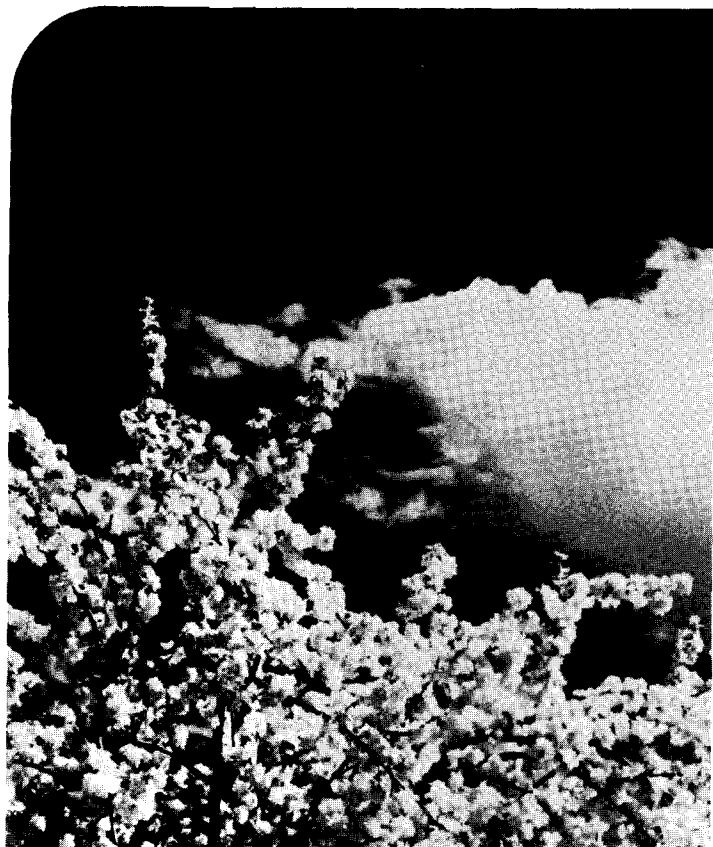


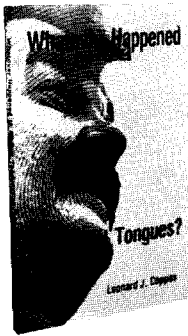
The Presbyterian Guardian



IN THIS ISSUE:

ALSO . . .





Whatever Happened to Biblical Tongues?

Leonard J. Coppes

Whatever happened to New Testament tongues speaking? Can we answer this question biblically or are we limited to a noncommittal response? This book presents a biblically developed answer, an answer that grew out of the debates which occurred in the Presbytery of Ohio, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Coppes has a Doctor of Theology degree from Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and is a Ph.D. candidate at Dropsie University in Philadelphia. He is pastoring the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Harrisville, Pennsylvania. Also by Dr. Coppes: *Who Will Lead Us?*

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"they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth . . . seeking a better country" Hebrews 11:13-16

Letters

RES — No Glow!

The glowing report of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod meeting last summer (in the February 1977 issue) leads to this reminder that some of us are disenchanted with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church's continued membership in that body.

The (OPC) Presbytery of the South has overtured the General Assembly in unmistakable terms requesting our immediate withdrawal from this strange mixture of belief and unbelief.

Some of us are ashamed and embarrassed to find ourselves in an ecumenical council which is so imprecise in its structure, so ambivalent in its declarations, and so resistant to genuine restoration to our scriptural and doctrinal standards.

One wonders if the thousands of dollars spent for travel and annual dues to the RES would not better be invested in the work of our committees through the Combined Budget.

John H. Thompson, Jr., pastor
Ocala, Florida

More on "Living Theology"

I'm writing in response to the letters (in the February *Guardian*) relating to my article, "The Great Need: Believers with a Living Theology" (November 1976).

Concerning the comments of Mr. Mason, I'll admit that the classification (fundamentalists, evangelicals, and Calvinists) that I used can be open to criticism. But so can other classifications.

Mr. Mason says that I haven't included the Baptists anywhere. But by inference the Baptists are included in the classification I used, just as are the Presbyterians, Lutherans, etc. This is the advantage that a broad classification has in an article of this type.

Mr. Mason explicitly mentions Dr. Francis Schaeffer. I'm glad he did this, for I greatly appreciate the ministry of Dr. Schaeffer. I worked with him for a year

in the '50s, and there is no other man who has influenced my thinking more than he has. We have some doctrinal differences, but any criticism that I might have of his ministry (and we're all open to criticism) would be greatly outweighed by my conviction that more Francis Schaeffers are needed in our day. He is not only an apologist; he is also a spiritual giant, in a day when there appears to be so few.

Now I think it can be said that Dr. Schaeffer doesn't stress Calvinism or Presbyterianism in his overall ministry. (If he did this, I believe the evangelicals would view his ministry differently.) And this is why I state in the article that evangelicals, as well as Calvinists, claim him as their own.

I'm afraid it is all too true, as Mr. Mason has indicated, that the splinter-tendency is present in Calvinistic circles. It's not confined to the fundamentalists. But the Calvinistic system doesn't contain within it the seeds for this, whereas present-day fundamentalism does.

I appreciate Mr. St. John's stress on the believer's living relationship to God. This is part of what I was trying to get across in the article. The other part is the theological base, the strong theological base of Calvinism. What one believes has a lot to do with how one lives. Mr. St. John seems to minimize this.

Mr. St. John asks the question, "Are we Calvinists any less bankrupt than Arminians?" No, unhappily we aren't. But this is because we aren't living according to the truth that Calvinism presents. We have the base, but we aren't living according to it. The Arminians don't have the base; so it's bankruptcy from the start for them, if they're living at all consistently with their position.

Mr. Adams has some provocative thoughts about the change in worship from exclusive Psalm-singing to uninspired hymns. As he states, a history of Reformed worship shows "a gradual acquiescence to a relatively recent movement." But Presbyterians in our day have, by and large, lost sight of the history of Presbyterianism. And until they regain this, exclusive Psalmody without instrumental accompaniment will continue to be viewed as simply a "quaint practice."

Dr. James A. Hughes
Scarborough, Ontario

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USURY, Sin, but When?

The Editor

This continues a discussion that began with an editorial in the December issue of the *Guardian* concerning the sin of usury. That editorial challenged the view of usury set forth by Dr. Gary North in a brief article in the September 1976 issue of *Chalcedon Report*.

(Dr. North's original article and a rebuttal of the editorial are both available free of charge to anyone who writes to: Chalcedon, P.O. Box 158, Vallecito, CA 95251.)

The editorial called forth a good deal of mail, most of it critical. Of the letters received, the one by Dr. Greg L. Bahnsen seemed to us to be the one response that (1) stuck to the subject of usury and (2) served to focus attention on just what is meant by the term in Scripture. We printed that letter in the February issue.

Defining the sin

Dr. North had based his remarks on Exodus 22:25-27, the first mention of usury in the Bible, where the charging of interest on a loan to a brother in need is clearly prohibited—a point no one disputes. Our quarrel with Dr. North was his insistence that the prohibition included all "charitable loans" among Christians or to Christian organizations. "The man who loans the church anything, at any time, for which he requires an extra amount in repayment is violating the law of usury."

Professor Bahnsen replied by seeking to establish from Scripture that the limited prohibition in Exodus 22 is broadened elsewhere to be as inclusive as Dr. North claimed. Bahnsen finds this editor at fault for failing to see the larger or broader definition of usury in such passages as Deuteronomy 23:19.

Is this criticism valid? I do not believe so, for several reasons:

(1) The broadest possible definition is not necessarily the intended one. For example: Luke 16:18 says that anyone who marries any divorced person commits adultery—no exceptions. That is as broad as you can get. But we know from other Scriptures that there were limitations and exceptions (cf. Matthew 5:32; 19:9; 1

Corinthians 7:15). So we read Luke 16:18 with the understanding from those more detailed statements.

The point is simply that an apparently all-inclusive statement one place in Scripture does not necessarily require an all-inclusive understanding. The inclusive-sounding statements may well be assuming that we know the exceptions or limitations that are clearly stated elsewhere.

(2) Usually in Scripture, the first definition of a term continues to be its definition unless there is clear indication that the Lord is redefining it. Since in Deuteronomy Moses is generally rehearsing the laws given earlier, we may read Deuteronomy 23:19 in the light of and in accord with Exodus 22:25-27 (and also Leviticus 25:35-38). Having defined the sin of usury in terms of lending to a brother in distress, the Scripture would fairly be understood to continue with that understanding apart from some clear indication otherwise.

(3) Professor Bahnsen feels that Deuteronomy 23:19 is meant to include all loans among brothers and that economic distress is not a factor there. He quotes the first part of the verse, which taken in isolation could be understood that way. But the whole verse says, "Thou shalt not lend upon usury [at interest] to thy brother; usury of money, usury of food, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury." The text goes on to say this is permissible in dealing with foreigners but not with brother Israelites.

Now the verse is talking about things that ordinarily were lent with interest charged ("any thing that is lent upon usury"). And the very mention of food as one thing that might be lent clearly suggests a brother in distress; you simply do not borrow food unless there is dire need. To read this verse in the terms established in Exodus 22 and Leviticus 25 makes eminently good sense. There is nothing to suggest the verse is talking about a brother who wants a loan for some personal desire of his own, such as a new model ox-cart.

(4) To insist that Deuteronomy 23:19 forbids all interest-bearing loans to a brother is to go too far. Even Bahnsen recognizes this, when he excludes so-called "commercial loans" from his interpretation. But if the verse is as inclusive as he says, how can any exception be made? Either all interest-bearing loans among brothers are forbidden or we are simply continuing to speak about loans to brothers in dire need as in Exodus 22.

Payment for usage

To be sure, commentators have differed

in interpreting Deuteronomy 23:19. But there are other indications of the Lord's will in our lending to a brother.

The ancient Israelite was free to lend his work animals for pay (Exodus 22:15). He was free to "lend" himself as a laborer for hire (Deuteronomy 24:15). He was even free to rent out his land (though not to sell it) for a return based on the number of harvests during the lease (Leviticus 25:15, 16). The principle is clear: It was right and proper to expect payment for the usage of such assets as land, animals, or even one's own person.

But if he could receive payment for the use of his land, by what principle of equity should he have been forbidden to collect "rent" on the use of his money?

A brother wants a new car. It would take three or four years to save enough to buy it for cash. Meanwhile, he is forced to pay repair bills on the old clunker. There is no dire need. But there is no biblical reason why another Christian, with a surplus of assets temporarily, may not lend him the money at fair interest.

A church wants to expand its facilities. It would take twenty years to accumulate the needed capital. The expansion gives promise of new growth to the congregation and the ability to repay a mortgage seems reasonable. There is no biblical reason why a Christian, with funds in a savings account for which he may well have a future need, may not lend these at fair interest to the church for its project.

Interest (usury) is payment for the use of money (or anything else). If a Christian has unneeded assets available now (though they may be needed in the future), be it money, land, or whatever, he may lend such assets to other Christians or to Christian organizations and expect as fair a return as he would get from the bank. He may not charge interest on loans to a brother in serious distress. But to make that prohibition into a restriction against all interest-bearing loans among Christians is to add to the plain teaching of Scripture—and to contradict its teaching on the rent of land or capital assets.

Let us indeed shake out our laps from involvement in the sin of usury against needy brothers. (This is precisely the situation Nehemiah was dealing with, and there is no example elsewhere in Scripture of anyone condemned for anything less serious than this.) To be more strict than Scripture requires is to burden our consciences with the commandments of men.

—John J. Mitchell

REDEEMER

of God's Elect

John Murray

In the whole compass of Christian literature, apart from sacred Scripture, the Shorter Catechism holds a unique position. It is the most perfect document of its kind that the Christian church has produced. To assess a document in this way is to pay it a very extraordinary tribute.

In giving such an estimate of the Shorter Catechism we are not saying that it is perfect; it is a human document and is therefore not inspired or infallible. Of all literature only the Word of God is perfect, and it is perfect because it is the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

Furthermore, we must not forget that other works of human authorship provide us with fuller, and in this respect more adequate and serviceable, expositions of the Word of God. The Shorter Catechism is a catechism and a small catechism at that; there are numerous needs which the Shorter Catechism does not fulfill and was not intended to supply.

But there is no other document of its kind that presents the truth of the Christian faith with such precision of statement, such brevity of expression, such balanced proportion, such rhythmical stylistic quality, and such theological adequacy. This is just saying that there is no other document of human composition that packs into so few words such an excellent summary of the truth respecting God and his holy will revealed to us in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Anyone who has perused it with some Christian intelligence must be persuaded that it is *par excellence* a masterpiece of human thought and labor, a masterpiece, too, in those things that concern man's chief end —

"to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever." What loss has been sustained by those who in their tender years have not been disciplined in its instruction and in their maturer years have not been fortified with the truth it so effectively inculcates, words of ours cannot calculate.

Mystery of the incarnation

There is one answer in the Shorter Catechism that for many years has impressed the present writer as an unexcelled example of precision, brevity, adequacy and completeness. It is the answer to the question, "Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?" The answer runs as follows: "The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever." The very punctuation should be observed.

Anyone who reads the New Testament with the humility of believing devotion and therefore with the reverence begotten of faith must be overcome again and again with the mystery that surrounds the person and work of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As understanding expands and as reverent inquiry seeks to push farther and deeper there grows upon the believer the marvel of the Savior's person and work. In reading the four Gospels, for example, one comes increasingly to appreciate the repeated expressions of wonderment on the part of those who were the eye-witnesses of the manifestation of Christ's glory. A deep chord of intelligent acquiescence is struck in the believing reader's breast as ever and anon he comes across the exclamations and acclaims of astonishment. "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" "And the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel." "And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes."

Jesus was indeed man. But he was also truly God. All the marks of humanity! And no less the insignia of deity! What a stupendous and incomparable conjuncture! No wonder that at the very beginning of the Christian era Satan should have hurled his darts at the mystery of godliness, and in one way or another have done his utmost to destroy the faith

of this Jesus. Sometimes he secured instruments to deny the reality of the Lord's humanity and sometimes to assail the reality of his deity. By hook or by crook Satan sought to destroy the faith of the church in that which constituted the mystery and the offense of Christ the incarnate Son of God.

It is no wonder that the church struggled through centuries of conflict and controversy to preserve the precious truth and to state it in the most precise and definite terms available. It is with profound gratitude to God that we should remember the issue to which these centuries of struggle came in 451 A.D. when at Chalcedon an ecumenical council was able to arrive at a statement of the faith that fixed and conserved the precious truth regarding the person of Christ, that he was truly God and truly man in one person.

In the answer from the Shorter Catechism, quoted above, this cornerstone of the Christian faith is expressed in language that a child can memorize, in language that is unexcelled in its well-balanced emphasis, and in terms that adequately guard and declare the great mystery.

Eternal Son of God

At the outset it should be observed that the person here spoken of is called "the eternal Son of God." This means that he was eternally God's Son. He did not *become* the Son of God. There is a Sonship, therefore, that belongs to this person quite irrespective of his becoming man. There are some people who think that the title "Son" applies to Christ only because he became man, so that, though he was God before he became man, yet it was when he became man

"The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever."

that he assumed the title "Son." This view might seem to be in the interests of guarding the full deity of Christ and his equality with the Father. It is, however, an unscriptural tenet, and it really impairs the evidence that the Scripture presents for the full deity of Christ and for his distinct personality.

If we should deny that the Lord Jesus Christ was eternally the Son of God, then we should have to deny that the Father was eternally Father. For if the first person is eternal Father, it is necessary that there be a Son of whom he is the eternal Father. And this means that the second person must be eternally the Son of the first person. Again, it is in this way that the distinction between the Father and the Son is maintained. It is also very important to notice that, if we deny that the Son was eternally the Son, then we do grave prejudice to the greatness of God's love in sending Christ into the world. The Scripture magnifies the love of God by showing that it was none other than his own well-beloved and only-begotten Son that the Father sent. He must then have been sent as the Son and not simply to be the Son. It is the greatness of such a gift that advertises the greatness of the Father's love.

We thus see how precious a truth the Shorter Catechism guarded and confessed when it prefixed the word "eternal" to the title "Son of God."

Being the eternal Son

Another very significant word in this answer of the Catechism is the simple word "being." This is what we call a present participle, and how important tenses are when we are dealing with divine truth! This participle means that the Lord Jesus was not only the eternal Son of God but that he continued to be such when he became man. There was no interruption of or interference with the eternal Sonship when he became man. And again we have a striking example of care and precision when, in addition, it is stated or, at least, implied that his continuing to be God is the corollary of his being the eternal Son of God. The one is coordinate with and inseparable from the other.

We are very liable to think that the title "Son of God" suggests that the second person of the Trinity is in some way or other less than the Father. How can the Lord Jesus Christ, we are disposed

to say, be both God and the Son of God? Does not the latter title indicate inferiority rather than equality?

It is here that the Catechism shows its faithfulness to Scripture teaching. It is a signal feature of Scripture that, instead of representing the eternal Sonship of the second person as inconsistent with his Godhood and his equality with the Father, it rather teaches that the eternal Sonship implies or carries with it the Godhood of Christ. We have a good example in John 5:18. "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal to God." The Jews quite properly interpreted Jesus' claim that God was his Father as tantamount to "making himself equal with God." That the Jews were right in this inference is shown by the fact that Jesus does not repudiate their inference but rather proceeds to vindicate his claim and to support the inference, namely, that he was equal with God.

Hence the Catechism shows a fine perception that the eternal Sonship and the Godhood of Christ are necessarily coordinate and that since he was and continued to be the eternal Son he also was and continued to be God.

He became man

The Lord Jesus Christ, however, became man. How he became man is stated in the Catechism in the answer to the succeeding question. But in the answer with which we are now concerned it is simply stated that he became man.

We come now to a very important distinction. It is the distinction between the two words "being" and "became." "Being" indicates what the Lord Jesus Christ was eternally; he did not *become* the eternal Son of God. But he did *become* man. How important again are tenses! His being as man was something that happened; it began to be. Since it was something that had a beginning it was, therefore, a temporal, historical event. Beginning to be can never be separated from time, for time and beginning belong together.

So the Lord Jesus Christ became something that he previously was not. The Catechism by the simplest of terms and distinctions propounds the most mysterious of all happenings, the truth with which our holy faith stands or falls, to

*Jesus was indeed man.
But he was also truly God.
What a stupendous conjuncture!*

wit, the historical reality of the incarnation of the Son of God.

It was man that the Lord Jesus Christ became, not the appearance of man, not superman, not even deified man, but really man with a true body and a reasonable soul. And as a result of what he became he was man. It is not as if he united himself to another man, not as if he, a divine person, became conjoined to another who was a human person. It was he, a divine person, who himself became man, so that as truly as he was the eternal Son of God so truly was he also man. The Catechism was jealous to say precisely this, for its framers knew the Scripture teaching that he was both God and man in one person. They were faithful to John 1:14 and many other texts — "the Word became flesh."

It might appear to us that Christ's becoming man required in some way or other a transmutation of what he previously and eternally was, a metamorphosis whereby his deity would be reduced or curtailed to the measure of humanity. So many have, in effect, taught. Or it might be thought that there was in some mysterious way a merging of the divine and the human and no longer undiluted deity or unchanged humanity. This has been the tendency of much speculation. But the beauty and adequacy of the Catechism appear — "and so was, and continueth to be, God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever."

God and man—for ever

A word must be said about the expression, "for ever." It might be plausibly protested: surely Christ is not now, in his glorified state, man; in any case, surely he will not be man for evermore. Or, it might be said, did not Jesus' exaltation mean, at least, the deification of his human nature?

It is true that Jesus was exalted in his

human nature; he was exalted in human nature far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and given the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. It is in human nature that he sits at the right hand of God. And it is also true that by his exaltation his human nature was endowed with the qualities that fit it for and are appropriate to that transcendent realm and the specific functions that are peculiar to that glorified state.

But it must be noted that it is in human nature he is exalted and, although his human nature is fitted for the supernal realm of resurrection life and activity, yet his human nature is not endowed with qualities that are proper to any other nature than the human. It is surely significant that, when Christ will come the second time, God will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained (Acts 17: 31). Jesus will come in human nature to judge the world. And the truly human character of the nature in which Christ is exalted is intimated in such a statement as, "who shall change the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:21).

Jesus' body in the exalted state is no more divine than will that of the saints be when they will be resurrected in glory. The saints will indeed be conformed to the body of Christ's glory and that will mean a glorious transformation. But the glory of it all resides in the fact that the transformation will consist in conformity to the resurrection glory of that same human nature in which the Lord of glory suffered and died.

To deny the integrity of our Lord's human nature as truly and properly in his exalted and glorified state is to overthrow what is nothing less than the pivot of Christian hope — "then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). "God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever"!

This study of the Catechism's definition of our Redeemer, by the late professor John Murray, first appeared in the Guardian of November 10, 1947. It has recently been reprinted and included in the first volume of the Collected Writings of John Murray, published by the Banner of Truth Trust.

The Case for QUIET SUNDAYS

James P. Wesberry

This is a reply to "The Case for Quiet Saturdays," an editorial by Dr. Harold Lindsell, editor of Christianity Today in which he suggested that a common day of rest on Saturday would be helpful. Dr. Wesberry is editor of SUNDAY, the publication of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States; this article is reprinted from that publication.

The Editor of *Christianity Today* proposes that "Saturday be set aside as the day of rest for all people."

He says that "responsible leaders should discuss the possibility."

Editor Lindsell was very kind to phone and ask my opinion about his proposal before it was published as an editorial in *Christianity Today* [in the November 5, 1976, issue].

Your Editor told Dr. Lindsell that while he did not speak for the Board of Managers of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States he was sure they would agree with him that the main purpose for the existence of the Lord's Day Alliance is to maintain and preserve the Lord's Day. Our position is unequivocally and uncompromisingly, "NO."

This unalterable position, so far as this Editor is concerned, is established on the fact that the sabbath of the Old Testament and the Lord's Day, which is celebrated on the first day of each week, are different days. The sabbath of the Old Testament is Saturday and the Lord's Day of the New Testament is Sunday. The Old Testament sabbath commemorates the rest of God after the six days of creation, while the Lord's Day commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death to life again.

The object of the Old Sabbath is to perpetuate the rest which ended the

work of creation while the object of the Lord's Day is to perpetuate the experience of the resurrection. The first Scripture reference to the Lord's Day is found in Revelation 1:10: "I was in the Spirit of the Lord's Day." We are told that by the early second century, at least in Asia Minor, the observance of the Lord's Day was universal in the Christian Church.

If we remember Jesus and his resurrection, the Lord's Day will naturally and inevitably be a day of worship.

The Lord's Day is also a day of rest. History reveals that the leaders of the French Revolution abolished Sunday only to find that they had to bring it back for the sake of the health of their nation.

The change of day

There is no statement in the New Testament by Jesus authorizing a change from the old Jewish Sabbath to the observance of the Lord's Day as the Christian's Sabbath, nor is there any such statement by the apostles.

But, the change was made and the reasons are quite obvious.

The first great reason for Sunday is that Jesus Christ chose to rise again from the grave, from death to life again, not on the sabbath day, but on the "first day of the week." Six out of ten of his post resurrection appearances before the ascension occurred on the first day of the week, and it was on that day that the Holy Spirit came, three thousand souls were saved and the church was born to commence its work on earth.

Another reason for this change from Saturday to Sunday is that the early disciples chose the first day of the week and not the sabbath upon which they met to celebrate the Lord's Supper and to sing hymns of praise to Christ as God. In Acts 20:7 we read, "upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them." The first day of the week was the special day for Christians to assemble themselves and to take an offering (1 Corinthians 16:2).

The differences

The days are not identical. The Lord's Day is not really the Old Testament sabbath. They differ in being kept on distinct days. The sabbath was kept on the last day of the week, the Lord's Day is kept on the first. The sabbath was the

weekly commemoration of the finished work of God. It brought before the mind of the Jew the ineffable majesty of the Great Creator. The Christian motive for observing the Lord's Day is the resurrection of Christ from the dead. This is to Christians what the creation of the world is to Jews. The Lord's Day marks the completed redemption, as the sabbath marked the completed creation. The resurrection is the fundamental truth upon which Christianity rests. It is as strongly and, perhaps, even more strongly insisted upon by Christians as God's creation is by the Jewish prophets. The creation is indeed precious to Christians, but the recreation of the world by the grace of God is even more precious. The resurrection is God's seal upon the atonement.

The Jewish sabbath stands in the same relation to the Lord's Day as circumcision does to Christian baptism, the Passover meal to the Lord's Supper and the law to the gospel. It is a shadow of a good thing to come. It is perpetuated by being transfigured. For Christians it has lost its identity in the Lord's Day.

The Jewish sabbath was observed in memory of the rest of God after creation and for the deliverance of the people from Pharaoh's cruelty. The first day of the week is honored by the Christian church in grateful memory of Christ's resurrection from the dead and his triumph over the grave. The first day was celebrated by Christians as a festival of the resurrection. Sunday observance is deeply rooted in Easter.

As great as creation is, the resurrection of Christ from the grave is even greater. The old Jewish sabbath was buried in our Lord's grave never to be completely resurrected.

Basis for observance

Let those who insist that we should have a direct command for the change of the Sabbath Day to the Lord's Day remember that Christ's "acts" speak even louder than his words and that his acts are really authoritative as his words. It was not by promulgation that he was "declared to be the Son of God with power," but by his glorious resurrection from the grave.

So far as we know Christ never attended a synagogue after his resurrection. If the seventh day were still the sabbath, it seems that he would have done

so. The apostles often went to the synagogues on Saturday to evangelize the Jews. There is no record of Christian assemblies after our Lord's resurrection on the seventh day for preaching, the Lord's Supper, or for other acts of worship.

There is no one fact upon which all the testimony of ecclesiastical historians and the apostolic fathers are more agreed than in the transfer of the last to the first day of the week.

Ignatius, companion of John the beloved apostle, said, "Let us no more sabbatize, but let us keep the Lord's Day, on which our life arose."

Justin Martyr at the close of the first and beginning of the second century said, "On the day called Sunday is an assembly of all who live in the city or country, and the memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the apostles are read." And he added, "it was the day on which the creation of the world began, and on which Christ rose from the dead."

St. Augustine said, "The Lord's Day was by the resurrection of Christ declared to Christians, and from that time it began to be celebrated as the Christian's festival."

The Lord's Day was considered by the early church to be appointed by the divine authority of the apostles, the special delegates and ambassadors of Christ, armed with his commission, and inspired by his Spirit.

Pliny said, "They are accustomed to meet on a stated day before light, and to sing amongst themselves hymns to Christ, as to God."

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who is said to have been a disciple of John, who was Bishop of Antioch after 69 A.D., said, "Let every one that loves Christ keep holy the Lord's Day — the queen of days, the resurrection-day, the highest of all days."

Clement of Alexandria, who lived in the second century, declared: "A Christian, according to the command of the gospel, observed the Lord's Day, thereby glorifying the resurrection of the Lord."

Tertullian, another of the early church fathers of the same period, said, "The Lord's Day is the holy day of the Christian Church."

The Lord's Day Alliance is located at Suite 107/2930 Flowers Road, S. Atlanta, GA 30341.

Contacts in LaGrange, Ga.

Anyone knowing of contacts in the LaGrange, Georgia area interested in forming a Reformed congregation, please contact: R. J. Dodds, P. O. Box 215, LaGrange, GA 30241. (The denominational affiliation would be a matter for later consideration by the group.)

Contacts in San Luis Obispo

The Missions Committee of the Presbytery of Southern California (OPC) is interested in contacting individuals in the San Luis Obispo, California, area as to the possibilities of beginning an Orthodox Presbyterian Church there. If you know anyone in this community who might be interested, please contact: Rev. Larry Conard, 607 Melrose Ave., Chula Vista, CA 92010.

Contacts in San Antonio

If you know anyone living in or near San Antonio, Texas, who might like to join in a Reformed and Evangelical Fellowship and Bible study, please contact: 1st Lt. Steven A. Rogers, U.S. Air Force (AFCOMSECCEN/SRTT), Kelly Air Force Base, San Antonio, TX 78243 (512-674-5450).

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Continuing . . .

Debate on GIFTS

The following letter to the editor expresses a viewpoint about the continuation of the "special gifts of the Spirit" in the church today that is frequently found, both in the writer's own communion and the editor's as well. We have reproduced the letter in full, though it is longer than we normally care to print. And we have attempted to take up at least some of the points raised in the following response. We give this much space to the subject, because it is important for the life of the church today and in hopes that readers will have a clearer understanding of the questions raised.

In response to the series of articles (pages 9-12) in the October issue of the *Guardian*, it seems the following comments are apropos.

Burden of proof

Regarding the matter of the continuation of the gifts, you say that it is up to those who believe in their continuance to prove it. I believe that you are mistaken. The gifts are explicitly stated in Scripture. Where a grant is made, and is not self-limiting, as this is not, it must be presumed to continue indefinitely unless a termination is expressed. Such a termination with regard to the gifts is expressed in 1 Corinthians 13:10 at the time "when that which is perfect is come," i.e., at the return of Christ.

Obviously, that has not occurred, nor have the other manifestations stated to accompany the termination — the vanishing away of knowledge, seeing face to face, or knowing even as also we are known.

Therefore, the burden of proof is upon those who maintain the cessation of the gifts before the appointed time, not on those who maintain their continuance within that time. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Canada adopted, this year, a report issued by a special commission after several years' work, on "The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit" (a report, by the way, that

is scriptural, comprehensive, and well worth consideration). The commission had been asked by a presbytery to express the Reformed tradition that the gifts had been withdrawn. The reply goes to the very heart of the matter—that in the total absence of any scriptural support for that tradition it was, rather, incumbent on those trying to maintain that tradition to prove their contention.

The gifts were established according to Scripture. Their duration is stated in Scripture and has not expired. Therefore, those who assert their earlier termination have the burden of proof.

You speak of "experience," always invidiously. Really, "experience" should not be, in effect, a "dirty word." Is not Christian experience essential? Truly, all experience must be judged in the light of Scripture, but many seem to devote more energy to attacking experience than to evaluating it.

Baptism with/by the Spirit

To say that all believers are baptized with the Holy Spirit not only begs the question but is contrary to Scripture. It confuses baptism with indwelling. Now it is plain that all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9) and unless you are indwelt you are no Christian. But while the indwelling Spirit comes, always, at regeneration, Scripture is clear that the baptism with the Holy Spirit can come appreciably after regeneration.

Nor does 1 Corinthians 12:13 alter the matter, if we consider the plain words of Scripture. This verse speaks of baptism by the Holy Spirit, obviously referring to regeneration, of which water baptism is the symbol and its place signifying the outward admission of the believer into the body of Christ, the church. But this is an entirely different thing from the baptism with the Holy Spirit, which is by Jesus Christ. In one case, water is the element and the baptizer is the Holy Spirit; in the other, the Holy Spirit is the element and the baptizer is the risen Christ. Of the two, that by Jesus with the Holy Spirit is better attested by Scripture, as with John 1:33, "and I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost"; see also Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:4-5.

Yes, all Christians are baptized into the body by the Holy Spirit, but not all are baptized by Jesus with the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit and the Word

To allege that the work of the Holy Spirit is channeled solely through the written Word is simply to deny the sovereignty of God. He is too great to be so confined or restricted by our theories. The written Word is not a box to which the Spirit is limited. It is perhaps his chief instrument. It is certainly the sole criterion by which all matters spiritual are to be judged. But we have no warrant from Scripture for the evident belief of some that when its writing was completed God, in effect, went back to heaven, shut the door, and took the phone off the hook.

It also begs the question to say that all Christians are charismatic. It is like the contention of the liberals in the 1950s that all of Christian life is evangelism. There is a sense in which both statements are true; but both statements are irrelevant to the context to which they are addressed. Rather than contributing to the discussion, they are an evasion of it.

I am not a charismatic and I am aware that some charismatics, as all other Christians, err at various points. But I am amazed at the attitude of hostility, near automatic rejection, and naked fear which greets the idea that God may again be moving with power in his church in these days. The thought that God may refuse to stay within the bounds of a closed theological system threatens those who are comfortable only with impersonal, predictable, and carefully defined divine power. I, for one, rejoice at the thought that God is again infusing his life and power into a largely dead and powerless church. The charismatics I know are filled with life, constantly glorify, point to, and praise our Lord Jesus, and radiate a warm Christian love that our cold churches have not known for centuries. I thank God for them.

James Francis Miller, pastor
St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church
Lexington, Kentucky

Who must prove it?

Mr. Miller insists that the "burden of proof" is with those who deny that the special gifts continue. Since such gifts were admittedly once present in the church, he would require proof to show that they have ceased.

One reason for rejecting this approach is simply the fact that at least one of the gifts of the Spirit to the church (1 Corinthians 12:28) was "self-limiting". An apostle had to have been an eyewitness of Jesus during his earthly ministry

(Acts 1:21, 22); there are no such eye-witnesses today and this gift, at least, has been withdrawn. The "burden of proof" is to show that other related gifts did not also cease at about the same time.

Were these special gifts "self-limiting"? Mr. Miller says not. But some of the gifts were given by God as his witnesses to the apostles (Hebrews 2:3, 4). There was a limit to the presence of apostles, and it seems reasonable that these witnessing gifts were similarly limited. The "burden of proof" is to show otherwise.

So too, some gifts were "foundational," given to establish the church. Christ's church was "build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Ephesians 2:22). Since the foundation is completed, such a "foundational gift" as the prophets may also be assumed to have ceased. Proof to the contrary is at least required.

Nor does an appeal to 1 Corinthians 13:10 prove anything about when the special gifts shall or did cease. What Paul says will cease is the limited knowing of Christ that we now have (verse 12). This knowing "in part," which is a result of prophecies, tongues, and special gifts of knowledge (verse 8), will indeed end "when that which is perfect is come" (verse 10). Presumably the prophecies, tongues, and knowledge of verse 8 will have ceased not later than Christ's return. But there is nothing in Paul's word to indicate that these gifts may not have ceased much earlier.

It still remains to be shown that such special gifts, clearly associated to some degree with the foundational period of the church, do in fact continue today. We are fully warranted, in view of their stated purpose and in the absence of proof to the contrary, to believe that they have ceased long since.

Baptism of the Spirit

Mr. Miller challenges the assertion that every true Christian is baptized with the Spirit. He distinguishes between a baptism performed by the Spirit (at regeneration) and a baptism with the Spirit that may come to certain believers later on.

This is a serious error. It is totally contrary to the whole tone of New Testament teaching with its emphasis on the oneness of believers. To refer only to 1 Corinthians 12, it is clear that Paul is speaking about every member of the body of Christ.

Every one who truly calls Jesus "Lord" does so by or in the Spirit (verse 3). Though there are "diversities of gifts," it is the same Spirit who is active in all

those calling Jesus "Lord" (verse 4). Indeed, "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal (verse 7); every believer has the Spirit.

This "manifestation" of the Spirit is seen in the particular gifts the Spirit distributes. There are all kinds of gifts and they are distributed in degrees and kind as the Spirit sees fit (verses 8-11). All the gifts of the Spirit are in connection with the "manifestation" of the Spirit to each believer.

So when Paul says, "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, . . . and have all been made to drink into one Spirit" (verse 13), he is forcefully denying that any group of believers has some experience of the Spirit not given to all of them. If you are a believer, a member of Christ's body, you have the Spirit in the only manifestation Paul knows of. If you have the Spirit, you have some gift of the Spirit for the good of the whole body. We are all truly charismatics, and that statement is entirely relevant since it flatly denies any doctrine of specially Spirit-baptized Christians in distinction from the manifestation of the Spirit given to all Christians.

Experience and the Word

Either I did not make myself clear, or Mr. Miller is attributing sentiments to me that I do not hold. In no sense do I see Christian "experience" as a "dirty word." As a basis for determining what is true and false in spiritual matters, experience cannot be the judge. Even in the most sanctified of believers, experience still is subject to error and delusion. Only the written Word can be our rule of faith and practice.

And that brings up a final point. Does the Spirit work in us apart from the Word? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). However, the Spirit opens a sin-blinded heart to faith in the Savior, he does this mysterious work through the Word. When Paul describes his "entrance" to the Thessalonians, he says that "when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2:13). Paul was not saying that the Word had some sort of magical power in itself; he had already insisted that his preaching was effective because the Spirit was working in and through him (1 Thess. 1:5, 6).

That is the point. Scripture by itself may do nothing more than serve as a judge against us; the devils believe it and

tremble. Apart from a working of the Spirit with the written Word there is no life.

On the other hand, neither does the Spirit operate apart from the written Word. After all, he is its author and the Scriptures were given as the all-sufficient gift of God to equip completely every man of God for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16, 17).

To say the Spirit works only through the Word is in no sense a limiting of his sovereign freedom to act. It is simply to recognize that in God's provision for his people, the written Word and the Spirit working through the Word are sufficient to do all that God has in store for his people until Christ returns. It is the Spirit of Christ working through the Word of Christ who adds to the body of Christ those who should be saved and who builds up the believers to the full measure of the stature of Christ which is revealed to us alone in the Scriptures.

Anything more than this is unnecessary. Anything more than this is beyond what Scripture says there is. To rejoice in this complete and gracious provision of God for all our needs is to bring forth the fullest possible glory and praise to our Lord Jesus Christ who gave his life to obtain such precious benefits for us.

— John J. Mitchell

A Ministry in Houston

The Covenant Presbyterian Church in America of Houston, Texas, desires to minister to the needs of any who would welcome our ministry and who are here to undergo treatment in the Medical Center. If you have people who need the ministry of other loving Christians, contact: Rev. Laurie Jones (713-497-774) or Rev. Tom Hoolsema (713-495-7891), or write to the church at 2110 Gray Falls Dr., Houston, TX 77077.

Westminster Journals wanted

No longer available from Westminster Seminary but needed are **Westminster Theological Journal** volumes 27-34, and volume 35, numbers 2 and 3 (especially). If you have these, and can part with them, contact: Rev. G. Duncan Lowe, R. R. 2, Morning Sun, IA 52640.

European Tour

A European Circle Tour is being planned by the Rev. Carl Reitsma for July 20 to August 3, visiting the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Germany. In addition to regular tour "hi-lites", we will have opportunity for worship and fellowship with our Dutch sister churches in Rotterdam, and included also is a visit to Reformation sites in Geneva. Inclusive cost is \$824. For complete details write: Rev. Carl Reitsma, 714 E. Emerson, Lombard, IL 60148 (312-620-5657).

Impious PIETY

Robert H. Graham

In this article, my purpose is not to ridicule or belittle piety in any way. Rather it is to lament and expose a form of piety that is both contrary to Scripture and a reproach to the cause of Christ and his church.

Holiness in life

Piety has been defined as "devotion to religious duty." But it seems to me that an in-depth study of the Word of God makes it clear that Christian piety is simply the application in our daily life and activities of that inward life that is hid with God in Christ and that inward holiness generated by the Holy Spirit.

Paul lays the foundation for true piety in the new birth and the indwelling of the Spirit. He says, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). And to be "spiritually minded" in Paul's teaching means to have a mind governed and made alive by the Spirit.

Again Paul says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (verse 14). Holiness of life is the natural fruit of the new man in Christ Jesus. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

The sad fact is that not all Christians show the same degree of holiness in life. The lust of the flesh and the pride of life too frequently stand between even the true Christian and the kind of life demanded by a holy God. We "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:23).

But piety must be the heartfelt desire of every Christian. "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God" (Psalm 42:1). Every deformity, every failure to demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit should give us pain and sorrow. The truly pious man

is more concerned about what God sees in him than in what the world sees or thinks of him — though true piety should be seen, whether appreciated by others or not.

A piety beyond Scripture

Unfortunately, there is a kind of piety that goes beyond that taught in the Word of God, a piety not of the Spirit but of the flesh. Professor R. B. Kuiper used to call it "piosity." It is a sanctimonious facade using Bible language to cover inconsistencies in both faith and practice.

Undoubtedly there is often much sincerity and even love for God in the hearts of those who demonstrate this superficial piety. Yet that makes it all the more dangerous for the Christian and for the testimony of Christ's church.

I refer to this as "Impious Piety"; though it is loud and promiscuous, it is really sinful and basically impious. This outward piety displays, in varying degrees in different individuals, three significant characteristics.

In the first place, this "impious piety" is unbiblical. It is a "super-piety" that adds to Scripture and requires more than God requires. Those who practice it may be quite sincere. But they have allowed experience and results to be more normative for them than the authoritative Word of God. This piety frequently speaks of "getting in" or "being in" the will of God, but it is slow to see that the Bible alone tells us what the will of God really is.

True biblical piety is rooted in the law of God; the truly pious believer has a high view of God's commandments as the basis for holy living. But this "super-piety" looks on loyalty to God's law as a cold intellectualism and seeks a more vibrant piety that will be "more personal and practical."

Such piety frequently clothes its conduct with pious-sounding cliches even as it defies the clear Word of God. How often Christians cover their profaning of the Sabbath through business activity or participation in Sunday sports by saying, "I prayed about it"; or "I was witnessing for Christ"; or "I made more money to give for missions"!

Then there's the person who "piously" prays for the presence of the Spirit and for more love in the church even while slandering or misrepresenting other believers. Slanders and gossipers are

harshly judged in Scripture.

All of this is not to say that such people reject the Bible. Indeed, they use it a good deal — to suit their own fancy and frequently out of context. The Bible is full of exhortations to pray; but how easy it is for the "super-pious" to make prayer a means of telling God, and everyone within earshot, all sorts of things not properly belonging in any prayer!

A piety centered in self

Now it is farthest from the thought of the "super-pious" that their form of piety is self-centered. Yet that is the obvious fruit all too often. Such piety will continually compare its own spiritual state to that of others, claiming that it alone is "spiritual."

This is spiritual pride and self-righteousness of the worst kind. It delights in making long prayers filled with loud protestations of personal humility. Those who develop such a piety do not hesitate to tell the Lord about the sins and weaknesses of other Christians not so "advanced" as they. It is quick to see fault and sin in others — and to recite these in public prayer — and slow to confess

There is a "super-piety" that adds to Scripture and requires more than God requires.

its own failures against the standard of God's Word.

But the truly pious Christian in his approach to God in prayer can do no better than to become saturated with the language of the Psalms. This is God-centered and not self-centered praying.

A beautiful example is Psalm 51 where David pours out his soul to God after he has seen the enormity of his sin with Bathsheba. But, we find David using the first person pronouns some thirty-five times; does this mean we should use them as frequently in our public praying?

I think not! Psalm 51 is an example of how the Christian should come before God in his own closet of prayer; it is not an example for public prayer. On your knees before God, you are praying that

God will be "merciful to me a sinner"; you are "offering up your desires unto God." This is prayer from a child to his Father in heaven, who knows every secret of his heart already.

But in public prayer we are coming to God in a united approach. Public prayer is to direct the thoughts of all to pray unitedly to the holy God, who is far removed from us all because of our sin, and yet is near to use because of the righteousness of Christ. Such prayer will not focus on the "I"; it will focus instead on God himself who has shown mercy to his people.

But the public prayer of the "super-pious" is that which says, "Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men are." It is self-centered, not God-centered.

A piety that divides

Because it is unbiblical and self-centered, such piety will be divisive. It will and frequently has split congregations, divided Christians, ruined friendships, and disrupted the testimony of the body of Christ.

Truly there is double tragedy here, for all this is brought about under the sincere desire to do God's will. Usually a misguided and frustrated leader is behind these sinful divisions. But that fact does not excuse the Christian for allowing himself to be used in a manner disruptive of Christ's honor.

Such a piety is the sin of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. In their religious zeal and personal jealousy, they rebelled against Moses and Aaron and sought to divide the congregation (Numbers 16). But God's judgment on this false piety was swift and thorough.

God does not always act with such dramatic clarity in this present dispensation of grace. But that does not make present-day "super-piety" any less heinous in God's sight.

Yet we still see instances of this same proud spirit where promoters of an "impious piety" have proudly separated between the "spiritual" and "unspiritual" of a congregation, and even pontifically declare the "unspiritual" to be not even born again. So the "super-pious" forces a division in the church by his proud superiority, all the while clothing himself in the garb of prayer and Bible quotations.

This fleshly piety is impious because its result is division, anger, strife, and

an unholy isolation from the church of Jesus Christ. True piety is built on "the wisdom that is from above," which is "pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, fully of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

To be sure, as Christians who long after that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord," we must recognize that blind loyalty to a church may be a very dangerous thing. As the Westminster Confession says, "some churches have so degenerated as to become no Church of Christ but synagogues of Satan." Even so, until the visible church is proved to be a false church, we best show our true piety by remembering to "obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account" (Hebrews 13:17).

Again, let it be stated that there is no substitute for genuine piety in the Christian's walk before God and man. Holy living, prayer, searching of the Scripture and continuing fellowship with the saints are but a few of the positive aspects of godly piety. This kind of devotion is not to be ignored or neglected by the born-again child of God.

But it is unfortunately the case that a form of piety and supposed spirituality has been made the outward display of those who — in spite of their conviction that they represent true Christian life — are in reality "unspiritual." It is an impious piety that takes Scripture out of context, refuses "submission in the Lord" to those whom Christ has appointed to rule in the church, exalts its own "spiritual" state as higher than that of others, makes prayer and public worship an instrument for censuring others, and so willfully promotes division and schism in Christ's body.

It is not my purpose to ridicule or belittle piety at all, but rather to lament that form of piety so contrary to God's Word. May the Holy Spirit enable all of us to look within our hearts and to decry our own lack of holiness. With the psalmist may we cry, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

The Rev. Mr. Graham serves as pastor of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Santee, California.

Ad Policy Notice

The *Guardian* welcomes advertising from Christian schools serving Reformed or Presbyterian families, and charges \$5.00 per inch for two insertions. Notices calling for contacts in an area where an orthodox Reformed or Presbyterian witness is being sought are carried free of charge.

Teachers Wanted

Covenant Christian School, Norwood and Manning Avenues, N. Plainfield, NJ 07060, needs teachers in history, English, mathematics, science, and the arts on all levels grades 7-12. Please write or call: Richard Zuidema, Principal; 201-753-2322. (Covenant is expecting to expand its enrollment at a larger facility next fall.)

Peninsula Christian School wants applicants for teaching positions in elementary grades. Applicants should be of Reformed persuasion and committed to quality Christian education. Please contact: Education Committee, Peninsula Christian School, 22507 S. Figueroa St., Carson, CA 90745.

The Greater Portland (Maine) Christian School has openings, K-5, for seasoned teachers for the 1977-78 school year. (This is a relatively new school and serves a varied constituency.) Contact: Rev. Stan Sutton, Jr., 23 Neal St., Portland, ME 04102 (207-772-8446).

The American Christian School of Succasunna, N.J., a well-established school adhering to the Westminster Confession, has openings for four teachers in the upper elementary grades and Junior High level. Contact: Dr. Forster D. Ruhl, President, Board of Trustees, American Christian School, 126 S. Hillside Ave., Succasunna, NJ 07876.

The San Jose (Calif.) Christian School has openings for 3rd grade, 4-5th grade, and Math and Phys. Ed. for Junior and Senior High. Contact: Donald G. Jamieson, Principal, 2350 Leigh Ave., San Jose, CA 95124.

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“Yoke Week” at Covenant College

The annual fix-up and clean-up week at Covenant College will be held this year on July 2-8. Volunteers with handyman or -woman skills are sought to come to help, enjoy the fellowship, and Bible study together. The location is beautiful (see the picture) and your help can be valuable to the college. If interested, write to Floyd Simmons, Coordinator, Covenant College, Lookout Mountain, TN 37350.

More Than Conqueror

Death, where is thy sting?
Grave, where is thy victory?
My breath shall cease;
My heart shall stop its beating;
But I shall not really die.
Christ has conquered death and grave.
I am Christ's
and shall live eternally.
Death and grave
shall not be victorious.
In Christ I shall be—
No, I am more than conqueror!

I am a member of the Spencer Mills Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Gowen, Mich. I wrote this poem some time ago when my husband's grandfather suffered a stroke. Grandpa and Grandma TeGroot-enhuis have always given a great testimony of faith in Christ to us. I wanted to share it with you. Thank you.

Mrs. Steven (Trudy) Bosman
Greenville, Michigan

ity will take a more personal interest in him and be ready to help if a need arises. Our young people will accept others with genuine interest and enthusiasm.

Yes, our outreach requires us really to involve ourselves with others. We are preparing to meet this challenge. To do less than this is to disobey the Great Commission.

This brief challenge was directed to the members and friends of Emmanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, Del., where Mr. Steltzer is pastor. Though it was for them, we feel it applies quite well to us all.

The congregation's efforts at increased outreach followed a special Evangelism Conference early in March led by the Rev. John Fikkert, denominational missionary-at-large.

Put It All TOGETHER

Arthur J. Steltzer, Jr.

“Hello, I'm Art Seltzer from Emmanuel Church on Wilson Road. I'd like to invite you to church on Sunday. . . .”

Although the evangelism seminars are over, our work has just begun. When members of the Session first thought how we as a church might reach into the community, we became painfully aware of our own need to prepare.

Ready for visitors?

Will we welcome visitors warmly? If they have children, will our children treat them in a friendly manner? Will some members open their homes, sharing meals and fellowship? And will we express our beliefs simply and lovingly to those searching to understand God's Word?

Far more penetrating and searching was the question: “Why do we want to bring people into our congregation after all?” Is it to fill our auditorium so as to

pat ourselves on the back? or, to expand our budget so we may relax and say we are meeting our obligations? Or, is it because our Lord commanded his disciples to make disciples of every nation?

And if our purpose is to make disciples, what does this mean?

Have we made a disciple when someone comes into our congregation, regularly attends services, gives when the offering plate is passed, and publicly confesses faith in Christ? Or have we only made a disciple when someone recognizes that Christ must be Lord in every area of his life? If discipleship means we challenge others to submit their *whole* lives — church, business, home, and all the rest — to the royal rule of Christ, then we had better inspect *our* lives and professions of faith to see where *we* stand!

An easy beginning

Our challenge is a great task that only *begins* with an invitation to come to church. Armed with an attractive piece of literature, Mr. Churchmember finds it a simple task to invite people to attend his church. He may ask a neighbor or someone in another development. There undoubtedly will be some positive response. But what will the visitor find when he enters our congregation?

When a newcomer arrives, some will make a special effort to welcome him and introduce him around. Some will have made a special commitment to pray for him. Those especially suited to hospital-

Genesis 2:22

PROMISE

to Keep

Jeanne L. Phillips

"Do you promise to pray with and for your child . . .?"

Each time I hear this question asked when witnessing a baptism, I am reminded of this awesome responsibility and ask for a sensitive heart to use the many prayer opportunities given me.

When expecting our first child, I was surprised to hear my husband petition the Father to send his Holy Spirit at that point to our child. He explained the record of John leaping in Elizabeth's womb at the visit of Mary, and that this gave evidence of the Spirit's being present in that fetus (Luke 1:41). Of all the petitions we can make for our children, both before and after birth, I now view this one as supreme (Luke 11:13). For Bible instruction, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, can never bring about repentance and faith.

Even in the child's earliest days before he could respond, we found prayer with him to be a precious time. How thrilled we were to pray with our third son while I was still on the delivery table. My in-laws told us how they prayed nightly by the crib of their infants, and encouraged us to do the same. I found that night-time feedings became joyful opportunities for quiet prayer in a busy household. The example of a retired missionary aunt instructed me when she folded the hands of our four-month-old and offered a brief prayer before giving him baby food.

As mothers, we have a unique opportunity to take advantage of spontaneous times of praying with pre-schoolers throughout the day. Often, at scheduled prayer times, they are not in the right attitude for prayer. Yet, by being sensitive to their moods, we can utilize moments when they will pray. Such times may include when they are getting out of bed, before a new adventure, while viewing

God's creation, after mail is read, in connection with an injury, or after discipline.

At first we had our boys repeat phrases after us, using vocabulary familiar to them. We found our sons became confused in their early stages of praying if we used many different names for God; however, we always taught them to pray in Jesus' name. Thanksgiving and petitions were the forms they first were able to compose.

We have never used memorized prayer poems because usually these become mechanical and have little meaning to the child. Such prayers are not always adaptable to the situation, and thus limit the prayer life. Selected Bible verses, though, can be repeated and provide the finest pattern to follow when the child composes his own prayers. Songs, hymns, and Psalms set to music can be useful means to unify family prayer time, too.

A concern I have is that prayer does

not become a time for the child to show off when relatives and company are present. Adults must be careful not to encourage this attitude by their comments, no matter how well intended. Neither should the shy child be forced to pray in front of company. In either case I fear a child forgets to Whom he is speaking.

A part of our daily family devotions is given to prayer by each family member (our boys are now eight, six, and two). Each day of the week we remember a specific topic as well as items that pertain to the praise and needs of that day. It is also a good time to learn our denomination's missionaries. The example of one elder's family reminded us of this. When I first met them at my husband's ordination, they told me how their son Stephen always was the one to pray for my husband Stephen when his name appeared on the home missions prayer list.

As in our adult prayer, adoration and

Abundance — Destroyed or Accomplished?

The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly (John 10:10).

As I searched your Word, Lord, a shining truth,
lying there as if hidden from view,
suddenly was illumined to meet a need of the moment.
I had allowed Satan, that sly, cunning thief,
to come into my life to kill and destroy
the awareness of your love, your beauty, your glory
— your very essence.
A thief had come in to destroy my optimism,
my courage, my faith . . .
A thief was robbing me of my enthusiasm and zeal.
I was losing that abundant life
because I was lazy, discouraged, gluttonous.
Then your Spirit illumined that verse.
No longer did I allow that thief to kill and destroy.
As on the cross of Calvary,
You had gained the victory over his power.
Rather, there lay before me a glistening nugget
telling me you meant me to have life,
and to have it abundantly!

Dorothy Hake

Mrs. Richard Hake is a member of the Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Burtonsville, Maryland.

confession are the hardest for the boys to include. I'm certain some of it is because of our own poor examples. But tonight I was encouraged. I had not handled my reaction to our two-year-old's mood in a biblical way. In his presence I uttered a prayer of confession. I wondered if he could grasp the idea of forgiveness. When I asked if he would forgive me, he quickly replied, "I love you."

Our boys have realized in a childlike way that our sovereign God is concerned about all of their lives. They've come begging Daddy to pray with them when they have had bad dreams. It is rare when our youngest doesn't request, "sing and pray" at bedtime. I recently saw him

bow his head before eating two pretzels. While my husband was at a general assembly, our middle son, then just a day over three, had to be rushed to the hospital with an incarcerated hernia. After getting settled there and praying with him, he spoke assuredly: "You may go home now." I'm sure I was the one most comforted, though he was the one hospitalized.

The writer calls this "a family testimony"; it is also an exhortation. Her husband is pastor of Memorial Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Rochester, New York.

Dear Sarah:

Just a note to tell you that I look forward to "Genesis 2:22" and "Dear Sarah" each time in the *Guardian* and to ask you a question. O.K.?

If you were me what would you do? I am a twenty-seven-year-old guy who would like to meet one or more Christian girls who would like to get married. Only want one wife — but, you know what I mean about one or more? I have prayed and asked the Lord for his will. But I just wondered if I should do more or just wait patiently? I really would appreciate your thoughts or your readers' thoughts on this question. Thanks for your time.

—Waiting

Dear Waiting:

How nice to know that male chauvinism doesn't keep some of you from appreciating the things of "Genesis 2:22"!

As to your question, cheer up! For every one eligible male like yourself there must be at least a dozen eligible girls wanting to know where you are!

Here are a few suggestions to help you. Yes, there certainly is more that you can do than "wait patiently." Start by following the sound biblical principle of *acting* on the basis of your prayers!

First, have you ever talked with your family, your pastor, or your Christian friends, and asked their help in finding the kind of Christian girl they think would be best for you? This certainly is a good place to start. All of these people are genuinely interested in you, know you and can often evaluate your needs better than you can yourself. Don't be embarrassed to discuss this with those

closest to you.

You should seek a girl whose convictions concerning her faith are as close to yours as possible. If you are Reformed, by all means seek a Reformed girl. I have talked to several young men and women who were at first merely content to seek *any* Christian, but who finally realized that the truest compatibility and joy came when their Christianity was mutual in its approach to and understanding of the teachings of Scripture. Personally I would set this as a top priority and worth waiting for, even if it takes longer.

By all means visit churches where you can find girls of like faith. If you are not close enough to any other churches for this to be possible, I would even consider moving, as Jacob did. There are areas of the country where there are a good number of churches of Reformed persuasion quite close to one another. At age 27, moving doesn't sound like too drastic a step to take to find a wife!

I hope you will be encouraged as you read God's Word and see that he really cares for you and has a perfect plan for your life. Trust the Lord to know who is the best wife for you and then step forth in faith to look for her. It may *not* be God's plan for you to marry, but you will never know this until you have actively as well as prayerfully sought his will in this.

Happy Hunting!

—Sarah.

P.S.: Please send me an invitation to your wedding when the time comes!

Do you have a question? a comment? a disagreement? Write it out and send it to 'Sarah' in care of Mrs. Leonard Rolph Rt. 2, Box 9 Glenwood, WA 98619.

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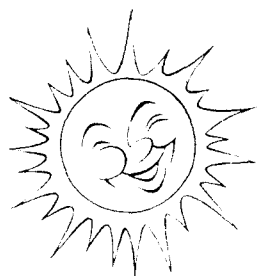
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