The difficulties of uniting

It is unrealistic to think that those with different doctrinal viewpoints could possibly present a united front. Calvinism

and Arminianism cannot be yoked together. They are two different religious systems. Arminianism is a form of humanism, and therefore it is utterly powerless to challenge our humanistic or man-centered culture.

The Arminianism of the average Bible-believer is one of the basic problems today. For this colors his whole way of thinking. The flame-thrower of God's word of truth must be used against Arminianism, as well as against the faulty theology of the liberal. The Bible-believing world of today must be shown that its repudiation of Calvinism, or the true Reformation theology, has left it bankrupt.

Now it must be quickly pointed out that modern Calvinism leaves things to be desired. For example, there is the tendency to rely too much on the Puritans. To publish the Puritan classics is a good thing, for their writings are filled with biblical truths. But we should not expect the Puritans to do the speaking for us. This amounts to a *second-hand* witness.

Also, there is the tendency among some Calvinistic groups to live in the past, in the wrong sense of the word. Consciously or unconsciously, a traditionalism has grown up. There is a rather rigid ritualism, not in pageantry, but in mechanical simplicity. What was done in the past must be continued, these people believe—even if it has no biblical sanction.

## Re-reforming the Reformed church

We are not thinking here of what is called the purity of worship. We believe that this has biblical sanction. This writer is convinced that the biblical pattern of worship for this dispensation is Psalm-singing without the use of musical instruments. This was the synagogue pattern of worship at the time of Jesus and the apostles, and it is the pattern that should be followed today.

But practically all Calvinistic churches have repudiated this. The historic Calvinistic position stressed not only proper doctrine, government, and discipline, but also proper worship. And the last has been repudiated, by and large, by present-day Calvinistic churches.

In North America in particular, there arose after the Puritan era a faulty view of the relationship between church and state. The present-day stress on "secularism" might well be traced to this. In Presbyterian circles, the original West-



minster Confession presented what this writer believes is the proper view of this relationship. But around the time of the American Revolution there were changes made by American Presbyterians in the portions of the Confession dealing with this relationship. These changes represented the thought of the people at that time, inside and outside Presbyterian circles. And the separation of "religion" from daily life may well have resulted from this and similar actions.

A basic difference between historic Calvinism and modern Calvinism is the separation of doctrine from life in the latter. The older Calvinists believed the truth and lived the truth. But the newer Calvinists are not taking seriously the importance of living the truth. This may be due to the tendency to glory in the Reformed Faith instead of in the Lord who gave us the Reformed truth. We may have made an *idol* out of the Reformed understanding of the truth.

Sad to say, some in Calvinistic circles are losing their grip on the truth. Through the influence of "higher criticism" and the "scientific consensus," the Bible speaks with an uncertain message—in the thinking of some. In this framework has grown up a deadly intellectualism. There is the desire for scholarly recognition. And there is something artificial and sterile about the whole thing.

Calvinism has fallen on hard times. Its witness is fragmented. Some are following one man, some another. There are, for example, those Van Tillians and Dooyeweerdians. Each group feels that its leader is saying what needs to be said. Van Til's theology is solidly biblical, but he does not write in a popular style. Thus his writings have a restricted circulation, apparently even in Reformed circles. Dooyeweerd starts with philosophy and not with theology, and this presents problems. There appears to be an erosion of the theological base in the Dooyeweerdian school.

Theology is indeed the queen of the sciences. And if the Bible-believing wing of the church is to experience a reformation, it will have to go back to theology. Fundamentalists and evangelicals talk about a reformation, but not about a *theology* of reformation. And evangelicals talk about evangelism, but not about a theology of evangelism. Both modern fundamentalism and modern evangelicalism deemphasize the sovereignty of God as a basic doctrine and thus have relegated theology to a subordinate position.

We in Calvinistic circles might think that we have really gotten back to theol-

ogy. But we must remember that theology is more than a correct *doctrine* of theology. True theology is of course doctrinal, but it is also *practical*. And it is doubtful if the practicality of theology has shown itself in our daily lives. Until this is shown, our theology will remain defective—no matter how correct it might be in its doctrinal formulations.

We Calvinists, as well as the Arminians, have to get back to a *living* theology. Unless we do, all talk about a reformation in the church is just so much talk.

*The writer of this article lives in Scarborough, Ontario. He is engaged in professional counseling and holds the Ph.D. degree.*

Dr. Hughes sets forth two views in his article with which many readers will have a disagreement. There have always been those in Calvinistic churches who held to exclusive use of the biblical Psalms in singing without instrumental accompaniment. This position was indeed "repudiated" by most Presbyterian and Reformed churches because they became convinced that Scripture, rightly interpreted, did not forbid the use of uninspired hymns but rather advocated it (in Ephesians 5:18, 19 and Colossians 3:16).

The other area of possible disagreement, at least for American Presbyterians, has to do with the church's relation to the civil magistrate. At the very beginning of the Presbyterian Church in the American colonies in 1729, men were allowed to take some exception to the portions of the Confession that had to do with the relation of the church to the state. The original form of the Westminster Confession teaches that the "civil magistrate" had authority "to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed" (XXIII, III).

Present-day forms of the Confession in most American Presbyterian denominations are much more restrictive: "Civil magistrates may not assume to themselves the administration of the Word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, or, in the least, interfere in matters of faith" (XXIII, III). Rather, they are simply to protect the church and ensure that all citizens have the right to full liberty in their faith.

Though we may not agree with Dr. Hughes on these matters, we do agree

with him in his urging those of Calvinistic heritage to get back to some solid biblical theology, not only in searching out the truth of God but in living it day by day.

—J. J. M.

## New church in Cerritos Valley

The session of the Garden Grove (Calif.) Orthodox Presbyterian Church is petitioning the Presbytery of Southern California to constitute the branch work in Cerritos-Artesia as a particular congregation as January 1, 1977. It will be named the Cerritos Valley Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The Cerritos work, now meeting in Artesia, is completely self-supporting and has elders and deacons ready to function on their own. The work did suffer a loss in the transfer of ruling elder A. M. Laurie to the Santa Barbara area. But it has two able elders, William Letson and Robert Coie, together with the pastor, Robert Newsom. Deacons are Howard Reno and David Smith.

## "This is the Way the Lord Will Come"

A new pamphlet-tract on Christ's second coming by the Rev. Calvin A. Busch, pastor of Emmanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Whippany, New Jersey. Available at 60¢ postage paid from Mr. Busch, 120 Park Ave., Convent Station, NJ 07961.

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# Speaking in TONGUES:

## Is it biblical?

Robert A. Nisbet

The author of the following article writes as one who experienced "speaking in tongues" and went on to serious study of Scripture teaching on the subject. He is a ruling elder and served as a member of the Presbytery of Ohio (OPC) during the trials of the Rev. Arnold S. Kress.

### I. Origin of Tongues-Speaking

Are modern occurrences of "speaking in tongues" real or imaginary? This is a difficult question to answer, for it depends on one's definition of "real." If "real" is defined as "not artificial, fraudulent, illusionary or apparent [but] occurring in fact" (*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1958), then modern "tongues-speaking" must be considered a "real" phenomenon.

Tongues-speaking is practiced by two general religious groups: The original Pentecostals, and the more recent Neopentecostals or Charismatics. Pentecostals began in the early 1900s as a schismatic group holding that modern preaching of the gospel is incomplete. A "full gospel" consisted of faith in Jesus Christ and his atoning death, plus outward manifestation (a gift) proving an inward filling by the Holy Ghost. Acceptable "gifts" include special "knowledge" of the Word; special "wisdom" in applying the Word; "discernment" of evil spirits; "prophecy" (utterance of often ambiguous statements

laced with scriptural phrases that mystically represent extra-biblical revelation).

Factual occurrences of speaking in tongues have been commonly explained as: unlearned but genuine languages; ecstatic utterances of gibberish; psychological dynamics; and demon possession. Much has been written on the first two explanations, but very little has been published on the latter two. It may be helpful, before turning to the biblical significance of tongues-speaking, to discuss these two non-biblical explanations of the present-day phenomenon.

#### A. Psychological Dynamics

One practice among some Pentecostals, as described by Wayne Robinson in his book, *I Once Spoke in Tongues* (Spire Pub. Co., 1974), requires a seeker to say a tongue-twisting phrase, while increasing the speed of pronunciation until the syllables blend together, or become transposed. The result is claimed to be "speaking in tongues" (pp. 72ff.).

Other psychological patterns in tongues-speaking are described by Dr. John P. Kildahl, a psychologist and researcher for the National Mental Health Association, in his book, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues* (Harper & Row, 1972). He describes how one person received the "gift of tongues":

"One friend gently laid both his hands on the top of his head. The other took the left and right side of his jaw in the thumb and first finger of each hand saying, 'Now, pray Jim. Say whatever the Lord gives you to say, and I will move your mouth.' 'Abadaba avadaba rehbadaba ramanama . . .' and the syllables started to come smoothly. Tears flowed down his cheeks as strange words issued from his mouth. He was speaking in tongues" (p. 73).

Dr. Kildahl found that the tongues seeker is invariably influenced by a strong personality, an authority-figure. Also, the "tongue" of the new speaker often resembled that of the authority-figure. Also, the "tongue" of the new speaker often resembled that of the authority-figure. Four benefits are given by Dr. Kildahl which the persons interviewed attributed to tongues-speaking:

1. There is a stronger sense of identity and self-confidence in relations with

others.

2. There is a greater sense of purpose and a deepening of the spiritual aspect of life.

3. Greater boldness is felt in relationships, such as business dealings, marriage, and teaching.

4. There arises a conviction that now they matter to God, their neighbors, and themselves (p. 41).

#### B. Demon Possession

A lesser-known hypothesis attributes the "gift of tongues" to demon possession. John L. Nevius, a China missionary from 1854 to 1893, in his book *Demon Possession* (reprinted by Kregel in 1973), compiled reports of demon possession and discussed possible theories to account for them. He says,

"Another differentiating mark of demon-possession is the evidence it gives of knowledge and intellectual power not possessed by the subject; nor explainable on a pathological hypothesis" (p. 190).

Nevius cited several examples of demonic tongues-speaking and discussed several independent references to the phenomenon. The first disturbing consideration surrounding his report is that it was published in 1894, before the beginning of the modern Pentecostal, tongues-speaking movement. Due to the total absence of any reference to tongues-speaking as a religious practice, it is doubtful that Nevius sought to draw any parallel between demonic tongues-speaking and religious tongues-speaking. The second disturbing consideration from his report is that if speaking unlearned foreign languages could be caused by demons in the past, it could and probably does occur today also.

### II. Tongues-Speaking in Scripture

Regardless of the origin of tongues-speaking today, it is a common occurrence. Is modern tongues-speaking equivalent to biblical tongues-speaking? Is its significance today the same as it was in biblical times?

#### A. "Sanctifying" or enabling?

The Spirit of the Lord came upon

Sampson mightily, enabling him to kill thirty men of Ashkelon (Judges 14:6, 19). But it is clear, from his affair with Delilah, that these manifestations of the Spirit had little inward effect on him.

The Spirit also came mightily upon Saul (1 Samuel 10:9-10), transforming him from a timid herdsman into an aggressive king, able to defend Israel. But this gift of the Spirit did not prevent Saul from defying the express words of the Lord.

The intended effect of such gifts of the Spirit in the Old Testament was to fit the recipient to do some special task for God. So, David prayed in Psalm 51:11, "Take not thy holy Spirit from me," as the Lord had done with Saul. The Spirit had enabled Saul to be king, but when he failed to fulfill that office, the Spirit was taken from him. On the other hand, the Spirit was not taken from David, even when he sinned with Bathsheba, since he repented of that sin and continued to carry out his role as God's anointed king.

If the Lord is "the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8), then we may infer that the basic nature and function of the Spirit of the Lord is also the same today as during the Old Testament period. Though there are clear differences, particularly in the degree and organic involvement of the Spirit in the New Testament church, there is only one Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4, 5) and, therefore, only one basic purpose in his activity. This purpose must be to glorify God, fulfilling in the heart and life of the believer the promise of the exceeding richness of God's grace as expressed in the Word. There is no biblical warrant to expect any gift or effect of the Spirit's activity upon the believer today other than that expressed in the Word.

Pentecostal doctrine stresses that the "filling of the Spirit" does enable men to do great things for God. Even so, the changed life resulting from this Spirit-filling is described, not in terms of enabling, but of increasing "sanctification." For the Pentecostal, the emphasis of the filling is toward a conservative life-style, adherence to extra-biblical sanctions against certain conduct, and the attainment of sinless perfection in this life.

The *inner* work of the Spirit in the

New Testament certainly was to effect growth in grace and holiness, a work that continues today. But the purpose of the *outward* manifestations of the Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, appears to have been God's visible sign that the Spirit was being given to new classes of people to bring them into the New Testament church. The inner work of the Spirit is unfinished and so continues. But if the outward manifestations do continue today, it must mean that God is still providing visible signs to prove that still other classes of people are being brought into Christ's church.

These outward manifestations moved from the Old Testament Jews who became the disciples of Christ (Acts 2), to the Samaritans (Acts 8), to the Gentiles (Acts 10), and almost as though to prove that no conceivable class of people was left out, to some isolated followers of John the Baptist (Acts 19). The outward gifts were given to these groups as representative samples of the various classes of people. Yet we see today that most modern claims to tongues-speaking are individual rather than group occurrences, and they appear within groups already attested by God in the representative groups recorded in Acts.

### **B. Individual or corporate?**

What we see on the day of Pentecost is not centered on the Spirit's indwelling or sanctifying work, but rather the visible extension of the Spirit's ministry to all classes of people. Although Peter claims (Acts 2:16) that the Pentecost experience was in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, that prophecy is completely fulfilled only when God now pours out his Spirit upon "all flesh," upon all major groups and social classes of people. The "all" is certainly not inclusive of every single individual (else all would be saved), but is meant to indicate all categories of people.

Jesus promised his disciples that when the Holy Spirit came upon them, they would "be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This witness began with the Jews at Pentecost (Acts 2), and then was extended to the Samaritans (Acts 8). The Jews had an exclusivistic

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***Modern tongues-speaking appears to arise from a Judaizing view that the gospel taught by Christ is insufficient and the Word incomplete.***

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view of Jehovah's blessing upon them; in particular, Samaritans were seen as excluded. The extension of God's grace in the gospel to Samaritans was as unthinkable to the early Christian Jews as a blessing on Egyptians would have been to the followers of Moses.

Frederick Dale Bruner, in *A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Eerdmans, 1970), observes that the Spirit was withheld from the Samaritans, even though they believed, until Peter and John arrived, so that the disciples could see with their own eyes the visible effect of the Spirit's coming upon them (pp. 175ff.). Though tongues are not specifically mentioned, the outward manifestations were indeed visible and powerful, or Simon the sorcerer would not have tried to buy the "power." For the Jews' sake, the sign of Samaritan initiation in the kingdom of Christ would have to be the same as for the Jewish believers at Pentecost.

The next group of people ushered into the kingdom was the Gentiles, exemplified by Cornelius and his household, concerning whom the gift of tongues is specified (Acts 10:44-48). Perhaps the presence of tongues at Corinth represents a further extension of the Spirit through the Gentile world to the "uttermost parts."

All of these acts of the Spirit were with corporate groups; none of the accounts is of an individual experience (Brunner, p. 192). Robinson observed that these acts of the Spirit were miracles demonstrating and validating the shedding abroad of the Spirit to different groups of people (p. 87). But the thrust of the modern tongues movement is on individual recipients and not on the extension of the Spirit to some

*(Continued on next page.)*

new group or class of people.

One objection to this analysis might be to insist that all those "represented" (we Gentiles of today) should receive all that was made available to our original "representatives" (Cornelius, his household, and the Corinthians). This appears as a rather powerful argument in light of our American ideals of full and equal representation under the law. It would also appear to be supported by the promise that every believer is represented in the resurrection and ascension of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:14; Colossians 2:12).

We must, however, be careful not to overextend a general principle to cover a specific incident. The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament often worked through the prophetic and priestly office, but nowhere do we see that all Israel (those represented by the prophets and priests)

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*An experience-oriented theology of the Holy Spirit can only detract from the Spirit's central purpose — to glorify Christ and his gospel.*

---

received all the outward characteristics of the office (such as visions, messages, dreams, or admission to the Holy of Holies). So, should we not view the outward gifts of the Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, as a characteristic given to our original Gentile representatives but not intended for all the Gentiles today who were represented then?

It could further be argued that the biblical norm for group manifestations of the Spirit does not necessarily invalidate individualized experiences today. Other biblical norms, such as the early communal life with its breaking of bread from door to door, daily prayer in the temple, love feasts, etc., seemed appropriate for the time but have far less relevance today (cf. Acts 2:44, 45).

A distinction, however, must be made between cultural norms and theological norms. Different means of religious and cultural expression may be used in different ages, but it must be the same Spirit working in all (1 Corinthians 12:4, 5). If we wish to discern a theological norm (such as the operation of the Spirit), we must judge according to references to it in all ages. The question is, What is the essential nature and effect of the Spirit's

operation among men of every age?

Whatever the answer, it must be consistent in its revelatory effect upon man. The activity of the Spirit in one age cannot conflict with that in another age with respect to the essential nature of that activity.

Therefore, in order to relate the modern individualized tongues-speaking to the New Testament coming of the Spirit in outward manifestations on groups, we must consider the effect of these manifestations upon men.

### C. Man-centered or Christ-centered?

The rejection of certain worldly activities and appearances becomes a prerequisite for and a sign of holiness for the Pentecostal. Further, the very ability to be holy is tied to tongues-speaking. This legalistic framework often becomes the touchstone for tongues-speakers (Pentecostal or Charismatic) as they fall into what Bruner calls a Gnostic error.

According to Bruner, the early Gnostics viewed Christ as the transcendental miracle worker and no longer saw him as the crucified Son of Man in the flesh (p. 272). Pentecostals and Charismatics certainly do not commit the error of denying the deity or humanity of Christ, but they do tend to fall into the legalistic asceticism of the Gnostics. An ascetic seeks to reach a higher spiritual state by following disciplines of "touch not, taste not, handle not" (Colossians 2:21). But the believer is to remain in the world, even as he keeps himself from the evil that is present in it (1 John 4:17; Romans 12:9; 3 John 11).

Since this transcendental, miracle-working view of Christ so permeates Charismatic thought, it is a great temptation for tongues-speakers to link the origin of their sanctification to such "miracles" as tongues and prophecy and to link the process of sanctification to a legalistic system of ascetic conduct.

This transcendental view of Christ and legalistic conduct tends to solidify in the Charismatic a miracle-induced, self-centered, self-serving love. Tongues-speaking converts are sought, not so much it seems for Christ, but for the sake of spreading joy and holiness. Moreover, this joy and assurance, which appears dependent on others for its very existence, is said to bring great rewards in this life.

A common order of service in Pentecostal gatherings and such Charismatic groups as the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship is to present some paragon of success (spiritual or financial) who attributes his great success to the gift of the

Holy Spirit, usually evidenced by speaking in tongues. These and other benefits appear to be long-lasting, and permit the tongues-speaker to appeal to the audience to receive these effects for themselves. The tongues-speaker needs assurance of his own worth to God and men, and this becomes the source of his love toward both. He loves God not so much because of Christ's death for our wretched sin, but rather for the joy and assurance that his conversion and experience brings.

Paul sought to direct the Corinthians to "a more excellent way" (1 Corinthians 12:31) — the way of love. The love commended by Paul is the serving, giving love of Christ that "seeketh not her own" (13:5). It is a love for the Christ who died for the believer, a love for the law of God kept for him, and a love for the sake of others and for the sake of extending Christ's kingship in the hearts of men. The main thrust of the gospel as worked out in the lives of men is not what it can do for them, but rather what they are enabled to do for their Savior and Lord.

It can be argued that, though discrediting to the recipient, abuse of these gifts does not necessarily invalidate them as genuine Spirit-given phenomena. But it is not the conscious misuse of these "gifts" by the mature recipient, but rather the immediate subconscious and subjective view that is the point. If the subjective view is so consistent and so wrong, we

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*Tongues-speaking can serve as a spiritual crutch by giving the speaker something tangible to rely on as an indication of his salvation.*

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should at least seriously question whether the Spirit can be the author of it.

Also, if there is a misuse, there could be also a proper use of these "gifts." But the "proper use" today is hard to discern when we view modern practice in the light of Paul's urging us on to "a more excellent way" instead.

### D. Spiritual crutch or witness?

Tongues-speaking can serve as a spiritual crutch by giving the speaker something tangible to rely on as an indication of his salvation. Rather than *faith* being "the evidence of things not seen" (He-

brews 11:1), it becomes redefined and practiced according to its manifestations in sight, sound, and emotion. Answers to life's questions come not from the Word of God, but from the supposed actions of the Spirit. According to Pentecostals, this action must be permitted and cultivated by "letting go and letting the Spirit have His way."

Doctrine as applied to life comes through a subjective, mentally passive attitude rather than from the objective, intellectually and spiritually perceived Word of God. Certainly not all tongues-speakers are intellectually passive; but the dangerous tendency exists for the new or weak Christian experiencing the phenomenon to think he "has arrived."

The outflow of this attitude is to seek mystical cultivation of the gifts of the Spirit rather than applying oneself to serious Bible study, allowing the Spirit to work through application of the Word. Scripture teaches that the Spirit's purpose is to glorify Christ, not to glorify his own gifts. An experience-oriented theology of the Holy Spirit can only detract from the central purpose of the Spirit's activity — to glorify Christ and his gospel.

Tongues-speaking can also serve as a faith-substitute when it becomes the focal point of a "fuller" gospel than simple faith in the atoning death of Christ. To this extent it tends to supplant faith. The effect wrought by tongues-speaking adherents upon the gospel and its hearers is, therefore, Judaizing. As Bruner observes, the holiness concerns of the original Judaizers were not allowed by the Jerusalem council to obscure the gospel of *sola gratia* and *sola fide* (p. 203). As a result, the council liberated the church from a "fuller" gospel and a "fuller" faith than that which had been given once for all.

I have experienced "tongues-speaking" in my own life; I have used it as a spiritual crutch. But by the grace of God, I was taught early in my Christian experience to seek after and practice a biblical love, not a self-love. As I began to grow spiritually (in the O.P.C. congregation in San Diego), I saw other young people quickly developing the same fervent spirit and desire for biblical knowledge and practice. This concern, love, and constraint to witness was flowering in them, as in me, yet they had *never* spoken in tongues and were not seeking the experience. It became obvious that I should separate conversion, and even sanctification, from the experience of tongues-

speaking.

I have since learned to be complete in the gospel with its perfect provision for faith and life, both temporal and eternal. As I look back on my experience of 1963 and the ensuing years of serious Bible study, I offer several conclusions concerning tongues-speaking:

1. The nature and source of modern tongues-speaking is not clear.

2. Modern tongues-speaking appears distinctly different from the biblical counterpart both in *scope* (individual rather than group) and in *effect* (self-serving rather than Christ-serving love).

3. Modern tongues-speaking solidifies a Gnostic self-serving love, rather than leading one to emulate the self-giving love of Jesus.

4. Modern tongues-speaking appears to arise from a Judaizing view that the gospel as taught by Christ is insufficient, and the Word of God is incomplete as a medium and means of God's revelation of his grace to man.

5. Although tongues-speakers may be Christian, no necessary relationship appears to exist between Christianity and tongues-speaking.

Since the Word of God is sufficient unto salvation, I believe Christians err in seeking to experience the "gift of tongues." The Forty-third General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (1976) judged that tongues and prophecy do not extend into modern times, thus upholding the decision of the Presbytery of Ohio in its verdict as a trial judicatory. It is hoped that reflection on these actions, and in the light of this article, would move Christians to avoid seeking such "gifts."

In avoiding tongues-speaking, however, we should not necessarily shun brethren who have had the experience. Rather, we must approach them in Christian love, seeking to guide and teach them through the Word to the "more excellent way." Such is the policy of my own local church when dealing with tongues-speakers. Although we may disagree with their doctrine and practice, we are still of one body and bound to a concern for their spiritual well-being. If, as a young Christian, I had been rejected by the more mature brethren, I might never have learned, in the providence of God, to revere his Word and the complete gospel expressed in it.

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# Genesis 2:22

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Dear Sarah:

What do you think of Marabel Morgan's *The Total Woman*?

—Curious.

Dear Curious:

Although the book was not written for Christians, I will answer your question as a Christian addressing the concerns of Christian women.

Yes, there has been quite a lot of talk about this book. Jean Shaw (who has written "Lydia's House" for the Reformed Presbyterian periodical *Mandate*) wrote an amusing jibe at the book in this column not too long ago. In spite of the punches she threw at it, Jean did point out that the book was helpful.

In the September 10 issue of *Christianity Today*, there is a very informative four-page article, an interview, devoted to finding out more about Mrs. Morgan's views specifically on the *Christian* principles on which she herself bases her relationship to her husband and children. The article also deals with her basic objectives in writing the book.

To me the book as a whole came across with a very positive note. Mrs. Morgan shares her discoveries about the marriage relationship that brought great success to her own admittedly floundering marriage. The title of her book is very apt as she does indeed deal with the *total woman* in her relationship to her husband.

First, she deals with the woman herself — her need for organization, self-evaluation and acceptance, and the realistic seeking of goals. Then once a woman has faced herself, she takes a look at her husband — not critically, but as *he* has need of *her*. The four "A's" — ACCEPT him as he is, ADMIRE him, ADAPT to his way of life, and APPRECIATE him and all he does for you — are not only biblically based and sound principles, they are also very practical and well worth every wife's calling to mind every morning of the world!

Next, the "total woman" must be concerned with sex in her marriage. For some

reason the very word "sex" immediately sets off an alarm to the critically waiting ear of many Christians. It is at this point that all the "controversial" aspects of this book are to be found, I'm sure. But I'm with Mrs. Morgan when she says, "I believe that God wants sex between a man and his wife to be enjoyable and thrilling. His complete blessing and sanction is on the sex act . . ." (*Christianity Today*, 9/10/76, p. 15).

A woman may or may not want to follow the lab course in sex exactly as outlined in this book. This really doesn't matter. What does matter is a woman's attitude toward sex. I found no suggestion here that was in any way contrary to

Scripture teaching. It may not be your cup of tea to dress up in sexy costumes to "turn on" your husband; but after all, "turning on" is the name of the game, isn't it? Her approach to sex is frank and fresh and has the aim of making it a joy and pleasure for both husband and wife.

The "total woman" further enriches her relationship with her husband as she learns what communication is all about. Also, the children in a home are not neglected as part of making a woman "total." She gives some good, practical, common-sense suggestions about acceptance, love, encouragement, discipline, and spiritual guidance for bringing up children.

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From Isaiah 40 —

## That they might BE BLESSED

Lord, I am among the blessed  
rather than the wretched of the earth.

Were it not for your grace,  
I, too, would be wretched.  
Were it not for your grace,  
I would be dishonoring you  
instead of honoring you —  
for I would not know what I do.  
Were it not for your grace,  
I would be tired, weak,  
because I would not know  
of your fountain of renewal.

Lord, thank you for allowing me  
to know that you are glorious,  
powerful, eternal, strong.

You are not only loving —  
you are *love*.  
You not only create —  
you also sustain.  
You are constant —  
forever, eternal, unchangeable  
in a

World that is changing,  
temporal, insecure.

You tell us, Lord, to make a road  
for you through the wilderness —  
Lead us, Lord, through the wilderness  
of defeat and despair:

(Last night as I prayed,  
a child was running away  
from a home that couldn't  
receive and sustain him;  
a drunken father  
was beating his daughter.)  
Lead us, Lord, through the wilderness  
of broken homes, drug addiction,  
alienation — pride, jealousy,  
hypocrisy, self-righteousness.  
Show us how to cry the good news  
through the wilderness.  
Don't allow us to be content  
to sit in neat little brick boxes  
Proclaiming the good news to each other,  
polishing our armors,  
but never going forth to battle.  
Lead us through the wildernesses  
of mankind,  
crying the good news  
that so many of the wretched  
might become the blessed  
So your grace may shine upon them.

Dorothy Hake

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Mrs. Hake lives in Laurel, Maryland  
and is a member of Covenant Orthodox  
Presbyterian Church in Burtonsville.



Finally, she completes the picture of the "total woman" with a short but clear presentation of the *inner* need for a "power source" to put this woman together. That source is clearly stated to be our Triune God.

It seems to be the exception rather than the rule that a marriage is all that it should be. From my observation, a great many marriages need a lot of rejuvenation. I think *The Total Woman* should be very helpful to any open-

minded woman.

—Sarah.

*Editor's note:* We've always let "Sarah" answer questions as she saw fit. You may entirely agree with her about *The Total Woman* and we suspect many readers may want to write to "Sarah." Please do; and send it to Sarah, c/o Juanita Rolph, Rt. 2, Box 9, Glenwood, WA 98619. Mrs. Rolph will see that your questions are forwarded to the *real* "Sarah."

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## Dripping, Spongy HEARTS

Juanita Rolph

Will you (teach a Sunday school class) (help with the Christmas program) (go calling) (be a counselor at the Bible conference) (bake three pies for the fellowship) (write an article for "Genesis 2:22")?

If you answered with an exuberant, "Sure, I'll be glad to!" your rating is high — and rare. The more usual response is likely to be "OK — — —" with voice trailing off at the end in an unspoken "but I'd rather not because . . ."

There is also, of course, the occasional, flat-out, "No." And sometimes, for various reasons not always known to the asker, "No" is the right and good answer.

But right now we're concerned with that human element in each of our regenerated hearts, that part of us that likes to receive and be fed, that is willing and able in its sponginess to soak up and hold. But, like a sponge, our heart must be squeezed to pour forth in abundance, or else we just drip along.

Certainly we have no excuses, for we're exhorted against being "drippy" Christians. We are to get up and get busy, to exercise our faith, that we might become more spiritually mature (Hebrews 5:12-14). "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is

not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

And Jesus laid it right on the line when he said, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required" (Luke 12:48).

"Much" has been interpreted at different times as being talents, spiritual discernment, or various other positive qualities. Regardless, whatever your "much" is, are you letting it flow forth? Or, are you just dripping along?

Next time someone asks you to do something of the Lord's work, why not try an exuberant, enthusiastic, "Sure!" (Oh, and for starters, how about a piece for "Genesis 2:22"?)

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*Mrs. Juanita Rolph has served as the "Genesis 2:22" editor since the feature began two years ago. It's hard enough being an editor under the best of circumstances, but if you don't have material you can't do much editing. "Genesis 2:22" is for Christian women, to express their faith and its practice, in the myriad ways the Lord has opened. Use the opportunity, and send your own thoughts to Juanita Rolph, Rt. 2, Box 9, Glenwood, WA 98619.*

## Dakotas' PRESBYTERIAL

How could you possibly improve on a women's program that features Polly Gaffin, Dee Male, and Sarah Pierrepont Edwards?

The Women's Presbyterial of the Dakotas (OPC) enjoyed hearing from all three during their fall meeting at Calvary Church in Volga, South Dakota, September 28-29. Mrs. Gaffin spoke twice. Mrs. Male brought greetings from Egypt. And Carolyn Cotton of Volga held an interview with Mrs. Edwards (impersonated, of course!).

Each made her own unique contribution to the spiritual profit of the two days. Mrs. Gaffin's messages from Scripture were illuminated and made credible by ample illustrations from her own experiences in Taiwan. Mrs. Male's report from Egypt was, by virtue of its positive, happy tone, proof that God can indeed enable his servants to be content, no matter how often they change locations.

And the interview with Mrs. Edwards (impersonated by Lucille Amie of Volga) was heartening. Even that great Puritan preacher Jonathan Edwards had his detractors. Because he operated on the principles of God instead of the pragmatism of men, he was asked to leave his pastorate — a fact commonly known, but made poignant by the dramatization of it.

The ladies also enjoyed hearing Mr. Gaffin tell of his and Mrs. Gaffin's early days in China. The two-day session closed with a final challenge from Mrs. Gaffin to "take his yoke upon you" — specifically the yoke of prayer.

Offerings were received for the home missions program of the presbytery, the Combined Budget of the denomination, and for Westminster Seminary. Fourteen of the churches of the presbytery (scattered from North Dakota to Texas and west to Colorado) were represented, with a total attendance of 59 ladies.

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*This report was prepared by Mrs. Miriam Moran of Hamill, South Dakota.*

# The Presbyterian Guardian

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## News and Views

### Herbert S. Bird

On Sunday morning, October 24, the Rev. Herbert S. Bird was found dead in his home in Ambler, Pennsylvania. His death came as the culmination of a severe nervous and mental breakdown, for which he had been under medical treatment for some time.

Mr. Bird was ordained to the gospel ministry on May 14, 1947, and served for some years as a home missionary in and near Lincoln, Nebraska. In early 1952 he, with his wife Mary and one child, went to Eritrea as a foreign missionary under the Committee on Foreign Missions. His nearly twenty years of service there were marked by valuable translation work of the Shorter Catechism and other materials into the native language.

The Birds returned home in 1972 and Mr. Bird has served since then as an editor with Great Commission Publications. More recently, he divided his time in order to serve the Committee on Foreign Missions also as an assistant to its general secretary.

A memorial service was held on October 27 at Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Hatboro, where the family were members. Burial was on Long Island, N.Y. Besides his wife, Mr. Bird is survived by three children, David, Steven, and Ruth, and his father, Mr. Thomas H. Bird.

### "Women's Role" at Westminster

A day-long program, "Women's Role in the Church," led by two nationally known Christian women, was held at

Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia on November 6. Elisabeth Scott and Mrs. Dick Van Halsema were the two featured speakers. The program was sponsored by the Women's Fellowship and the Student Association of the seminary.

Mrs. Scott is the well-known author of *Through Gates of Splendor*, written after her husband, Jim Elliott, was killed by Auca Indians. Her latest book, *Let Me Be a Woman*, deals with womanhood and the church. Mrs. Scott is presently a visiting professor at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, and she spoke on "The Christian Reaction to the Feminist Movement" and "The Christian Feminist."

Mrs. Van Halsema, dean of women and professor of social work at Reformed Bible College in Grand Rapids, spoke on "The Ordination of Women" and "The Utilization of Women's Gifts in the Church." She has served on the Christian Reformed Church's synodical committee studying the use of women's gifts within the church.

### Buswell honored

The third number of *Presbuterion*, the review from Covenant Theological Seminary, is a special commemorative issue in honor of J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., D.D., Ph.D., emeritus professor of systematic theology at Covenant Seminary, and former president of Wheaton College.

The special issue contains articles by many of Dr. Buswell's closest associates both at Covenant and from the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. The articles seek to describe Dr. Buswell in such varied aspects of his life as that of "pastor-teacher," "educator," "administrator," "theologian" and "churchman." Statements of appreciation from several other leading figures in the Christian world are included. A complete bibliography of Buswell's writings is also supplied.

This issue of *Presbuterion* is available from Covenant Theological Seminary, 12330 Conway Road, St. Louis, MO 63141, for \$4.00. Or those interested may subscribe for the *Presbuterion* on a subscription basis at \$4.00 per year for two issues a year.

## Reformed Seminary Tenth Anniversary

The Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, celebrated its tenth year of service during the fall convocation. Dr. Edmund P. Clowney, president of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, was the principal speaker. Reformed Seminary began with five professors and seventeen students; it now serves nearly 300 students and has graduates in many denominations and countries.

The annual theological institute will be held, February 7-9, 1977. Speakers include the Rev. James M. Baird, Jr., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Macon, Ga.; the Rev. B. J. Haan, president of Dordt College; Dr. O. Palmer Robertson, professor in Old Testament at Westminster Seminary; and Dr. John W. Sanderson, professor of biblical theology at Covenant Seminary. Registration forms may be secured from Wm. B. Robinson, Director of Development, Reformed Theological Seminary, 5422 Clinton Blvd., Jackson, MS 39209.

## NPRF and NAPARC meetings

The annual meeting of the National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship (an organization of elders and ministers from many denominations) was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on October 28, 29, 1976. The theme of the gathering was "Building Christ's Church in a Changing Culture."

Immediately following, the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (made up of official representatives from five denominations) met on the campus of Calvin College in Grand Rapids. This was the first regular meeting since NAPARC was organized a year ago. One item of interest was the request of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church for membership in the council.

Deadlines prevent our giving a report on these meetings in this issue, but we hope to have details for you next month.