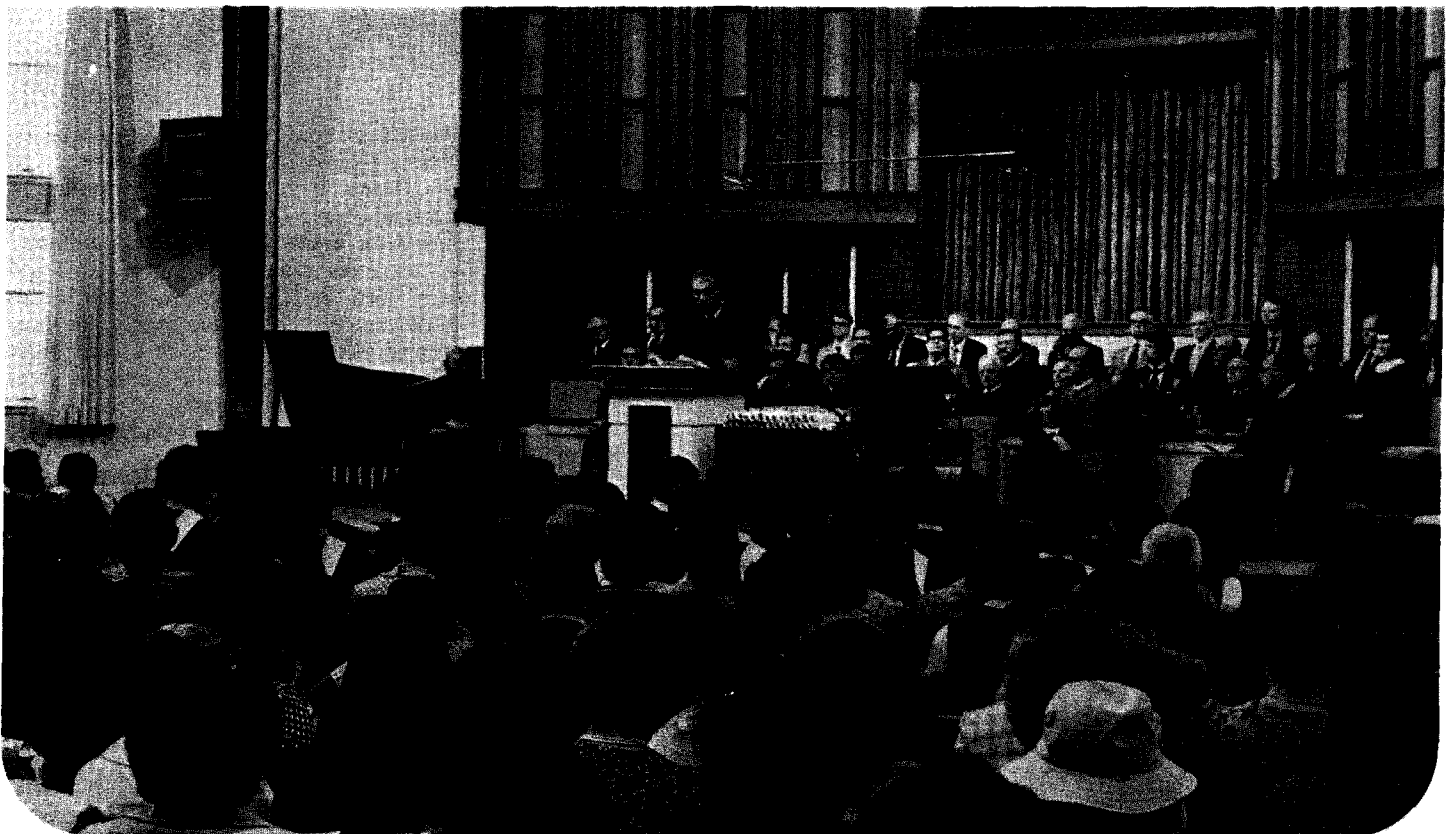
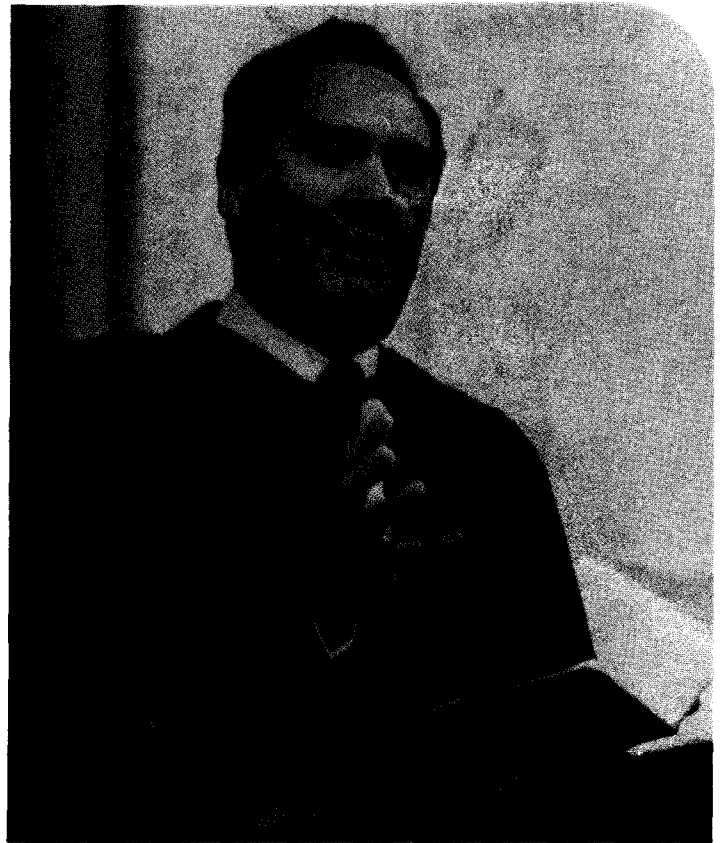


The Presbyterian Guardian

IN THIS ISSUE:



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The Guardian Welcomes Cameron Fraser as Managing Editor

"Scotland's main export has been men." The *Banner of Truth* missionary biography of James Fraser by Alexander McPherson carries that statement on the

flap of the book jacket. It was true of James Fraser, the Scottish missionary to the Bantu of Rhodesia; it continues to be true of his son Cameron Fraser who has been asked by the *Guardian* board to serve as managing editor. Cameron was born in Rhodesia in 1954. In his fifth year his father died under the burden of missionary labor. Two years later his mother also died; Cameron was raised in the manse of an uncle, a minister in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. He graduated from Edinburgh University in 1975 and entered Westminster Seminary in the fall of that year. He received the Master of Divinity degree from Westminster in May of this year and plans to continue study at

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Westminster as a candidate for the Th.M. in missions. He also plans to be married in August to Margaret Hurley, a graduate of the Master of Arts in Religion program at Westminster.

In January 1977, Fraser accompanied Harvie Conn, Westminster's professor of missions, to Mexico for a period of study and service. During that month he taught in an extension seminary there. He has been particularly interested in the development of theological education by extension. Fraser's concern for

the world mission of the church is shared by other members of his family who have served in Rhodesia, Taiwan, and Italy.

As a young friend of the late Professor John Murray, Cameron Fraser has long had an interest in the cause of the *Presbyterian Guardian*. While at Westminster he has used his skills as a writer in articles prepared for the Bulletin published by the seminary.

He says of his new job: "I am glad to have this opportunity to serve *Guard-*

ian readers. I am especially eager to see more interaction among the Reformed churches throughout the world. Our missionary vision needs to be expanded."

An editorial committee from the board of the *Guardian* will be working with Fraser in his new assignment. Dr. Edmund P. Clowney is chairman of this committee. The other members are the Rev. George Haney, the Rev. Joseph Pipa, and Mr. John Van Voorhis. Dr. F. Kingsley Elder, Jr. is the president of the *Guardian* Board of Trustees.

IN THIS ISSUE

J. Cameron Fraser

This issue of *The Presbyterian Guardian* announces my appointment as managing editor. I am grateful for this opportunity to serve *Guardian* readers and I covet your prayerful support.

John J. Mitchell resigned his capable editorship in September 1977 in order to take up responsibilities as general secretary of the Stewardship Committee of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. A committee was then formed to continue production of the *Guardian* as the search for a new editor began. Earlier this year, I was approached with a view to my taking over this responsibility for a period of one year.

The members of the committee did a commendable job and for this we are grateful. However, since they were all busy with other responsibilities, it became increasingly difficult for them to keep up with the publication date. Accordingly, as of now each issue is being published approximately one month late and my first responsibility is to get us back on schedule. Since we will be running a double issue for July and August, we hope to achieve this goal by September. The July-August issue will be devoted to the synods and general assemblies of the NAPARC churches (National Association of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches) which met concurrently in Grand Rapids in June.

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During the interim following John Mitchell's resignation the editorial committee made it a matter of policy not to send personal replies to letters received by the *Guardian*. Again, the reason was simply lack of time. This means, however, that I have a number of letters in my file awaiting replies. We trust readers will be understanding of this situation, and I do hope to be sending replies as soon as possible.

One other matter—I have also inherited a number of articles which have not yet found their way into the pages of the *Guardian*. Some merit publication but require editorial work. In forthcoming issues we hope to deal with specific themes of significance to the church and I hope to incorporate some of the material I have received. So please wait patiently! We are grateful for all articles and letters we have received.

As long as I shall be working for the *Guardian* I propose to write an editorial introduction to each issue. It will give

an overview of the articles being printed and an introduction to the general theme being discussed. I also hope to write articles of more general interest from time to time.

Our aim is to serve Reformed churches in North America and abroad with edifying articles on matters of concern for Christians living in the latter half of the twentieth century. This is in keeping with the original purpose of the *Guardian* which was founded by J. Gresham Machen in 1935 to be a Reformed testimony within the Presbyterian world. The *Guardian* is not the organ of any one denomination, although it has enjoyed a large readership in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Although some articles will doubtless continue to be of a more strictly "theological" nature, our general purpose is to serve the whole Christian family. We also hope to publish church news of national interest and we encourage churches to send in such news items. Suggested topics for future issues will also be welcome.

In this particular issue, we are publishing several articles of current interest. The first is by Mariano Di Gangi, International Chairman of the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship and Professor of Pastoral Studies at the Ontario Theological Seminary. It consists of the text of an address given by Dr. Di Gangi at the commencement exercises of Westminster Seminary in May of this year.

The brief article "Summer Service," written by myself, draws attention to some of the needs and opportunities to be met this summer. Examples are taken from the experiences of fellow Westminster graduates. (As a general rule,

unsigned articles come from my pen; so if you wish to respond to them, please write to me.)

Dr. E. P. Clowney, President of Westminster Seminary, provides us with a critique of the highly acclaimed decision of the United Presbyterian Church not to ordain homosexuals to the gospel ministry. Dr. Clowney's article is based on the policy statement which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in May of this year. Appreciation is expressed for the decision made, but Dr. Clowney also draws attention to some major flaws in the report. Next comes an article by the former

editor of the *Guardian*. Entitled "Rejoice with . . . Weep with . . ." it speaks poignantly of his own and his family's reaction to the sudden death of his wife last October. We are grateful to Mr. Mitchell for permission to print this article which first appeared in the *PCA Messenger*.

We are providing a fairly extensive book review of *Promise and Deliverance* (Vols. 1 and 2) by S. G. De Graaf. This is an English translation of a well-known Dutch work which has been hailed as one of the most significant publications of recent years. The reviewer is David Dombek, a Th.M. candidate at Westminster Seminary.

News and Views

New Appointments at Reformed Seminary

The Board of Trustees of Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, Mississippi, announced the election of Dr. Luder G. Whitlock, Jr. as President-

Letters

To the OPC

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church means much to me, and to the Church in which I labor here in New Zealand. This is true for a number of reasons. In this letter I want to concentrate on one only, namely, the fellowship that we have with you in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. As I see it, it would be a great tragedy if the Orthodox Presbyterian Church deserted this fellowship. I use the word "deserted" with care.

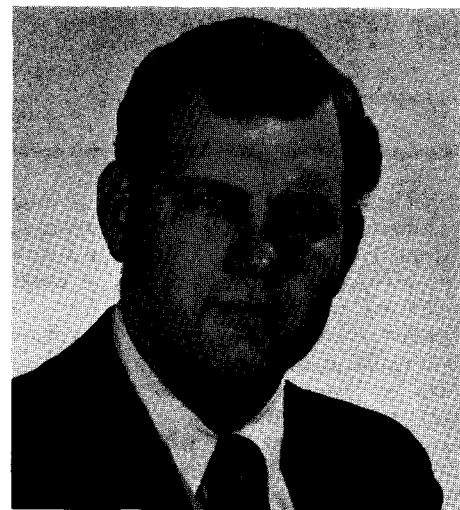
I am well aware that all is not well in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. I believe that we must persist with unyielding determination in our efforts to deal with the deviations from Scripture which are presently tolerated in the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands. It is my conviction that persistent effort by Churches such as yours and ours will, by the grace of almighty God, result in one or two things. The Gerformeerde Kerken will either be driven out of their present trend of declension, or they will be driven out of the R.E.S. It is my understanding

of the responsibilities involved in becoming a member church of the R.E.S. that we cannot, in consistency, do anything less. To leave before every constitutional means is exploited to the full to redress the situation is not to help the body of Christ, but to harm it.

Having lived in New Zealand for a large part of the past 15 years, I have come to realize how parochial we Americans tend to be. We call "our" baseball tournaments the "World Series" not because they really are, but simply because we like to think of things this way. I sometimes think the developments in recent times among some of our smaller Reformed Churches betrays a similar insularity. "Why do we need to bother with the R.E.S. when we have our own ecumenical 'world series' going right here at home?" Well, the answer is that you need to bother with us because we are your brethren in Christ, and we need your faithful support in dealing with the now vagrant church (with whom we have so many strong historical ties) which was, until so recently, "our sister."

There is, I am afraid, a kind of "quick and easy separationism" that sometimes surfaces in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. I do not feel critical of those who do not, at this juncture, join the R.E.S. But I do think that we who have joined must shun the cheap solution. Church discipline is never easy. One of the things that still makes Machen a hero to me is the fact that he fought so long

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Dr. Whitlock

Elect of the Seminary and the election of Dr. James Calvin DeYoung to the position of Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Professor Albert Henry Freundt, Jr. as Vice-President of Denominational Affairs.

Dr. Whitlock succeeds the Rev. Sam C. Patterson who will become the Seminary's evangelist and off-campus representative of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Whitlock, a member of the Presbyterian Church in America, is a graduate of the University of Florida, Westminster Theological Seminary and received his doctorate at Vanderbilt University.

Dr. DeYoung, a member of the Seminary's original faculty, is a member of the Christian Reformed Church. He has

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COVER PICTURE: Dr. Mariano Di Gangi (top) Mr. Theodore Pappas (bottom) speaking at Westminster Seminary Commencement.

The Christ Peter Preached

Acts 10:34-43

Mariano Di Gangi

Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield was Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology in the Theological Seminary at Princeton during the first quarter of this century. That seminary is still located at Princeton, but its theological stance has, by the admission of some of its faculty, shifted radically from the doctrinal stand so clearly declared and firmly defended by Warfield.

Among the many learned articles from his pen is one entitled "The Christ Paul Preached."¹ Expounding the teaching of the first paragraph of Romans, Warfield noted that the apostle "preached Jesus the Messiah. But the Messiah that he preached was no mere human Messiah. He was the Son of God who was made of the seed of David. And he was demonstrated to be what he really was by his resurrection from the dead."²

This same Jesus was also preached by Peter. Commenting on the relationship between Peter and Paul, Oscar Cullman rightly remarks that scholars are "unjust to Peter when they put him entirely in the shadow of Paul, or regard him as Paul's antagonist devoid of understanding for the great Pauline insights."³

The Christ Peter preached is presented plainly in the sermons whose outlines are preserved by Luke in the book of Acts. Peter proclaimed Christ at Pente-

Dr. Di Gangi is International Chairman and Canadian Director of the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship. He is also Professor of Pastoral Studies at the Ontario Theological Seminary. This sermon was delivered at the forty-ninth annual commencement exercises of Westminster Theological Seminary in May, 1978.

cost, in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is interesting to note that as soon as he was filled with the Spirit, Peter expounded a text from Joel (the written Word) and exalted Jesus Christ (the incarnate Word), rather than dwelling on his subjective experience. Again, Peter preached Christ in the temple area after healing a lame man in the name of the Nazarene. He indicated the indispensability of Jesus the Messiah for salvation when confronting an apostate hierarchy in Jerusalem. Now, speaking to Cornelius and his family, he proclaims Christ in what F. F. Bruce describes as "the apostolic kerygma in a nutshell."⁴

We should preface our consideration of the text, recorded in Acts 10:34-43, with the comment that Peter had to be persuaded by a voice and vision from heaven before he ventured to present the gospel to a man whose cultural, linguistic, occupational, and religious background was "not of his kind." May his eventual obedience to orders from above stimulate us to cross similar barriers for the fulfillment of Christian mission today.

Peter begins with these introductory remarks: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right" (Acts 10:45, 35).

Note that Peter opened his mouth and spoke. His voice was heard. He articulated the message God had commanded him to deliver (Acts 10:35). He spoke the words that Cornelius needed to hear in order to be saved (Acts 11:14). Let us not depreciate preaching, but rather appreciate the importance of being articulate in communicating the gospel truth. Sinners will be saved if they make their appeal to the saving Lord. But how shall they ever call on his name if they have never believed in him? And how can they come to believe in him, if they have never heard of him? And how can they hear of him without someone preaching to them? "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17).

Peter starts with a conclusion. From what God has shown him, he concludes that God "does not show favoritism" (Acts 10:34). He perceives that God is

not swayed by superficial considerations. Salvation is by grace, not race. As Matthew Henry puts it, "God never did, nor ever will, justify and save a wicked Jew that lived and died impenitent, though he was of the seed of Abraham and a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and had all the honour and advantages that attended circumcision . . . He never did, nor ever will reject or refuse an honest Gentile who fears God and worships him, is just and charitable towards all men, and lives up to the light he has, both in a sincere devotion and right conversation."⁵

Peter now presents the ministry, majesty, and mercy of Jesus Christ. As a true evangelist, he majors in the gospel rather than gimmicks. He preaches what the Puritan pastor John Trapp decries as "the offices and efficacies" of Christ.⁶

The Ministry of Christ

The apostle refers to the preparatory work of John the Baptist before drawing our attention to the ministry of Jesus. He pays tribute to that faithful and courageous witness whose purpose was not to cluster a personality cult around himself, but to point others to the sin-bearing Lamb of God. He knew himself to be only a voice in the wilderness; Jesus was the very Word of God. His mission was to prepare the way for him who is the Way to the Father's heart.

After the preparatory ministry of John the Baptist came "Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 10:38). This is no mythological figure but an historical person who grew up in Nazareth, served in Judea as well as Galilee, and was crucified in Jerusalem.

God anointed him "with the Holy Spirit and power" (Acts 10:38). "This anointing, however, was not his first unction with the Spirit, but only symbolic of that which he had in his incarnation."⁷ Long before the descent of the dove at his baptism, he was conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. The Spirit of God anointed him, and empowered him, for the fulfillment of his messianic ministry as the infallible prophet, merciful priest, and sovereign king of God's redeemed.

The unction of the Spirit was not for public enjoyment, but for public service. The Father endowed him "with extraor-



dinary spiritual gifts for the performance of his mediatorial functions, and thus consecrated him to his great offices as the Messiah.”⁸

In the awareness and fullness of this anointing, Jesus not only confronted Satan in the wilderness but served God among men. On one sabbath day in Nazareth, Jesus amazed the people in the synagogue by reading these words from Isaiah and applying them to himself: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me; therefore he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:18, 19; Isaiah 61:1, 2).

Peter describes the ministry of Jesus in terms of benevolence and deliverance: “He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him” (Acts 10:38). His beneficent ministry not only expressed compassionate concern for people at their point of need, but corroborated his claim to be the Christ of

God.

His miracles were not pointless prodigies to gratify the craving of curious crowds for something sensational. His works were messianic signs, pointing to him as the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises concerning the Messiah. That is why Jesus reassured a doubting disciple by referring to an ancient prophecy verified in his ministry: “The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor” (Matthew 11:5, Isaiah 35:5, 6).

If the benevolence of Jesus has set the pattern for social concern particularly expressed in the medical aspects of the missionary enterprise abroad, the deliverance from the demonic wrought by him provides the example and encouragement for all engaged in evangelism.

The exorcism we are called to fulfill is related to the liberation of men and women from the power of sin and their entrance into the glorious freedom of the children of God. Of this did the Lord speak to Paul on the Damascus

road, saying, “I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness . . . I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me” (Acts 26-16, 18). As the Spirit uses the service and witness of the true evangelist, people are “rescued from the dominion of darkness and brought into the kingdom of the Son” (Colossians 1:13).

The Majesty of Christ

The benevolent ministry of the Messiah was met with acceptance on the part of most. “He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3). Falsely accused, shamefully abused, Christ was condemned and crucified.

But death was not the end. “God raised him from the dead on the third day” (Acts 10:40). The historical reality of the resurrection is clearly affirmed by the apostle. This mighty evidence of divine intervention “on the third day” not only assures us of our resurrection at the last day, but vindicates the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Whether addressing the people at Pentecost, or the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, or Cornelius at Caesarea, Peter declares that the crucified Jesus is now risen from the dead. Reflecting on the reality of the Redeemer’s resurrection, the apostle moves from declaration to doxology: “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you” (I Peter 1:3, 4).

Writing to the Corinthians, Paul referred to the fact that the risen Christ appeared to his people. Now Peter does the very same. He mentions that credible “witnesses” actually “ate and drank with him after he arose from the dead” (Acts 10:41). Theirs was a close encounter of the best kind. On the basis of their trustworthy testimony, we who have not seen may also believe and inherit the promised blessing (John 20:29-31).



The Christ of the resurrection is "Lord of all" (Acts 10:36). After the descent into the deep, dark valley of the shadow of death, elevation to the highest dignity in heaven. After the cross, the crown. Humiliation of men is followed by exaltation. Let us ever be mindful of the sufferings of Christ and the glories that are their sequel. Peter proclaims: "You put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead . . . God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:23, 24, 36).

What does it mean for us to confess that Christ crucified, risen from the dead, is now "Lord of all"? Surely this truth must be decisive for our lives as individuals and our existence in the community of faith. It means that his revealed will alone, made known as the Spirit speaks in the Scriptures, must shape our attitudes and direct our actions. In dealing with the great moral issues of this generation—whether racism, abortion, homosexuality, divorce, or whatever—we will submit to the authority of him whom the Father has exalted to highest sovereignty. It means that in defining the mission of the Church we will be guided by his great commission, rather than misled by parochialism, syncretism, universalism, and mere political activism. It means that in our relationships with each other we will aim at fulfillment of the great commandment with reference to God and the law of Christ in the bearing of one another's burdens.

The majestic Christ, risen from the dead, now reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords. He commands us to preach. The proclamation of his word is not an option, but an obligation. How faithfully are we preaching the Word? Do we present both law and gospel, so that human presumption is shattered by God's demands, and the penitent are saved from despair by God's grace? Do we extol Christ as prophet, priest, and king? Do we declare "that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead"? (Acts 10:42)

The advent of Christ to judgment, resplendent in the splendor of his majesty, is a neglected theme in much contemporary preaching. Of course, certain kinds of prophetic presentations are popular today. The more speculative and sensational such prophetic messages are, the greater their popularity on the lecture circuit and their profits in the book stores. But what of the presentation of Jesus Christ as the righteous judge whose penetrating perception probes our attitudes even as it evaluates our actions with unflinching accuracy? It is one thing to discuss the role of Russia, Israel, China and the United States in connection with Armageddon, or to make predictions about the European Common Market as a tool of the Antichrist, or to pontificate about matters not even known to the Son of Man. It is quite another to face up to the prospect that we "will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead" (I Peter 4:5). The former approach turns hearers into speculating spectators. The biblical approach, however, provides a powerful incentive to repentance and a stimulus to obedience in advance of His advent.

The Mercy of Christ

The Christ Peter preached fulfilled a ministry of benevolence and deliverance. He attained to majesty after a life of service and suffering. But the Christ Peter preached also manifested mercy, and that mercy is related to the grim reality of His death.

There is a close connection between the fact that men "killed him by hanging him on a tree" and the gospel promise given by the prophets concerning the "forgiveness of sins" (Acts 10:39, 43). While the apostle does not state the doc-

trine of the atonement explicitly in this text, the central truth of the evangel sinners need to hear is certainly implicit in what Peter preaches.

"All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name" (Acts 10:43). This is mercy. God offers sinners the "forgiveness of sins." Here is a gift to be received. We may be separated from the sins that would separate us from God. We can be liberated from the penalty deserved by our sins. Why? The answer is found in "all the prophets."

There is a close connection between sin, atonement, and forgiveness. Paul Tournier, a prominent Swiss psychologist and physician engaged in the practice of psychotherapy, has long explored the relationship between medicine, psychology, and religion in the quest for human wholeness. He rightly finds the answer to the problem of guilt in the gospel announcement of grace. That grace is revealed in Christ on the cross.

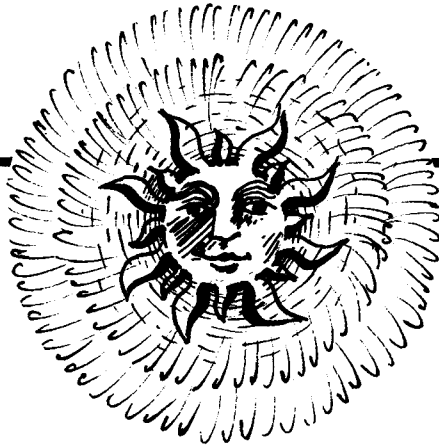
"The obliteration of our guilt," writes Tournier, "is free for us because God has paid the price." He continues: "Recently my wife made a study of this question of the atoning death of Jesus Christ. I was amazed at the impressive number of Bible quotations which she accumulated one after another on her list, in harmony with each other and drawn from the whole Bible. They all expressed the certainty that the removal of our guilt is assured to us by Jesus Christ, and that 'we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son . . . justified by his blood'"⁹

The sacrificial ritual ordained of God through Moses the prophet pointed forward to the Messiah who would deal decisively with sin. In the fullness of time, the Lamb of God came to bear away the sin of the world. He was the scapegoat, laden with the guilt of others, driven away into the wilderness as a reminder of the truth that the God who forgives also forgets.

Zechariah prophesied about the fountain that would be opened for sin and for uncleanness, transforming personal pollution into purity. Ezekiel promised men a new heart, responsive to the leading of the Spirit of holiness. Daniel

(continued on page 11)

Summer Service



Summer is a time of activity. Birds migrate back from the south, families plan vacations in the sun. This summer many thousands of people from all over the world will be visiting the beaches and tourist spots of the United States. For Christians this is a reminder of the call to "teach all nations." Our Lord calls us to "go into all the world." We in the

twentieth century find that the world is on our doorstep.

A couple of months ago we ran an item in our "News and Views" section about the Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, New Jersey—a place where college and seminary students spend their summers witnessing, sometimes in a variety of languages, to the visitors who

flock to the beaches.

Larry Edison is one student who found opportunity not only to witness but a new direction for his life at Wildwood. "One night I went witnessing at the Boardwalk Chapel with Dr. Hendrick Krabbendam (of Covenant College)," Larry explained, "and it became a turning point in my life!"

He had become a Christian during his first year at Covenant College, yet it wasn't until that night in Wildwood that Larry began to see the soundness of Reformed Theology. "I saw that the Bible could be used without apology to confront sinners and this gave real authority to evangelism."

As a seminary student Larry was involved in Karate evangelism. He explains: "We gathered young people to view a brief demonstration of Karate. This was then followed up with a brief presentation of the power of God."

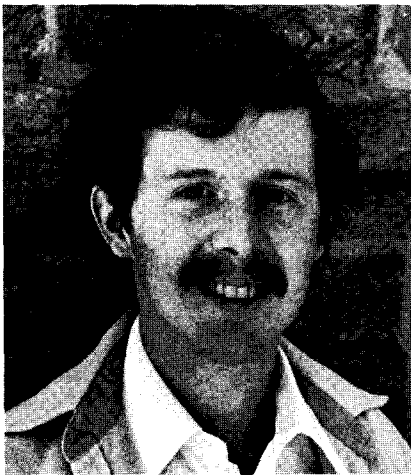
Larry's concern for evangelism will continue with him throughout his ministry. He is to assist a pastor in Pittsburgh, working as a community college evangelist with the "Christian Coalition" staff.

Increasingly the need of child evangelism and witness to young people is being brought to our attention. This is the concern of Charlie Drew, a Harvard graduate who has been deeply involved in youth work. "It's wiser to build a fence at the top of a cliff than a hospital at the bottom." That's why I think junior high ministry is so strategic," reflects Charlie. "We've got to reach young people with the gospel while they are still open and inquisitive about life." Charlie plans to be the Junior Schools Director of FOCUS, an evangelistic ministry to private school students.

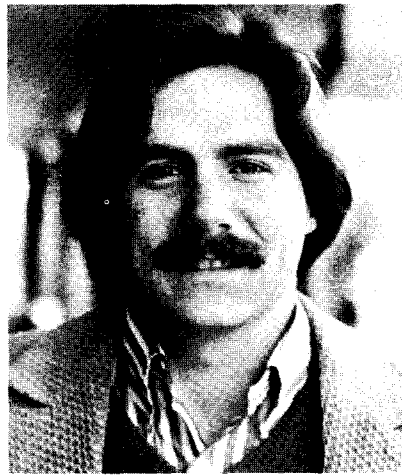
Chuck and Bill Colclasure are brothers who went to seminary together. They will both be serving churches in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Chuck has been called to serve as Minister of Evangelism at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church. Bill will be organizing home Bible studies, evangelism, and Sunday school curriculum as Assistant Pastor at Bethany Presbyterian Church. Both churches are in the Presbyterian Church in America.

Joe Novenson has had a unique min-

(continued on page 14)



Charlie Drew



Joe Novenson



Chuck Colclasure



Bill Colclasure

Church Policy and Scripture: United Presbyterians and the Homosexual Issue

Edmund P. Clowney

Last May the 1978 General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church adopted by a margin of about six to one a policy statement and recommendations that advised against the ordination of professed homosexuals to the gospel ministry. The statement followed in the main the minority report of which Dr. Richard Lovelace, professor at Gordon-Conwell Seminary was the major author. The report concluded that "unrepentant homosexual practice does not accord with the requirements for ordination set forth in the Book of Order." (The passage cited includes the requirement that the ordinand "live according to godliness.")

The action has been hailed as an "overwhelming victory" for evangelicals. It was supported by a coalition of conservatives including the Presbyterian Lay Committee, Presbyterians United for Biblical Concerns, and the Presbyterian Charismatic Communion.

Certainly the conclusion that was adopted is right. It stands in marked contrast to the majority report and to the atmosphere that seemed to prevail in the hearings held by the study-task force at the Philadelphia Assembly in 1977. At that time the testimony of an actively homosexual minister of the denomination rejoicing in his liberated life-style was received with expressions of sympathy in a setting where open rebuke seemed out of the question.

The report certainly is remarkable for its Biblical content and much clear theological expression. It shows, too, the marks of long struggles to understand homosexuality. The root problem of homosexuality is found to be "affectional attraction," rather than simply sexual habits. The report recognizes com-

plex influences in the life and development of the homosexual and judges that the nature and causes of homosexuality have not been conclusively shown.

At the same time, the report asserts "Even where the homosexual orientation has not been consciously sought or chosen, it is neither a gift from God nor a state or a condition like race; it is a result of our living in a fallen world."

Homosexuality, the report concludes, is not God's wish for humanity. Redemption in Christ Jesus does not liberate us to license, but frees and empowers us for lives of obedience subject to his Lordship. The report points out that two factors are critical in the counseling of homosexuals. "First, do therapist and client believe that change is possible? Second, how convinced is the client that change is desirable?"

The report shows that Jesus Christ the living Word and the Bible as the written Word reveal the will of God that human sexuality find expression exclusively in the bond of marriage between man and woman. It points to the power of the Spirit to bring sinners to repentance and to new obedience. Apart from recognition of God's judgment and repentance, grace becomes mere sentimentality.

Secular science cannot provide the norm for the church's evaluation of moral conduct, nor will "situation ethics" with its appeal to unselfishness. The norm must be the living Word and the Bible. Among the Scripture passages referred to are Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26, 27; I Cor. 6:9, 10; I Tim. 1:9, 10. These are put in the setting of God's creative and redemptive purpose for man and woman. Paul's description of homosexual behavior as "unnatural" (Rom. 1:26, 27) does not mean "contrary to custom, nor contrary to the preference of a particular

person, but rather contrary to that order of universal human sexual nature that God intended in Genesis 1 and 2."

No doubt many or all of those who prepared and supported the report would be aware of defects in it. It may seem unappreciative to criticize in the midst of general thanksgiving, but some serious issues remain. Indeed, some of the strengths of the report lead to critical weakness. The statement certainly shows compassion for homosexuals and is carefully phrased to seek to persuade them and not to provide ammunition for those who have an irrational fear and hatred of homosexuals. (This is called "homophobia.") The mildest terms are used to state Biblical convictions. Homosexuality is "not God's wish," or his "revealed intent." It is "outside God's will."

The weakness, however, is not that the report fails to regard homosexuality as sin. That position is gradually made quite clear. The weakness is that the heinousness not just of this sin but of all sin does not appear. The report informs us that the Bible calls homosexual practice an abomination, but the statement never remotely approaches such a condemnation. The church's mission to homosexuals, within and without is discussed, but the discipline of homosexual sin is not touched upon. Indeed the distinction between the church member and the officer creates the impression that the avowed practice of homosexuality bars from ordination but not from church membership. The report could, and perhaps should be read in another way. The key sentence says: "Homosexual persons who sincerely affirm 'Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior' and 'I intend to be his disciple, to obey his Word, and to show his love' should not be excluded from membership." A later statement would confirm a strict interpretation of "obey his word" here: "Neither are members and officers free to adopt a life-style of conscious, continuing and unresisted sin in any area of their lives."

But the fatal concession is the "grandfather clause" that is one of the recommendations attached to the policy statement. Incredibly, this declares "that these actions shall not be used to affect negatively the ordination rights of any United

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Dr. Clowney is President of Westminster Theological Seminary.

Rejoice With . . . Weep With . . .

John J. Mitchell

The hospital called early on Saturday to tell me that Margie had suffered a cardiac arrest. My wife was in a coma and on the way to the intensive care unit. I should come right away. I said I understood, and I did realize it meant she might die.

It hardly seemed believable. She had had nausea and then dehydration—a problem, but nothing too serious we thought. She was in the hospital receiving fluids and under sedation. I had seen her the night before and, except for the effect of the drugs, she seemed herself. I had prayed for her that night, but with no feeling of great urgency.

Now the doctors were puzzled, not knowing what caused her heart to stop. It had started again, but her breathing was maintained by a machine. They were very frank, mentioned probable brain damage, and offered very little hope. We even talked of whether and when to turn off the machines.

Weeping For Others . . .

She seemed to me to be already gone, this physical and spiritual intimate of nearly nineteen years. There seemed to be a sort of void beside me as I drove back home. Yet it was not my personal loss that first struck me.

My thoughts were much more practical, in fact. How could I manage the family without her? How could I keep the children in Christian school without her income? The three older children, all in their teens, needed their mother now especially. And there was Sarah, the unexpected blessing who was less than a year old.

How could I father and mother both? What do you do with a little baby? The grandmothers had been caring for her while Margie was in the hospital. But

that arrangement was temporary at best. So I fretted about things.

That I underestimated my children is now plain enough. When I returned from the hospital, and the two older children got back from a visit away from home, I told them all the doctors had said. That afternoon we went back so they could see their mother. With tubes in her and machines blinking and clicking, she hardly seemed like anyone we knew.

Weeping With Others . . .

By that time the news had begun to travel. I had called Margie's brother and sisters; her parents, now retired, lived close by. People were beginning to call and relatives to arrive. It was even more of a shock for most of them, since they could only recall seeing her with her normal life, love, and active faith in the Lord.

Many of them wept. She was the oldest daughter in her family and had been the focal center for them all during the years the parents were serving as missionaries in Korea. They would miss her and they sorrowed for the loss. I wished at times I could have found a corner to be alone in. But I wept with them, thinking more of their loss than of my own.

Back at the hospital once more that day I was nearly overwhelmed by the people crowded into the small visiting area of the ICU. Friends were there, and almost half the staff of the hospital. Margie had worked there part-time, and these nurses and doctors crowded around. They expressed sympathy, but they also spoke of their own sense of loss and wonder that such a thing could happen to one who had been so thoroughly alive. Again I wept with these friends, too.

Next morning the hospital called again to say she had died. I was relieved in a way, thankful she did not linger on or suffer pain. They wanted to do an autopsy, for they simply did not know what had happened. I agreed readily to that. (She had a major tumor in the brain, but it was located so that none of the usual symptoms were apparent even to the specialists who had examined her.)

Weeping and Praying . . .

I told the children. They cried a little and we prayed together. And we talked

of her being now in the presence of the Lord. Our fears, I said to them, were not for her but for ourselves and our sense of loss. They seemed to understand this, accepting God's will. The crying did not last long.

It was Sunday morning. Thinking back, I am grateful for that. I asked the children if they wanted to go to church as usual and made it plain that I was not requiring them to go. But they all wanted to be there. Little Sarah seemed to sense no difference. We went together to God's house.

I said I was grateful it was Sunday. Barely two hours after Margie had died, we were in the congregation of God's people. Again, I underestimated the value and wonder of the fellowship of the saints of the Lord. Many had tears in their eyes that day. But what I felt most was the love and concern of so many. There was grief, but they gave me strength.

Rejoice and Weep . . .

Paul says we are to "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15). I always thought it meant that you should shift the gears of your emotions so you could share in one person's rejoicing and, at another time, share in someone else's weeping. Gradually it became clear to me that you might well have to do both at the same time.

The hospital where Margie worked, where Sarah had been born ten months before, and where her mother now had died, was operated by an order of Roman Catholic nuns. Many of the staff, especially among the nurses, were Catholic. Margie was an exception, an orthodox Protestant working with crucifixes on every wall.

(It had been hard for her to put herself into that situation. But she sought the position because it was the only hospital that did not perform abortions. Everyone there knew why she had come, and there was real respect for her even from those who had no very deep religious commitments. The Catholics particularly felt a strong sense of fellowship with her.)

Some of the staff members seemed dismayed that God would take so vital a person, one who meant so much to so

many. I wasn't too sure myself why God had done it and would have advised the Lord that her remaining was the "more needful." But the Lord did not seek my advice, and I found grace to affirm his infinite wisdom to these who questioned his goodness.

But there were others who spoke of Margie's present joy in the presence of her Lord. Yes, I knew she was with her Savior and that it was—for her, anyway—"far better." One nurse, whom Margie had helped to come to the Lord not many months before, put it simply. "The Lord wanted her more than we did. I'll miss her so much, but she must be really happy now!"

"Happy" in Death?

How could I think of her being happy? The last Sunday she was in church the two older children had made public profession of their faith in Christ. She had written each of them a long letter expressing her happiness. The third child also has given good evidence of a living faith, and Margie had often expressed her joy in seeing this.

***"How could she be happy?
She would never see Sarah take
her first step or utter her
first word. She would never see
any of her children off to college
or married . . . And, I thought
to myself, how can she be happy
knowing she has left me behind
to cope with all of this?"***

And the baby. After thirteen years, to discover yourself pregnant again is something of a traumatic experience. Even some of the Catholic doctors at the hospital were surprised she didn't seek an abortion. But Sarah was born, with the father present and half the hospital staff crowded into the delivery room as though it were Grand Central Station. She had been happy then, and Sarah continued to be a source of joy.

How could she be happy now? She

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The Christ Peter Preached

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foretold the wonderful work of reconciliation, involving an end of sins and the experience of an everlasting righteousness.

And Isaiah plainly prophesied of Him who was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, cut off out of the land of the living when his soul was made an offering for sin, stricken for the transgression of his people, bearing their iniquities, suffering for the sin of many, and making intercession for the transgressors.

Peter now understands the significance of the sufferings of Christ. Once he protested our Lord's prediction of the passion, and vowed vehemently that he would never let the Messiah die. But now, he sees that the Christ had to suffer, that the Lamb had to be sacrificed, if God's elect were to be liberated from an empty way of life and brought into a vital relationship with the Holy One (I Peter 1:18, 19). The apostle knows Jesus as the Suffering Servant of whom Isaiah prophesied. He believes that Jesus Christ bore in His body, on the cross, the weight of our sins and the judgment of God against those sins. Peter is persuaded that now the way back to God is open.

We must henceforth die to sins as well as live for righteousness, grateful for this revelation of divine grace (I Peter 2:21-25). The gospel truth is that Christ died for our sins, once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God (I Peter 3:18).

The knowledge of sins forgiven restores serenity of soul and assures us of renewed fellowship with God. Indeed, the gospel message is nothing less than "the good news of peace through Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:36). If we believe in the person of Jesus Christ and trust in the redemptive work he accomplished on behalf of his people, then pardon and peace become realities in our lives.

Relying on the promises of God in the gospel of his sovereign grace, resting on Jesus Christ as he is offered to us in that gospel for salvation, renouncing all confidence in any merits of our own, we will receive the remission of

sins and the peace produced by pardon.

This, then, is the Christ Peter preached. The Christ whose ministry brought blessing to men in need; whose majesty calls forth our obedience and gives us peace. To know him, trust him, love him, obey him, and proclaim him, must be the one holy passion of our lives.

Thank God for parents who early lead their children to a knowledge of the inspired Scriptures in which this Christ is revealed as Savior and Lord. Thank God for Bible colleges and theological seminaries where the person and work of this Redeemer are the theme of consecrated study. Thank God for faithful ministers who point people to him through their ministry, by preaching and counseling. Thank God for churches whose sense of mission stirs them to share "the good news of peace through Jesus Christ" with others.

The apostle who once denied his Lord and then experienced the forgiveness of sins, faithfully preached Christ. He encourages us to serve him as well with the glow of devotion in these moving words: "To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away" (I Peter 5:1-4).

¹ B. B. Warfield, "The Christ Peter Preached" reprinted in *Biblical Doctrines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1929).

² *Ibid.*, p. 252.

³ Oscar Cullman, *Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr* trans., F. V. Filson (New York: Meridian Books, 1958) p. 69.

⁴ F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954) on Acts 10:36.

⁵ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament* (London: Nisbet, 1857), on Acts 10:34, 35.

⁶ John Trapp, *A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments* (London: Dickinson, 1867-77), on Acts 10:38.

⁷ Henry Alford, *Greek Testament* (London: Rivingtons, 1857-61), on Acts 10:38.

⁸ J. A. Alexander, *Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Scribner, 1858), on Acts 10:38.

⁹ Paul Tournier, *Guilt and Grace* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1962), pp. 185, 186.

Letters

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and hard in the old Presbyterian Church U.S.A. before they finally threw him out. If the O.P.C. has to go out of the R.E.S. it would be a good thing for the body of Christ as a whole if it went out the same way. Until that day, I can only pray that you will stand with us in our efforts to prove that faithful discipline is the answer, also within the R.E.S., rather than the all-too-tempting solution of separation.

In conclusion let me just repeat, for emphasis, my own conviction that there must be no wavering in our determination to keep right on pressing for a scriptural conclusion of the problems in the R.E.S.

Yours in Christ,
G. I. Williamson
Silver Springs, New Zealand

Salvation Message?

A review in the April, 1978, issue criticizes the (Hal Lindsay) film, "The Late Great Planet Earth" because it does not contain the message of John 3:16 and the way of salvation. This is a good criticism.

But in the same issue there is an article about Charles Colson and the students. There is no salvation message here either. Maybe the students do not need it. But have you noticed that the message is not in Mr. Colson's famous book either, in spite of the fact that the book is titled "Born Again." If I had read the book before I was "born again" the message to me would have been that I should live a life of greater commitment. I would not have learned from it how to be saved. Nor will anyone else. I have not noticed anyone else make this criticism.

Sincerely,
Bolton Davidheiser
La Mirada, California

Book Review

PROMISE AND DELIVERANCE

by S. G. De Graaf; trans. by H. Evan and Elizabeth Wichers Runner. Vols. 1 and 2 (Vol. 1 *From Creation to the Conquest of Canaan*; Vol. 2 *The Failure of Israel's Theocracy*); Paideia Press, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. *Study Guides Vol. 1*, by Gordon J. Spykman (same publisher). Reviewed by David A. Dombek, Abington, Pa.

How do we view Bible history? In Holland over the last fifty years this question has been hotly debated: How do you preach historical texts? Two schools of thought emerged from that debate. One school taught that the Old Testament is primarily a casebook of examples. We can draw straight lines of application from those examples to us. The other approach was, for want of a better term, historical. An event in the Old Testament revelation is significant *because* it occurs at a specific time and place in redemptive history. So, the "exemplary" school had little concern for historical detail, and the "historical" school had little sympathy for application. (This battle has been recorded in detail in *Sola Scriptura* by Dr. Sidney Greidanus.)

But the problem of the handling of historical texts is not one which belongs only to ministers. It is a very practical dilemma for any parent seeking to instruct his child in the ways of the Lord. How are we teaching our children to view the saints of long ago? Do we take our little ones through the Scriptures as through a museum? Do we teach them to view the saints of old as sculptures and paintings of exquisite art, yet somehow aloof from the hurly-burly of our lives? Or, to change the metaphor, do we teach them to partake like epicures at a smorgasbord, munching moral applications? What do we expect to show them of God in Scripture?

A work has recently appeared in English, written some time ago by S. G. De Graaf, called *Promise and Deliver-*

ance. The first two volumes have been translated, covering the Old Testament historical sections. They are ably rendered in English by H. Evan and Elizabeth Wichers Runner.

De Graaf moves into this difficult area of our understanding of Scriptural narrative, not by demand or debate but by example. The two volumes are a sort of prose outline of Old Testament history. Each lesson has three basic parts: first a summary section of the most important things in the story, second a one sentence summary of the theme of the lesson. Third, the lesson is broken down into its component parts. It is not necessary to cover the whole lesson in one sitting, especially with children. But the summary section at the head of the lesson and the one-sentence theme help to focus the whole lesson around its main purpose.

Special and careful attention should be paid to De Graaf's introduction to Volume I in which he sets forth the purpose of Scripture as the revelation of God. From that he concludes that "every story in Scripture reveals something of the counsel of God for our redemption. And in every story God is the prime agent, revealing himself through his acts as the Redeemer." De Graaf feels that people in the Biblical narratives serve as background even in the most personal stories: "This fact, too, makes it difficult to tell the stories. The stories will be hard for the children to understand not because their minds cannot grasp them but because their hearts do not accept them. . . ."

Bible stories are not a form of entertainment or amusement. A child (or an adult) is not being confronted with the heroic conduct of some human (David versus Goliath, for example) but with the Lord who redeems his people through his lowly shepherd boy whom he has anointed king and would yet make king. Any child can accept God as long as he can keep God distant, peripheral, and keep himself as the center of his life. But God is the center of Scripture, even of each narrative. As such, God confronts each child, as well as each adult, in the stories he has given for our edification.

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NEWS and VIEWS

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served as Academic Dean and is presently at Cambridge, England, completing a sabbatical study year. DeYoung is a graduate of Calvin College, Westminster Theological Seminary, and received his doctorate at the Free University of Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Professor Freundt, also an original faculty member and Chairman of the Department of Historical Theology, is a member of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. He serves as Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Mid-South. A graduate of King College and Columbia Theological Seminary, Freundt is presently a doctoral candidate at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Mr. Patterson, well-known former president of French Camp Academy, will maintain residence on the Seminary campus as President-Emeritus and member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Ministers' Institute

The annual Christian Reformed Ministers' Institute was held June 6—8 at Calvin College, Grand Rapids. Speakers included the Rev. Iain Murray, editor of the *Banner of Truth*, the Rev. Sam Patterson, former President of Reformed Theological Seminary, and the Rev. Norman Shepherd, Professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Seminary.

Iain Murray delivered three lectures on "Principles in Biblical Evangelism."

Professor Shepherd addressed himself to the subject of reprobation in the light of the recent controversy in some Christian Reformed circles. Under the heading of "Reprobation in Covenant Perspective" Shepherd approached his subject from both an historical and Biblical perspective. He showed how some of the more recent views expressed by men like Harry Boer were akin to the sentiments of the Remonstrant Arminians.

Mr. Patterson spoke on "Extending the Reformed Faith in Church and World." A Bible study was led by Dr. Andrew Bandstra. Other subjects of more specific interest to the Christian Reformed Church were also dealt with.



Anniversary at Newberg

Fenn and Sally Myrtle Bourland of Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Newberg, Oregon, observed their 65th wedding anniversary on the Lord's Day, June 4, 1978. Following the morning worship service the congregation remained for a short program. Their son Laurence (an elder in Trinity Presbyterian Church), his wife Gertrude and their children served a delicious anniversary cake and refreshments.

Fenn and Sally Myrtle have long been faithful members of Trinity Church. In recent years illness confined Mrs. Bourland. However, God has graciously restored her, and for over a year God has given both the strength to be among the most faithful in attending the worship services. The church thanks God for his covenant faithfulness evident in their lives.

New Executive Director for CSC

The Christian Studies Center in Memphis, Tennessee, recently announced the appointment of Douglas W. Petersen as Executive Director. A native of Minnesota, Petersen did his undergraduate work at Wheaton and Shelton Colleges and received his Master's degree from Rutgers University. He already has had much practical experience in administration and organization, both in the military and as headmaster of the Evangeli-

cal Christian School system in Memphis.

Petersen, with his wife Susan and their three children now live in the Philadelphia area where he is working on a Master of Arts in Religion degree at Westminster Theological Seminary.

Joining the new Executive Director are two additional staff members: Thomas H. Ester, Jr., Editor of Publications and Gen. John Bradshaw, National Field Director.

Installation at Neptune

The Rev. Albert Edwards presided at the installation service of the Rev. Douglas Rogers at Good Shepherd Church, Neptune, N.J. on Sunday, April 2, 1978.

The sermon given by the Rev. Calvin Busch was entitled "The Minister's Beautiful Task." Rev. Edwards asked questions of the pastor-elect and then of the congregation. Rev. David Kiester gave the charge to the pastor and Rev. Edwards the charge to the congregation.

A time of refreshments and fellowship followed the benediction.

Ministers' Retreat

The Committee on Christian Education, Presbytery of the Dakotas, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, announces a ministers' retreat to be held September 5—7, 1978, at Homeward Trail Bible Camp, Mason City, Nebraska. The theme this year will be "Brush Up on Your Hebrew" with Dr. Raymond Dillard of Westminster Seminary. The cost is \$19 (\$16 if sent by August 20). For further information write to Rev. Jack J. Peterson, Box 306, Carson, N.D. 58529.

Tent Ministry

A "tent ministry" is just beginning under the auspices of Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Rochester, N.Y. Friends are encouraged to send the names of contacts in the Syracuse area to the Rev. Richard E. Knodel, Jr., 460 Westcott St., Syracuse, N.Y. 13201 Phone (315) 422-2470. A Bible study has begun on Wednesday evenings and further developments are expected shortly.

Institute of Pastoral Studies

From June 5—16 a Summer Institute of Pastoral Studies was held on campus of
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Book Review

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A corollary of De Graaf's theocentric emphasis is his stress on the importance of the covenant—the promises of God. It is often said that intuition can't be taught. But De Graaf comes close to achieving that. By simply showing God's faithfulness to himself through his keeping his covenant promise, De Graaf begins to engender a "covenant sensitivity"—a "sixth sense" seeing God at the center of all things. This is invaluable for all of us, but especially for those of us who have come lately to the Reformed Faith, without the benefit of childhood catechizing. In this day and age when the church is being assaulted on every side, it is a great comfort to see the centrality of our sovereign God, his covenant, and our redemption so clearly set forth. De Graaf brings with him the strong conviction that the historical narratives are not a pile of arbitrarily chosen tales, but rather that they are selected to show us things about God: his sovereignty, justice, mercy and love.

Promise and Deliverance is written in non-technical language. The Runners have done a remarkable job of rendering this translation into English that is simple but not simplistic. The book, however, cannot be read to children. It must be thought over, digested and retold to the children in the parent's, or teacher's, own words.

The work is not a commentary. It should not be made to function like one. It is an overview, a survey, of the Old Testament historical sections showing how they revolve around God and Christ.

A study guide for Volume I has been prepared by Gordon J. Spykman (Paideia Press). Dr. Spykman strives to make the reader reflect deeply on what De Graaf has said. His questions should be starting places for the reader's questions.

All in all, *Promise and Deliverance* is exciting reading. It is exciting to see the Lord unabashedly praised and glorified. I hope that *Promise and Deliverance* will be but the start of a current of such studies. These can only help the Church as she seeks to conduct evangelism, answer her critics, and, most importantly, walk humbly with her God.

Summer Service

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istry to handicapped people, as the result of an accident to his hands. He was taking a year off from seminary and working in a factory, feeding sheet metal into a huge roller. "Then it happened," Joe recalls. "The machine suddenly grabbed my hands and began pulling me into the rollers." Within an instant it was all over. The rollers had completely crushed his hands. "I never went into shock," Joe continues, "but I did become awfully depressed when I overheard doctors coldly discussing amputation."

However, in Spokane, Washington, where Joe was at the time, there just "happened" to be a plastic surgeon. In fact, the surgeon was a hand reconstruction specialist. He studied the x-rays a long time and told Joe that he could put his hands back together again.

"When I awoke in the recovery room and counted ten monstrously bandaged fingers," recalls Joe, "I began to believe that God's sovereignty was really not just a textbook matter. Through the following months I saw students and handicapped people come to know the Lord, not because of my arguments, but because they saw that I believed in a sovereign God who was putting me all back together."

Matured and enriched by his experience, Joe will become assistant pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Augusta, Georgia.

From the glimpses we have given above of the ministries of these men beginning a lifetime of service, we catch something of the many needs to which we must be sensitive, not only this summer but throughout life.

The Homosexual Issue

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Presbyterian deacon, elder or minister who has been ordained prior to this date."

The report tells us that homosexual practice is a sin, that the Bible as God's revelation calls it an abomination, that it is inconsistent with ordination, that this has been the historic position of the

church, but that active homosexual ministers are immune from discipline. Who gives the keys of the kingdom? In whose name are they exercised? At what date did the Lord of the church require sexual purity of the people of God? "Grandfather" clauses are applicable only to new legislation to prevent it from being retroactive. But the San Diego Assembly had no power to legislate morals. That is God's sovereign right.

The report stresses the "pluralism" of the church, the right of members to hold opposite opinions and assures those who would ordain practicing homosexuals that no decision of the church is final. Above all the statement seeks to maintain the unity of the church and "pluralism-in-dialog." It would be a "hindrance to grace" to ask a candidate for ordination about the purity of his sexual life.

Love, tenderness and concern cannot justify a homosexual fellowship that is contrary to God's revealed will. The report rightly states that. But neither can love, tenderness, and concern justify the fellowship of a pluralistic church when the apostolic foundation of fellowship is ignored. "Separated brethren" outside the United Presbyterian Church should rejoice at the advice given by the 190th General Assembly against the ordination of homosexuals. They may be instructed and cautioned in their own attitudes by this report. But they should pray for the application of the Word of God to all the life of the church in doctrine and practice. Obedience to Scripture and "pluralistic" inclusivism are fire and water. The great strength of the report is that it is not "pluralistic." It faithfully declares that homosexual practice is sinful. But the serious weakness of the report is that it seeks to avoid the implications for church discipline of the clear teaching of Scripture. Both paths cannot be followed. Christ's commands do not yield to the spirit of our age and they demand exclusive loyalty.

Rejoice with . . .

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would never see Sarah take her first step or utter her first word. She would never see any of her children off to college, or married, or know the special joy of being

a grandmother. And, I thought to myself, how can she be happy knowing she has left me behind to cope with all of this?

And it had meant so much to her to be able to share her faith with others, in quiet conversations and in home Bible studies, at work, in church, wherever she found herself. She fretted that her testimony for the Lord was so weak. But her funeral service drew the largest crowd that ever tried to get into our church, any many of them had to stand outside on a dreary evening. They were church friends, relatives, people from the Bible studies, nurses and doctors and nuns from the hospital. (The Rev. Joey Pipa preached that night, and all those people heard the gospel again clearly.)

Joy In Sorrow . . .

No, "happy" is not really the right word. Yet I now realize more clearly what that nurse, so young in the faith yet so full of grace and wisdom, had meant. Margie was "really happy now," experiencing the true and complete joy of being in the presence of the Lord she had loved and tried to serve. She was with the one who had never given her pain, never caused her grief, the one who loved her so much that he gave his life for her. How could I not rejoice with her in the fulness of joy that she knew now?

In the midst of sorrow, there was joy. It took time to realize this, but I found myself able to rejoice in her joy and even to speak of it to others. Weeping there has been. But as I reminded the children—and still need to remind myself—our sorrow is not for the loved one at home with her Lord. Our sorrow is for ourselves, for our loss.

The loss is real enough. I won't speak of what I feel for myself. But my children no longer have their mother to be concerned for their welfare or to guide their steps in the Lord's paths. The baby will never know this person who seemed to mean so much to others. (The older children carefully put away various keepsakes they thought would help Sarah someday to appreciate this mother she scarcely knew and even now does not seem to remember.)

Grace In Sorrow . . .

I underestimated my children's faith

and maturity. They have rallied to do all sorts of things day by day that their mother once did. They have accepted God's will and have gone on to live their lives before the Lord. And this is of God's grace.

I underestimated what the fellowship of the saints really means, I believed in it—and confessed it practically every Sunday morning. But I had never felt before how much it could mean, how much it could help. So many of those dear saints of the Lord, and I include many of our Catholic friends, gave me sympathy in my loss; they wept with my weeping.

“ . . . There is also the joy of experiencing the Lord's grace in all of this. I am persuaded that Christ sends his grace to us in times of sorrow particularly through the ministry of His saints.”

So many sought ways to help. One friend sat down in the midst of a busy schedule and wrote out all the details of arrangements that I needed to make. A mother, of four young children whose father was taken suddenly even before the youngest was born, insisted she wanted to care for Sarah during the days. Others have brought food, and they are still bringing one meal a week even now—a real blessing to me.

And there were also those who spoke of their joy in having received some blessing from Margie and their joy in knowing she was with her Lord. One of the Catholic sisters particularly expressed her confidence and joy that Margie was then in the presence of her Savior. They were rejoicing for her, and I finally found myself able to rejoice with them.

In all of this, I had underestimated the sufficiency of God's grace. I had worried about all the problems and the details, yet no urgent need has gone unmet. On the day Margie died, I found grace to extend comfort to others who keenly felt the loss. It seemed strange that I should be giving the comfort, but the Lord gave the grace.

Now I realize the Lord did want her for himself more than we needed her here. Just to think of the Savior welcoming her into his presence brings joy. What true joy there is in knowing that one of the Lord's dear ones is home with him. I can rejoice with her, knowing that her joy is truly full.

But there is also the joy of experiencing the Lord's grace in all of this. I am persuaded that Christ sends his grace to us in time of sorrow particularly through the ministry of his saints. My wife is in the immediate presence of the Savior; but I have enjoyed his presence with me in a closer way than ever.

May what I experienced be a help to you in facing the loss of a loved one. May it suggest to all of us the need to give of ourselves to those who are grieving. I have learned to rejoice with those who rejoice in the death of one of the Lord's saints; I can weep with those who weep for the loss in their own lives. And I have learned to do both at the same time, by God's grace.

(Lois Margaret Hunt Mitchell died on October 30, 1977, at age forty-four. She left four children, Bruce, Mary, Margaret, and Sarah; a brother and three sisters and their families; her father and mother, the Rev. and Mrs. Bruce F. Hunt, now retired from missionary service in Korea.)

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NEWS and VIEWS

(continued from page 13)

Westminster Seminary by the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation of which Dr. John Bettler is the Director.

Over 150 people attended the Institute, representing many different parts of the country. Five courses were taught by four teachers: John Bettler—*Counseling and Self-Identity*; Jay Adams—*Counseling Workshop and Preaching*; Howard Eyrich—*Premarital Counseling*; Wesley Walters—*The Cults*.

Participants in the Institute were asked for their reactions and suggestions. The overwhelming impression was of an exceedingly beneficial experience, enriching the ministry of the participants.

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Abundance

Ellen Bryan Obed

*He gave the flowers the hill for room;
He gave the sun the flowers to bloom;
He gave the rain the flowers to fill;
He gave the wind the rain to spill.
He gave me then the hill to climb
And all these things were also mine—
The flowers, the wind, the rain, the sun.
God's given so much, I thought, to one
Who only for a summer's day
Has come to the hill and gone away.*

Hymn for the Installation of a Pastor

Calvin A. Busch

*Ascended Lord, in heav'n above,
With royal pow'r at God's right hand,
Pour forth your gifts with all your love
Upon your church that here does stand.
Anoint our pastor's flaming tongue
To preach the Gospel's saving pow'r,
And guard his feet as he among
Your flock does walk each passing hour.
Your blessing is implored today
Upon your servant's sacred task.
Install him, Lord, we humbly pray
And o'er his life your Spirit cast.*

Contacts in Arizona

Families of Reformed Faith convictions who are moving to the Prescott, Arizona area will find like minds and fellowship with the Prescott Presbyterian Church in America. Providing a full ministry of preaching and teaching in the Reformed Faith. Write Pastor Charles E. Turner, P.O. Box 248, Prescott, AZ 86302. Ph. (602) 778-2538.

Principal Needed

Covenant Christian School (kindergarten to 6th grade) of St. Louis, Missouri is seeking a principal for the 1978-79 school year. Limited teaching will be required. Inter-

ested candidates should have teaching experience and certification on the elementary level and show evidence of administrative capabilities. Contract provisions require membership in a church of Reformed faith. Letters of application and resumes should be sent to: The Education Committee, Covenant Christian School, 2143 North Ballas Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63131. Call: (314) 527-7141, or (314) 962-1807.

Teacher Openings

The American Christian School has openings in the 5th through 8th grades for teachers who are capable of handling

combined classes, and a combination of subjects. Send all inquiries to American Christian School, 126 S. Hillside Ave., Succasunna, N.J. 97876. Tel. (201) 584-6616.

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