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The Bible as the Word of God

A Study in Protestant Principles

By the REV. ROBERT L. ATWELL

Pastor of Old Westminster Independent Church, San Francisco, California

THE proper attitude of the Christian toward the Bible is stated very clearly in the Bible itself. Let us examine three texts: (1) "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Tim. 3:16); (2) "The word of our God shall stand forever" (Isa. 40:8); (3) "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet" (Psalm 119:105).

Combine these texts and you have a quite complete answer as to what we should think of the Bible. It is well to remember that these texts do not constitute what men have said about the Bible; rather, they are what God Himself has said about it. These answers constitute the second of the great principles of the Protestant Reformation.

¹ We have seen that the Reformation called men into the very presence of the God who knows the hearts of all men. Subjectively, this persuasion that all of a man's life is lived in the divine presence was, and is, the basic thought of the Reformation. By this decisive idea, by this mighty fact, the Christian is to be controlled at every instant and in every act.

We noticed that this principle was not new with the Reformers. It is stressed throughout Scripture. Indeed, it is not too much to say that it was precisely because it is so emphasized in Scripture that it became the living, governing principle of the Reformation. Thus you will realize why it is that students of church history have agreed that the *formal* principle (that is, the rule or standard of faith, the authoritative source of knowl-

edge) of the Reformation is the absolute and final authority of the Scriptures as the Word of God.

As we consider this formal principle let us note three things: (1) The sufficiency and exclusive *authority* of the Word; (2) the *permanence* or finality of the Word; (3) the personal *application* of the Word.

Authority

The authority of the Word is involved in the declaration of Paul that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. The moment one accepts that definition of Scripture his idea of the Scriptures becomes determined (as indeed his idea of all other things is determined) by the conception which he holds of God. Now we have seen that the Reformers recognized that the one and only God is sovereign. By sovereign we understand, among other things, that He is infinite in holiness, in wisdom and in power. That being so, He is the God of truth. Accordingly, Scriptures which He has inspired are true. Since He is the God of all wisdom, wisdom controls the Scriptures and there is naught but wisdom found therein. Since He is the God of all power, He has ordained that only those thoughts which He intended are inscribed in the pages of that book.

To admit that truth of this text, that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and then deny, as some do, that the Bible is infallible—to accept this text and yet affirm that there are mistaken ideas and antiquated theories in the Bible—is to deny that God is the eternal God of truth and wisdom.

It was this truth, the authority of the Word, that

¹ See "Man in the Presence of God," by Robert L. Atwell, THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, October 25, 1940, pp. 115, 116.

determined in every field and in every detail the progress of the Reformation. That movement had scarcely begun when its leaders became acutely aware that they must return with unqualified dependence to the Scriptures to determine alike their doctrine and their conduct. Someone has said that the work of the Reformation can be explained in one sentence: "It called men from the study of tradition to the study of the Bible itself." It was effective in this because it placed the Bible in the hands of the people and because the people used it.

You and I are not sufficiently familiar with the conditions of the sixteenth century to realize how imperatively men needed that source of certainty and that voice of authority. But we can easily see such need in our own age. This age, this decade, this very year of our Lord, 1941, is characterized by nothing more than by its hesitancy and doubt, its uncertainty and futility. There are many problems which perplex, but to none of them is the world able to give a certain answer. We might expect that progress in education and advance in science had been such that we could receive a sure answer from those sources. Indeed, that is what they tell us; yet Sir James Jeans, while making that very affirmation asks that we be patient and wait perhaps a million years until a closer approximation of all the facts is available. But our problems press for an immediate answer. A million years will not avail for us or for our children. This is true of world war, of industrial conditions, of social upheaval and political turmoil. It is true also of the needs of the sin-burdened soul.

The church of our day fails to answer these and similar questions that she might be expected to answer because she vainly attempts to find an answer in the opinions of the most learned men. Is it any wonder that the world is beginning to think of the church as incapable of offering any solution to the needs of man or of society? Oh, that the church would realize her task and return to the Word of God! Then again would she speak with authority.

Man is so constituted that he longs for, yea, he must have, a ruler, one to command him. And yet he is also so constituted that he cannot be con-

tent to take commands from one of his fellow men. Nevertheless, he is lost without a voice of authority that will order his very life. Hence the rise of dictatorships. Hence a feeling, even in our own country, this land of liberty, that we need some strong man to determine the destiny of the nation, to control our industrial, our social, even our religious life. What this age needs and is vaguely groping after is God—the God who speaks with absolute authority in His Word!

Permanence

We next consider the permanence of the Word. Isaiah declared, "The word of our God shall stand forever." This too is in keeping with the character of Him of whom it is said, "And thou Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as does a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but thou art the same and thy years shall not fail."

Voltaire spoke of the Bible as a short-lived book. He said that within a hundred years it would not be in common use. Not many people today read Voltaire, but his house has been stacked with Bibles as a depot for a

Bible society, and more Bibles are sold and we trust more are read today than ever before. The Bible has been translated into more than a thousand languages and is being translated into a new one on an average of every five weeks.

The Bible remains a source of power in the lives of all who receive it. When in 1535 Miles Coverdale completed the first Bible ever printed in English, the volume was known as "Pages of Power" because it transformed life among all classes—in the shops, in the schools, upon the streets, wherever it was read and believed and obeyed. It was a book which spoke to the hearts of all men, of every age and in every condition of life. It is still such a book today.

The teaching of the Bible does not change. Moreover, it remains true in every age that the teachings of the Bible are sufficient for the needs of man. Conversely, when man departs from those teachings, darkness settles over him and the race becomes entangled in problems that threaten to destroy the very civilization in which man so prides himself.

Let me illustrate. This country in its infancy had only a fraction of the resources that are now readily available. Machinery to aid man in his productivity was almost wholly lacking. The very forces of nature which are now so largely turned to his benefit seemed bent on his destruction. Yet, if we are to credit historians, unemployment and actual poverty were almost non-existent. There was little want and few acute problems. Why? Because the infant nation was marked by industry, honesty and thrift. Why was that so? Because those principles were taught in the Bible. Today, with material things all in our favor, we are faced with a situation that threatens to overturn the whole political, social and economic structure. Why? Because we have forsaken the Bible as the norm, and hence industrious habits are shunned, thrift is scorned as an out-moded trait of the puritans, and an honest man is as hard to find as in the days of Diogenes.

Those whom we regard as most responsible for this republic in its formative years recognized in the Bible the only foundation and guarantee of liberty. Historians, among them

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"A Rich Example of Grace and Mercy"

The Fifth in a Series of Biographical Sketches on Outstanding Leaders in Scottish Church History

By the REV. G. N. M. COLLINS, B.D.

Pastor of Free St. Columba's Church, Edinburgh, Scotland

JOHN WELSH was born about the year 1568 at Collieston, in the shire of Dumfries, where his father owned an estate. He received his early education from his father and the parish schoolmaster, one John Jameson. The next part of his life-story is best told in the Parable of the Prodigal Son for, as John Howie of Lochgoin puts it, "He was a rich example of grace and mercy." The restraints of home and school became irksome to young John. He absconded in the company of a band of thieves who prosecuted their illegal and hazardous calling in the border country of England and Scotland.

But the "far country" was characteristically unkind to the young Prodigal. "He began to be in want, . . . and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father . . ."

The house of an aunt, a Mrs. Forsyth, marked the termination of the first stage of the Prodigal's homeward journey, and there, by a strange providence, his father met him. Anxious to break the news of John's return, Mrs. Forsyth approached her task by asking his father whether he had heard any news of the runaway. "O cruel woman," was the reply, "how can you mention his name to me? The first news I expect to hear of him is that he has been hanged as a thief." At the right moment, the erring son was brought forth from concealment. Paternal charity proved equal to the occasion. Father and son, in due course, set out for Collieston, and we may be sure that the family circle "made merry and were glad" over God's unlooked-for goodness in sparing them the grief and disgrace which they had dreaded. And they would have rejoiced, not only because the lost had been found, but also because the dead had come alive again. For it would appear that when John Welsh returned to his earthly father, he returned to his heavenly Father also. He submitted once more to the yoke

of the schools and, after a period of study in the Grammar School of Dumfries, entered the newly-founded University of Edinburgh where, it appears, he acquitted himself with credit as a student. He completed his curriculum and received the degree of Master of Arts in 1588 as one of the earliest graduates of the new seat of learning. At his graduation, in accordance with the usage of the times, he signed the National Covenant, and it would be safe to say that no one who ever subscribed that historic document kept his bond with greater fidelity than did John Welsh. If he did not die for the Covenant, he did something not less difficult; he lived for it.

In the year following his graduation, John Welsh was appointed minister of Selkirk, where his pastoral charge was not so much a congregation as a diocese. The Scottish Reformation was still a recent event and comparatively few of the landed proprietors, whose possessions had been enlarged by the acquisition of lands that had formerly been held by the church, had a sufficiently acute sense of honor and responsibility to make adequate provision for the spiritual welfare of the common people. Many of the clergy too were of the Vicar of Bray type, with the result that the ministers who really bore the burden of souls upon their heart labored as apostles rather than as local pastors.

John Welsh gave his whole time to pleading with God for Selkirk and pleading with Selkirk for God. Prior to his marriage he lodged with a burghess of the burgh, James Mitchell-hill, whose son was sometimes the bed-fellow of the young minister. The association appears to have been richly blessed to the boy. To his old age, he used to tell how Mr. Welsh used to lay a Scotch plaid above his bed-clothes wherewith to wrap himself when he arose during the night to intercede with God on behalf of his flock. He might have made his charge a sinecure had he been so minded, for his message was not wanted. But realizing that the less it

was wanted the more it was needed, he itinerated the country, preaching once every day of the week, fearlessly and faithfully rebuking the vices of rich and poor alike, and beseeching all, without respect of persons, to be reconciled unto God. With some, his pleading prevailed; with others, it evoked bitter opposition. Among the latter was Scott of Headschaw, a prominent member of a family whose loyalty to Rome had undergone no change at the Reformation. To end Welsh's evangelistic itineraries, Scott so mutilated Welsh's two horses that they bled to death.

About this time a new field of labor opened to him. The pastorate of Kirkcudbright became vacant through the assassination of Mr. David Blyth, and Welsh was called to succeed him. He ministered in Kirkcudbright from 1595 to 1600. The responsibilities of the minister of Kirkcudbright of those early post-Reformation days were indeed weighty. The population was split into factions, and the prevailing spirit was one of intrigue. The papacy had still a large body of adherents in the shire. The Solway harbors were conveniently situated for illicit trafficking with Spain, and there was a conspiracy afoot that a large force of Spanish troops should be landed at Kirkcudbright, to work together with such Scottish troops as could be raised, for the overthrow of the Reformed religion and the dethronement of Queen Elizabeth of England. Welsh's predecessor had reported the doings of the popish faction to a convention of the Scottish Church in 1592, and had paid for his zeal with his life.

Such was the Kirkcudbright which awaited the coming of John Welsh. With the same tireless diligence and uncompromising faithfulness as had characterized his ministry in Selkirk, however, he labored among the factious people of the Solway-side, and with gratifying results. Many of the most fanatical papists were genuinely converted under his ministry, and became choice and influential members of the Reformed Church. Many of

his converts, in later years, attached themselves to the ministry of Samuel Rutherford in Anwoth, and the names of some of them appear among the favored correspondents to whom Rutherford, while in banishment, addressed his famous *Letters*.

In 1600, Welsh was transferred to Ayr, his last charge in Scotland, and the one with which his name is usually associated. The gospel privileges of Ayr had been of a rare order for those times. Long before the Scottish Reformation, as early as the nineties of the fifteenth century, the disciples of John Wycliffe had secured a following in Ayrshire. These "Lollards of Kyle," as they were called, did much to prepare the way for the Reformation. The town of Ayr itself had been visited by George Wishart in 1545, and on frequent occasions thereafter by John Knox and John Willock. But although these ministries had been fraught with gospel blessing, the old order was slow to pass. A balladist of the time well said:

"Lord God, Thy face and Word of grace,
Hes lang bene hid by craft of men."

And the fruit of this neglect of gospel teaching on the part of the corrupt church from which Scotland was delivered by the Reformation was all too evident in Ayr when John Welsh began his ministry. Immorality was widespread; street brawling was rife; law and order were almost unknown. Sabbath desecration of the most open kind was common, and indeed, Welsh's senior colleague, Mr. John Porterfield, countenanced it to the extent of accompanying his parishioners to the bow-butts on Sabbath afternoons for archery practice.

Mr. Welsh immediately occupied himself with works of reform. Whenever the sounds of a street-fight reached him, he used to pull on a helmet and, with no other means of defense, rush into the midst of the combatants with loud remonstrance and rebuke. If he succeeded in making peace, he used to spread a table in the street and persuade the combatants to partake of a meal together in token of their reconciliation. These strange feasts began with prayer by the minister, and ended with the singing of a Psalm in which all joined.

Welsh had an early reward of his toils in the quickened interest which

his people manifested in the gospel, and in the ever-increasing congregations which crowded the spacious parish church of Ayr to overflowing. Good David Dickson, who himself exercised so fruitful a ministry in Irvine, used to say that "the grape-gleanings of Ayr in Mr. Welsh's time were far above the vintage of Irvine in his own." But unlooked for trials were in store both for John Welsh and for his congregation.

The Union of the Crowns took place while Welsh was minister at Ayr, and King James, obsessed with his theory of the divine right of kings and determined to be supreme in the church as well as in the state, took steps to invest the government of the Scottish Church in bishops who, as servile minions, should acknowledge his headship in the church and perform his royal will. He was astute enough to recognize that the General Assembly of the Scottish Church must be destroyed if his purpose was to be realized. Accordingly, although the General Assembly of 1602, with his own consent, had appointed its next meeting to be held in Aberdeen in July, 1604, he prorogued the meeting until July, 1605, and then flatly forbade the holding of the assembly, and refused to name any other date or place for the next meeting.

Certain of the commissioners, however, realizing the gravity of the issue, met in Aberdeen in accordance with the former appointment. They transacted no business but merely constituted the assembly and dissolved. John Welsh and certain other brethren were not present on the precise day of the meeting but, coming later, obtained a copy of the proceedings and formally expressed their approval of what their brethren had done. Within a month, several of the most excellent ministers of the Scottish Church were placed under arrest for alleged disobedience to the royal authority.

Thereafter John Welsh had experience of several places of confinement, among them, Blackness Castle. Prison conditions in Blackness must have been unimaginably horrible. James Melville, nephew of Andrew Melville, describes the fortress as a "foull holl"; and though the thought that—as Samuel Rutherford once put it—"the darkness of Blackness is not the blackness of darkness" would probably have occurred to John Welsh too, and yielded him comfort, even

then, the "darkness of Blackness" must have been hard to endure.

Eventually, he and several others who had taken part in the Aberdeen Assembly were brought before the Privy Council at Edinburgh to answer for their disregard of the royal will. They declined to own the authority of the council as judge in ecclesiastical causes, however, and were subsequently charged before the criminal judges with high treason. They were found guilty and sentenced to banishment.

A great company of people gathered at the harbor to witness the departure of the banished men. Welsh preached to them from the ship, exhorting them to hold fast the doctrines which he had taught and for which he deemed it worth while to suffer death itself if need be. As the vessel moved away the sounds of sobbing and weeping could be heard from the company ashore; but from the exiles afloat came the strains of praise as they sang together the Twenty-third Psalm. It was a fitting testimony. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

Arrived in Bordeaux, Welsh immediately began to equip himself for gospel service in his land of exile, and within fourteen weeks of his arrival he was able to address a French audience in its own tongue. During the sixteen years of his exile he ministered at Jonsac, Nerac, and latterly at St. Jean d'Angely. In France, as in Scotland, he was called upon to suffer for the Protestant faith, and was a tower of strength to the Huguenots in their times of persecution. During the siege of St. Jean d'Angely, a cannon-ball actually passed through the bed on which he was lying but, nothing daunted, he actually rallied the defenders of the city and assisted the gunners, carrying gun-powder to them in his hat when a shot from the attackers' guns had knocked from his hands the ladle that was ordinarily used for that purpose!

Toward the end of his sojourn in France, John Welsh was seized by an illness which the physicians found difficult to treat and he was strongly urged to seek such remission of his sentence as would permit him, for reasons of health, to return to his native Scotland. King James peremp-

torily denied his request, however, and relaxed his sentence of banishment only to the extent of permitting him to return to London "to be dealt with." When he arrived in London, renewed appeals were addressed to the king on his behalf. Mrs. Welsh herself was one of his intercessors with James. Mrs. Welsh, a daughter of John Knox, had joined her husband in exile and was in the fullest agreement with him in his heroic and costly contentings for the crown-rights of Christ as sole Head of His church. At her interview with the king she showed her mettle. "The King asked, Who was her father? 'John Knox,' was her reply. 'Knox and Welsh!' exclaimed the king; 'the devil never made sic a match as that!' 'It's right like, Sir,' said she; 'for we never speired his advice.' His Majesty next enquired, How many children her father had left, and if they were lads or lasses? 'Three,' she said, 'and they were all lasses.' 'God be thanked,' cried James, lifting up both his hands; 'for if they had been three lads, I had never bruiked my three kingdoms in peace.' She urged that the king would give her husband his native air. 'Give him his native air!' the King exclaimed; 'give him the devil!' 'Give that to your hungry courtiers!' she indignantly rejoined. The King at last told her that if she would persuade her husband to submit to the bishops, he would grant her request. Lifting up her apron, and holding it towards his Majesty, she heroically said, 'Please your Majesty, I'd rather kep his head there!'" The good name of Knox was safe in the keeping of such a daughter!

The request that Welsh be allowed to return to Scotland was refused, but a subsequent request that permission be granted him to preach in London was grudgingly granted. Once only did the dying man exercise the right so secured. Returning from the place of worship to his lodgings, he rapidly became weaker, and within two hours had passed into an even better country than his longed-for Scotland—a country where "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." "When dying," says Robert Fleming, "he was so filled and overcome with the sensible enjoyment of God, that he was sometimes heard in prayer to utter these words:—'Lord, hold Thy hand, it is enough; thy servant is a clay vessel, and can hold no more.'" With this

final testimony to the fullness that is in Christ Jesus, John Welsh passed into the presence of the King he had

so faithfully served and for whose sake he had been branded as a rebel by the kings of the earth.

The Fulfilling of the Law

By SAMUEL. H. STUART

of Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, Ohio

MY FATHER began his ministry in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S., the Southern Church, but, at the turn of the century, joined the Northern Assembly and accepted a call to a church in Cincinnati. From that time until his retirement at the close of the World War, he ministered to thirteen small churches in seven states of the mid-West. In only one case were two of these congregations served concurrently. The pastorates ranged in length from a few months to a little over five years, and the records of nearly every church served showed numerous instances of similar short incumbency, followed by a long vacancy. One elder explained this phenomenon to Father by saying the people liked to "rest their pocket-books" every so often! The lack of shepherding and fellowship consequent upon such a course seemed not to concern them—much less the inconvenience and disappointment occasioned the ministers.

Entering upon each of these pastorates with the hope of being able to fulfill his early ideal of growing old with the congregation which had called him to serve them, Father finally grew prematurely old from the conflict and disillusionment, retired to a farm in broken health before he was fifty and died some fifteen years later without ever really recovering from the physical and mental shock produced by the ordeals he had endured. His experience was similar to that of many another minister who came to the pulpit about the time the modern declension began to germinate. He saw—and felt—Modernism at the grass roots and the token of its sinister beginning was a lack of the thing which is stressed more than anything else in the New Testament—*love*. The people were completely disunited and lacking in that true charity which is an essential grace of the true church of Jesus Christ. The pastor indeed suffered the first impact, but today the members' children are reaping the full consequences of the "sour grape" feast indulged in by their parents.

What caused the loss of that love which was the abounding characteristic of the early church and again of the churches of the Reformation? Was it not caused by receiving into church membership persons who had not been sufficiently examined as to their conviction and faith? Was this not the result of an emphasis upon bigness, a worldly principle, rather than upon purity, a divine principle? Was not such misplaced emphasis greatly furthered by the unscriptural methods of numerous evangelists, who reduced their requirements for entry into the Kingdom in order to "stimulate" a popular acceptance of the Way of Life?

Whatever was the cause of the eclipse of the love of "the brethren"—the proof of passage "from death unto life"—it was the first manifestation of the growing spirit of apostasy which marks the present generation. And it is today the best avenue by which Satan can slip in and break down any Christian fellowship. It is therefore something doubly to guard against, with the help of God's Holy Spirit.

Divisions in the body of Christ are always the result of sin; separation from the world—whether it is dressed in ecclesiastical habiliments or in any other garb—is always the work of righteousness. We should be certain then before we part our ways that it is truly separation, and not division, which is taking place. True separation was very evidently the motive for the formation of what is now The Orthodox Presbyterian Church; but there have been schismatic divisions in contemporary church history for which no justification can properly be claimed.

I can remember something of those factional divisions in my father's later charges. My mother has added a fuller account, and it is certainly a record unworthy of churches of Jesus Christ. A non-churchgoing business man in one of the towns where my father ministered said to him one day, when he had been invited to the

services, "Brother Stuart, I approve of your work—this town is a better place since you have been here—but I won't have anything to do with that bunch of wildcats over there." And Father, knowing only too well what he meant, felt smitten to the heart by such a hindrance to the church's witness. May God grant that no minister of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church will ever have to feel that way!

The apostle Paul, in Romans 13:10, and James, in James 2:8, both speak of love as the *law's* fulfillment. One spoke to the Gentile church in the

wicked world capital, the other addressed his message to the "twelve tribes which are scattered abroad." Peter, in his epistle to the "scattered strangers" enjoins his groups throughout that territory that they should be "all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing."

If ever Christians should be endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace surely it is today, with so few light-bearers in a dark world of unbelief!

claimed a lost soul.

The God who knows the human heart pictured in fancy the response of penitents to His invitation to backslidden children. Harken! "Shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters." These are words put on the lips of second-generation despisers of God's covenant with Israel. They constitute the confession of men who had themselves experienced the folly and unfruitfulness of apostasy as they had also seen it in the lives of their fathers. Life for them had proven vain and unsatisfying. It had brought only misery and despair.

Backslidden Children

A Meditation on Jeremiah 3:22-25

By the REV. BURTON L. GODDARD

A NOTED preacher has voiced the conviction that once a man believed on Christ and knew the protecting care of the everlasting arms of the Father, he might slide a long way yet he could *never* slide *all* the way out. The relapse of such a person into periods of loose living and indifference may well be termed "backsliding."

God, however, was talking about something else when He spoke through the prophet Jeremiah in pleading voice, saying, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." He was addressing godless children of godly parents, covenant breakers who might have availed themselves of covenant promises but who had not done so. The great mass of those to whom He spoke had never given their hearts to the true and living God nor honored His name. They were backsliders in the sense that they had turned from the worship of their fathers' God and fallen away to the abominations of idolatry.

They would have much company if they were living today. Any minister of the gospel may well testify to that fact, for there are numbers of men and women in his parish who have grown up in Christian homes and yet have never believed on the Son of God. Some of them, out of custom, religiously attend the services of the church, but their hearts are far from God; others have long since ceased to have anything to do with the church. They are backslidden children.

One End

Skies are not always fair for such an one. As a human grasshopper, he may fiddle away the best years of his life, carefree and unconcerned. Men may count him happy. But there is one sure end for a backslidden child—and only one! Sooner or later he must awaken to the realization that he is bankrupt before God. His conscience was once enlightened to know the truth of God; it will not let him go down to the grave in peace.

Like the man who has heard the gospel and professedly believed on Christ, his end is often most miserable. Consider the story of Sabat, the Arabian. Sabat responded to the missionary efforts of the Rev. H. Martyn, then apostatized and took up the pen to defend Mohammedanism. One day the questions of another minister of the cross searched his heart, and he cried out, "I am unhappy. I have a mountain of burning sand on my head. When I go about, I know not what I am doing."

There is no profit in the lives of backslidden children. One of them forsook the covenant and turned his back on the faith of a believing father and a saintly mother. He entered one of the great western universities and sought the association of unregenerate youth in one of the fraternities. A Saturday night dance lasted on into the Lord's Day. Passers-by found his body, with that of a companion, near the wreck of an auto beside the road. Eternity had

One Hope

There is no blacker picture conceivable. They were without God and without hope. Nothing to live for! Nothing of hope in death! Borne in deep upon their conscience was the solemn truth of the everlasting God, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Did I say "without hope"? Yes, but thanks be unto God there *was* yet hope, a sure and steadfast hope. By divine grace they might yet lay hold on this hope. It is a glorious hope. It is good news. It is music in the ear of a despairing backslider. Like a clarion call it rings across field and dale. It penetrates far into mountain recesses. It awakens those that slumber. Hear and rejoice, ye who despair! "Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." So Jeremiah preached, and so some of the backslidden children of Israel laid hold on this hope and were saved.

What was your home like? Did Christian parents lovingly provide that you should have opportunity to know of divine love which prompted Almighty God to send forth His dear Son into a world of shame that He might purchase salvation for wayward children? And have you never taken this Christ to be your Saviour in answer to their prayers?

There is only one hope for the backslider. It is not to be found in Gautama or Mohammed or in the religions they have left behind them. You will seek it in vain in the endeavor to accomplish your own salvation by works of kindness and mercy and discipline of character. That hope is in God's Son, and in Him alone; it is a hope that fadeth not away.

One Way

The nature of hope, however, is strange. Unless it be embraced, it often ceases to be hope and becomes condemnation instead. And unless the backslidden child of God reaches out by faith and lays hold on the hope which the Lord holds before him, he becomes acquainted with the truth of this assertion.

But how shall he make this hope his own? There is one way—and only one! It appears in God's impersonation of the penitents: "We have sinned against the Lord our God." In plain language, the way is none other than *confession*.

In our modern world there are three outstanding kinds of confession. One is a cheap variety. It consists of pouring out the shame of one's life before his fellow men. It is the Buchmanite type. The second kind of con-

fession is a mistaken one. It is the revelation before an earthly priest of one's sinful actions. It ignores the teaching of the Bible that there is only *one* mediator between God and man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Obviously, it must be another kind of confession which constitutes the way whereby backslidden children may become reconciled to the Heavenly Father. We analyze the confession they make. It is humble. It deals with sin. It is addressed to God. It recognizes that sin is an offense against Him. It professes helplessness. It invites grace.

Oh, backslidden children, turn from the end which awaits you! Consider the hope which lies in the gospel of the vicarious sacrifice of God's Son! Open your hearts in repentant confession to the God of grace! He will receive you and make you His own.

An Important Announcement

To Readers of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT recently said that if the world survives the present crisis, he would return in the spring to Warm Springs, Georgia, for his annual visit. In saying this, the president expressed some doubt that the world would survive; and this doubt finds an echo in the minds of many people. We cannot help but feel that the president was jesting somewhat in implying this doubt as to the survival of the world. If he was jesting, we cannot join him in his merriment. But we do agree that the world as never before appears to be on the brink of abysmal chaos. It would be a masterpiece of understatement to say that we are deeply concerned about this, and we have every good reason to believe that our readers share our concern. But there is something that should be of far greater concern to us than the present world crisis. That is the rôle which the Church of Jesus Christ is going to play in this crisis.

In a veritable welter of panaceas for world cure, we say flatly that the only cure for the world's ills is a program of successful evangelism on the part of the church. When we say evangelism, we do not mean the National Preaching Mission, which has been holding the center of the religious stage for some time; in a

word, we do not mean any so-called evangelism not founded on the infallibility of the Scriptures and the principles contained therein. We also flatly say that the program of evangelism of the Christian Church has been eminently unsuccessful in our time.

About two months ago two students at Westminster Theological Seminary—Mr. John C. Hills and Mr. William E. Welmers—who felt keenly the challenge which faces the Christian Church as a result of the present emergency, turned their feelings into action and began to prepare a series of articles for THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, submitting their ideas to the editorial council for approval. We feel that their analysis of the problem and the solution they propose are of such a nature as to warrant the most serious consideration on the part of our readers.

This series, which is to begin in the February 10th issue of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN and which will continue for a number of months, analyzes first of all the precise nature of the emergency and the crisis which the Christian Church faces in its evangelism. Then the authors trace the historical process which has produced and resulted in the present crisis. After showing in some detail

how the Christian Church generally has not been, and is not now, using proper methods of evangelism by which the crisis may be met, the articles close with a presentation of a method of evangelism which is eminently Scriptural and thoroughly Reformed, showing that this method of evangelism, and this method alone, is the one that can bring success in our time to the efforts of the evangelical Church. This method of evangelism is calculated to meet all classes of people—the "up and outer" as well as the "down and outer."

The editors of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN feel that the forthcoming articles are so timely in their appearance and so practical in their treatment of our greatest problem that GUARDIAN readers cannot afford, and will not wish, to miss the series. Surely, the successful evangelization of the world is our greatest concern.

WINTER RALLY AND BANQUET PLANNED BY MACHEN LEAGUE

THE January rally of the Machen League of the Presbytery of Philadelphia will, as in previous years, be in the form of a banquet. It will be held on Saturday, January 25th, at the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Germantown, which meets in the Y.W.C.A. building at 5820 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia. Sessions of the rally will be held on the third floor, and delegates are asked to use the main entrance and the elevator.

At the afternoon meeting at four o'clock the speaker will be the Rev. Clifford S. Smith of Bridgeton, N. J. The banquet will be served at six o'clock, and at 7.30 the Rev. Professor Paul Woolley will be the speaker of the evening. The evening meeting will be held around the banquet table, but those wishing to attend only in the evening are also cordially invited.

Banquet tickets at fifty cents each may be secured from local Machen League officers, but all reservations must be made before January 18th and the number who can be served is limited. Friends outside the Presbytery of Philadelphia are also welcomed, and may secure reservations by writing to Mr. Henry P. Allen, Jr., 513 W. Cheltenham Avenue, Oak Lane, Philadelphia, Pa.

Moses and the Prophets

The Fourth Article in a Series of Studies in Prophecy

By the REV. EDWARD J. YOUNG

Assistant Professor of Old Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary

(Earlier articles in this series appeared in the issues of September 25, October 25, and December 10, 1940.)

HAVE you ever considered how baneful are the consequences of jealousy? A jealous person can cause much harm. Particularly reprehensible is jealousy when it appears among those who are God's appointed servants. It is a tragic and regrettable fact that even the ministry is not immune from this evil. We are to study an instance of jealousy which is recorded in the Old Testament. It is a particularly sad instance because it occurred among the members of one family, all of whom were servants of the Lord.

Apparently Miriam and Aaron were jealous of their brother Moses. They envied the position of preëminence which he occupied. Of the two Miriam was probably the more guilty, for she was punished the more severely. Doubtless Miriam and Aaron watched their younger brother for some time, waiting for an opportunity to offer criticism. Finally the desired opportunity came, and the two spoke. Their words, however, brought upon them severe rebuke.

Moses had married a Cushite woman (Num. 12:1). In all probability this was not Zipporah, but a second wife whom Moses took after Zipporah's death. The marriage to Zipporah had taken place a long time before, and it does not seem likely that Miriam would have made such a marriage the occasion for her complaint. Furthermore, we are distinctly told that Zipporah was a Midianite (Ex. 2:21). Who, then, was this Cushite woman that Moses had married? An old rabbinical interpretation is that the word "Cushite" means beautiful, and that Scripture merely means to inform us that Moses had married a beautiful woman. However, we may dismiss this suggestion as idle fancy. Probably the Cushite woman here referred to was an Ethiopian who had come out of Egypt with Israel. At any rate, because of

his marriage to her, Moses was criticized by his sister and brother.

The instigator of this complaint was probably Miriam, for the feminine form of the verb is used. Also, Miriam's name is placed before that of Aaron (v. 1). Such a criticism, however, proceeded not from right motives but from envy. Furthermore, this was a criticism that was entirely unjustifiable. Both Miriam and Aaron had been greatly exalted by God. Miriam was distinguished from all the women of Israel as a prophetess, and Aaron, as high priest, had been set forth as spiritual head of the nation. That Aaron hearkened unto his sister reveals the fact that he was apparently no more able to withstand her suggestions than he had been to resist the cry for the golden calf (Ex. 32). Hence, the jealous act of Miriam and Aaron manifests a lack of proper appreciation and gratitude to God for what He had done for them. Such is the true nature of envy and jealousy. They blind our eyes to the goodness of God. Instead of being thankful for the blessings which God has given, the jealous person sees merely that which he covets.

A further sin resulted from this jealousy. Miriam and Aaron did not properly appreciate the position of Moses. They dared to speak against him whom God had appointed as servant in His house. Instead, they should have feared thus to criticize God's servant, and they were severely rebuked for their criticism. In not properly respecting the position of Moses, they further became guilty of presumption (cf. Num. 12:8b). What a tragic sin is jealousy, especially in the hearts of God's people! Like a chained beast, it chafes and smarts within the human breast, until finally, bursting forth, it spreads a path of destruction. May God deliver His people from this sin!

Such was the sin of Miriam and Aaron. The occasion for their complaint lay in the fact that Moses had married a Cushite woman, but the real reason for their speaking appears in

the question, "Is it to Moses only that the Lord hath spoken? Has He not also spoken to us?" (v. 2). There is a striking contrast between the words "Moses" and "us." This utterance pierces to the very core of the matter, and reveals the jealous hearts of the speakers. "Why should Moses occupy such a high place?" they said in effect; "God has spoken to us as well as to him." The utterance was perfectly true, but was called forth by wrong motives. In a plain, direct statement, the Bible tells us, "And the Lord heard." Though man may not discover our sin, yet all our ways are open and plain before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

The Meekness of Moses

Doubtless, Moses also had heard the criticism uttered by his brother and sister, but had declined to enter into a defense of himself, for he was the meekest of all men (v. 3). There is nothing incongruous in the fact that Moses wrote such words about himself. They are not an exhibition of vainglory, nor of boasting in one's rank or attainments. Rather, they comprise a statement which is indispensable to a proper understanding of all the facts in the case. Not everyone could speak thus objectively about himself, but, as the devout Bible scholar, C. F. Keil, says, Moses was "a man of God whose character is not to be measured by the standard of ordinary men."

There is a reason why Moses thus speaks about himself. He could call himself the meekest of men, since he had been so greatly exalted by God. Because of his meekness, he abstained from any defense of himself and did not cry out to the Lord for vengeance upon those who had attacked him. It was God who had exalted him, and Moses could afford to leave his defense in God's hands. Calvin well remarks, "It is as if Moses had said that he had swallowed the injury in silence, inasmuch as he had imposed a law of patience upon himself because of his meekness."

The Lord, however, speaks suddenly. Such effrontery as that exhibited by Miriam and Aaron must be immediately and directly met and punished. "Come out ye three," says the Lord, "unto the tabernacle of the congregation." "And they three came out" (v. 4). The Lord then proceeds to deal with His children.

Majestic is the scene which the Bible presents to us. Before the tabernacle stood the three, Moses, Aaron and Miriam. At the door of the tabernacle was the pillar of cloud in which the Lord came down. The words which were then proclaimed set forth once and for all the true position of Moses and the prophets and the true relationship which existed between them.

Moses and the Prophets

In the first place, the Lord pointed out in what manner He would reveal Himself to true prophets. "If your prophet shall be the Lord, in a vision shall I make myself known unto him; in a dream shall I speak unto him" (v. 6). The verse is difficult to translate, but its meaning is clear. We may paraphrase the thought as follows, "Whenever there arises in Israel a true prophet, one who is commissioned by the Lord and not one who merely speaks in his own name, I, the Lord, will grant him revelation by means of visions and dreams." The verse thus teaches that the two principal methods by which true prophets were to receive their revelations were visions and dreams.

However, this was not to be the case with Moses (v. 7). There was a distinction in position between Moses on the one hand and the true prophets on the other. God did not reveal Himself to Moses in dreams and visions, for Moses was not like the prophets. Rather, he was over the prophets and a servant in all the Old Testament dispensation.

It will be well for us now to turn to the New Testament for confirmation of this high position of Moses. The epistle to the Hebrews (3:1-6) contrasts Moses and Jesus. The author of the epistle exhorts his hearers to consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of their confession, as One who was faithful even as was Moses. Moses, we are told, was faithful *in* all God's house as a *servant*, but Christ was faithful *over* God's house as a *Son*. This contrast reveals that Christ was infinitely greater than

Moses, yet at the same time it greatly elevates Moses as founder of the theocracy. In all the Old Testament there is only one who is thus contrasted with Christ, even Moses. The greatest figure of the Old Testament economy, then, was not Abraham, nor David, nor Isaiah, but Moses.

Moses, as a faithful servant in the old dispensation, occupied a position exalted over the prophets. This is what Deuteronomy means when it says, "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (34:10).

Because of the high position which he occupied, there was a plainness and directness in the revelation given to Moses which did not appear in that granted to true prophets. "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold" (Num. 12:8a). The manner of revelation vouchsafed to Moses, therefore, distinguished him from the prophets.

We may summarize: To true prophets, God revealed Himself in visions, dreams and dark speeches. To Moses, He revealed Himself mouth to mouth, even by appearance, and permitted him to behold the similitude of the Lord.

Moses, then, was over the prophetic institution, and the prophets were under him. It therefore follows that the prophets were men of the Old Testament dispensation and used the language and thought forms of that dispensation. The Old Testament economy, in which Moses was faithful as a servant, was a period of preparation. It stood in relation to the New Testament economy as type to antitype, as preparation to accomplishment, as prophecy to fulfillment. This is the clear teaching of the Word of God itself. (Read carefully, for example, Heb. 3:5; 8:7-13; 9).

This fact must be kept in mind when one seeks to interpret the prophecies of the Old Testament. It is a serious mistake to treat prophecy as though it were couched in terms of New Testament revelation. The brief treatment of a specific prophecy will make this clear. In a later article we hope to treat the matter more fully.

Ezekiel, chapters 40-48, presents a detailed description of the temple and its worship. The language does not refer to any then existing temple, but is rather a prophecy of the future.

What is the meaning of the prophecy? Does it teach that after the return of Christ the Jews will erect such a temple in Palestine? Is the language of this prophecy, in other words, to be treated as narrative prose?

The question may easily be answered. Ezekiel was a prophet of the Old Testament dispensation, and therefore was under Moses. Hence, his utterances stand in relationship to the New Testament as preparation to completion and prophecy to fulfillment. Ezekiel is thus to be interpreted by the New Testament and not the New Testament by Ezekiel.

Those who maintain that Ezekiel or any other Old Testament prophet looked beyond the New Testament period to a continuation or revival of the Old Testament temple and sacrifices seem to ignore the clear teaching of the Word of God as to the relationship of the Old Testament period to the New. Such procedure in reality assigns to the prophets a rank which they did not occupy. If, however, we are properly to interpret prophecy, we must recognize the true status of the prophets. True prophets were under Moses.

It is for this reason that God rebukes Miriam and Aaron. Moses occupies a position far higher than that of Miriam or Aaron or any true prophet. His relationship to the Lord is unparalleled, and subsequent prophets merely built upon the foundation which he laid. Hence, the Lord says, "Why did ye not fear to speak against my servant Moses?" (Num. 12:8). The sin of the brother and sister, then, was the sin of presumption arising from jealousy. Such sin must be punished, even among God's own, and the anger of the Lord burned against the offenders. Probably due to the fact that she was the instigator, Miriam was punished with leprosy for seven days.

There remains one more point to be noticed. The sin of Miriam and Aaron, as we have sought to demonstrate, was made the occasion by the Lord for uttering the profound truth concerning the relation between Moses and the prophets. This is not the only instance in the Bible where the sins of pride and presumption are made the occasion for the utterance of truth. When the disciples rebuked James and John for desiring to sit on the right hand and on the left of the Lord in His glory, our Saviour took the occasion to utter the

great declaration concerning the purpose of His mission in the world (Mark 10:45). Likewise, Paul, in exhorting the Philippians to humility, set forth the teaching about our Lord's humiliation.

Doubtless the lesson thus learned by Miriam and Aaron made a profound impression. This younger brother of theirs, who acted as a leader of the people, was one who received direct revelation from the Lord, and stood in unparalleled relationship to Him. In time Moses would pass from the scene and, upon the firm foundation which he laid, the true prophets would build. In the fullness of time there would be born in Bethlehem of Judea, One who was to be like unto Moses, even that great Prophet for whom the nation waited. With His advent the period of type and preparation and prophecy would be done away, and those things which were written of Him would be fulfilled. When the apostle to the Gentiles stood before Agrippa, he declared that he was "saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

News Notes From The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Presbytery of New York and New England

AT 5.30 each Sunday afternoon a group is meeting in West Cumberland, Maine, for worship and study. Under the leadership of the Rev. Dean W. Adair, the members are receiving instruction based upon "A Young People's Study of the Heidelberg Catechism," by Dr. William Goulooze. They have already studied, in order, "Portraits of Christ in the Gospel of John," by Laird; the Epistle to the Hebrews; "Studies in the Shorter Catechism," by Skilton, as published in THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN; "Study Your Bible," by Young; and the second and third "Book in Christian Doctrine," by

Hylkema and Tuuk. "The group has produced one lay preacher and two ministerial students," said Mr. Adair. "Its members enjoy the peace of God and use the means of grace; their new life has its effect on the community."

Second Parish Church, Portland, Maine: On the Sunday before Christmas, a portion of the evening worship was devoted to a Candlelight Service, sponsored by the Young People's Society. The Christmas program of the Sunday school was given on the following day. On New Year's Eve a Watch Night Service was conducted, beginning at nine o'clock. Special music and two brief addresses by the pastor, the Rev. Arthur O. Olson, preceded the time of prayer at the closing minutes of the year.

Presbytery of Ohio

TRINITY CHURCH, *Cincinnati:* After redecorating, the new building recently purchased will be occupied by the Trinity congregation, probably shortly after the new year. . . . Four new communicant members were received into church fellowship on Sunday, December 8th. . . . On January 12th at 8.30 A.M. the pastor, the Rev. Everett C. DeVelde, will speak over Radio Station WLW and the church soloist will sing. The half-hour program over this powerful Crosley station in Cincinnati will be heard by many persons not often reached by the radio ministry of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Trinity Chapel, Newport, Ky.: Mr. DeVelde writes of the Thanksgiving supper given in Trinity Chapel on November 28th for the needy and often destitute members. He says, "The supper surpassed the splendid occasion held last year. The Rev. and Mrs. J. Lyle Shaw had organized their people this year to care for the whole meal, including preparation, cooking and serving. I never tasted a better meal. A hundred and forty plates were served to the congregation, most of whom were present. Others not able to come were served in their homes. They sat by families, and it was quite a sight to see them—especially one family where, between father and mother, were ten children. Once more the orderly conduct of these people stood out, and was in great contrast to the behavior of the chapel people when the work in Newport began.

"The Trinity Church in Cincinnati

had a part in providing the food as its Thanksgiving offering, including half a dozen cases of canned or preserved food, five 15-pound turkeys, and some cash for further necessary expenses. It goes without saying that the Shaws contributed much to the occasion."

During the vacation of Mr. and Mrs. Shaw, services at the chapel are being maintained by members of the Cincinnati congregation.

Presbytery of New Jersey

ON FRIDAY evening, November 29th, one hundred members of the Machen League of presbytery took part in a rally at the Westfield Senior High School. Delegates were present from Orange, Westfield, White Horse and Morristown. "All for the glory of God" was the subject of a chalk-talk by Westminster Seminary student Edmund Clowney. The Rev. George W. Marston of Philadelphia was the speaker of the evening, and chose for his topic "The Sovereignty of God." Special music featured this fifth annual rally sponsored by the Westfield group.

The Rev. Leslie A. Dunn of White Horse, Trenton, has accepted the call of the Calvary Church of Wildwood, and will leave for his new field on January 6th.

Covenant Church, Orange: The two Machen Leagues of this church are assisting in the distribution of portions of Scripture among the students at Upsala College. The pastor, the Rev. Richard W. Gray, is leading this project which is designed to give to each student a portion of the Bible and a letter of personal testimony to the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Presbytery of Philadelphia

CALVARY CHURCH, *Middletown, Pa.:* An impressive service was held on Saturday evening, November 29th, when a delegation from the Covenant Church of Orange, N. J., visited Middletown. Mr. Charles A. Freytag and Mr. Leroy Smith of that congregation brought with them two former convicts who had recently made confession of faith in Christ, following the testimony of Mr. Smith. Mr. Joseph Del Guerrie and Mr. Arthur Scarano had served twelve and twenty years, respectively, in the penitentiary, and their earnest words shamed many in the congregation for lack of zeal in Christian service.

The Presbyterian Guardian

EDITORIAL

The New Year

WE HAVE just entered another year—a year which may produce events that will alter the course of nations, if not of the whole world. This is one of those periods in history when tremendous changes are in the making and when the hearts of men are tried to the utmost. The uncertainties and anxieties which accompany these cataclysmic days are unnerving; tossed about by the storm of chaos, men look for some solid foundation upon which to stand and to base their philosophy of life. Even Christians are perplexed and stunned by the seeming triumph of evil. "What will the new year bring?" is the question on the lips of every thinking person.

There are many unknowns in our untried tomorrows; some will shake our faith, make life seem futile, and others will strengthen our loyalty to God. There is not one of us who will not be tested.

Out there somewhere in this year, defeat will meet many of us. The financial security which we thought was ours may be swept away. The business that we had built up may vanish overnight. As Burns the poet expressed it, "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley." Few foresaw the financial disaster of 1929 and, as a result, many suffered complete disaster.

Friendships, one of the truly great experiences of life, may prove a grand disillusionment. We who have passed through the sad days of the last decade as former members and ministers of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. know what disappointments in men can do to our faith and soul. Those upon whom we had counted the most and in whom we had the greatest confidence fell by the wayside, or deserted to the camp of the enemy. Our awakening was rude and our confidence in men was shaken.

Laboring in the vineyard of the Lord, or leading the flock, we shall see other seeming defeats. Professing Christians listen to the Word of Life

each Sabbath, but they grow so slowly and some appear even to retreat. We seem to have the same sins, to possess such little power to resist temptation and to break sinful habits—and so we too meet defeat. The visible church is largely in control of those who believe not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It seems as though those who stand for the truth of the Bible as the Word of God are defeated on every side.

These are the defeats which may meet us, but listen to the gospel's answer to each one. "My God shall supply all your needs." "Lo, I am with you alway." "My word shall not return unto me void." "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (the church). "He shall keep you from stumbling." "My grace is sufficient for thee."

What is more, we have two great assurances in Christianity and in Christ. The material cannot conquer the spiritual and error cannot conquer the truth. The material forces of evil and destruction may appear to be victorious for a time, but they will be infallibly overcome by the Spirit of the living God. The cheap and tawdry faiths which lead men away from God may seem to draw many converts and to prosper, while the true Church has few additions; but we know that in the end the truth will triumph. "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" is the promise of Christ.

There will be not only defeat in those untried tomorrows, but doubts may also assail us. We may question the absolute standards of morality laid down in the Bible. "After all," we may say to ourselves, "perhaps moral standards are relative. Is it necessary for every individual in different lands to follow the Sermon on the Mount?"

We may even doubt the validity of Christianity itself. Perhaps Chris-

tianity is not the final word on the way of salvation for man. Perhaps it is just one of many ways—even the best—but surely not the only way to God.

Doubts about the historicity and authenticity of the Bible may begin to undermine our faith in the full truthfulness of that book. Are the miracles of the Old Testament to be accepted as true? Was Christ raised from the dead bodily? Is the Bible infallible or is it only the work of men who were inspired as Shakespeare was inspired? These and a thousand other questions may find lodgment in our minds and shatter our faith.

How did our Lord deal with honest doubt, for doubts do come to real Christians? When John the apostle was in prison, he too was perplexed about the claims of Jesus. Was He truly the Messiah? So he sent two messengers to inquire of Jesus. His method of dealing with honest skeptics is enlightening. John was right in going to the source for light on religion, and not to someone who knew nothing about it or who despised God. Jesus was sympathetic. He did not condemn John nor ridicule him. On the contrary, He listened attentively and then told the messengers the facts of the case. Christianity always thrives in the light because it is founded on the truth. Happily, John drew the right conclusions and he was reassured. We would do well to follow John's example when those questions of faith trouble us.

There is an even more grave possibility in the year of uncertainty which lies ahead. Some of us may meet death. But life's greatest reality is Christianity's greatest strength. We are not dependent upon the arguments of philosophers for proof of life after death, for Jesus Christ our Lord broke the jaws of death and was raised again for our justification. Absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. "I am the resurrection and the life," said Jesus; "he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." We can sing the triumphant song of Paul, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Defeat, doubt and even death meet their master in Christ and Christianity. The gospel of Jesus Christ supplies a Christian's every need. The new year has no sorrow that Christ cannot heal.

—E. H. R.

Calvin Institute

THE second semester of the Calvin Institute of the Bible, a Reformed training school for laymen, will begin on January 13th. All sessions will be held on Monday evenings at the Y. M. H. A., Broad and Pine Streets, Philadelphia, and visitors are welcome.

"Whys" of the Christian Life

A Series of Studies for Young People

By the REV. BURTON L. GODDARD

January 19th

Why Be Baptized?

NEAR a little coastal village of Maine there live a man and woman who are regular attendants at the worship services of the community church. They are in their places at the hour of the midweek service of prayer. Few surpass them in faithfulness. Strangely enough, they are not members of the church. Apparently the man is a believer, but he has never been baptized. He does not want to receive Christian baptism.

I should like to sit down with this Christian and suggest to him a few of the many reasons why he should submit to the ordinance of baptism.

It is a *divine ordinance*. God's own Son directed that those who became His disciples should also receive baptism. His parting command was for His followers to *make disciples* and to *baptize them* into the name of the Triune God (Matt. 28:19 R.V.). Think you not that we are under great constraint to obey? Are not His commands binding? May we rebel against His authority? Are we wiser than Christ? Our Confession of Faith says that refusal on the part of a Christian to be baptized is a *sin*. How can we claim to be His disciples if we obey not His commands?

A second reason for baptism lies in the *pictorial witness* of the sacrament. An unbeliever who witnesses a baptism has pictured before him the essential elements of the Christian gospel. He notes the symbol of cleansing, the washing of water, and hears these words: "The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). He becomes acquainted with what God does for sinners who believe on His Son.

For the Christian, the ceremony of baptism is a *reminder of God's covenant*. He thinks of the Scripture, "He saved us, by the washing of regeneration." And just as the baptismal candidate receives the assurance that if faithful and sincere he will receive the benefits promised to those who are Christ's, so the baptized Christian is brought anew to the consciousness

that his sins are forgiven, all washed away, and that he is a member of God's family. Yes, and more. There comes to him the reassurance that God will be faithful, glorifying those whom He has justified (Rom. 8:30).

In baptism, one makes *public declaration of his faith*. Here is a most important reason why the Christian should be baptized. Football enthusiasts carry the banners of their own teams. Backers of candidates for election boldly display appropriate buttons. It is good that a witness go forth to the world as to who is on the Lord's side. Remember this: our Lord declared confession before men on the part of His disciples the *condition* of His confessing them before His Father in heaven (Matt. 10:32, 33). Baptism is the first and most important fulfillment of this condition.

Lastly, baptism is a *channel for the reception of honor and blessing*. If, in the Old Testament times, circumcision (whose symbolism was equivalent to that of baptism) was much to be coveted as a badge of honor and as the mark which entitled men to the privileges of the visible church, how much more should men covet the badge of membership in the New Testament Church, whose glory far outshines that of the old. To this church God has committed His oracles, the great body of truth which is able to make men wise unto salvation. He who belongs to it knows the blessing of the care, the prayers and the fellowship of God's people. It is no mean privilege to belong to the church visible. Baptism is the key to this privilege. Its blessing, however, goes further. It is a means of grace, and just as spiritual life is nourished by prayer and the reading of the Word, so it is fed through the sacrament of baptism.

Why be baptized, oh Christian? You cannot do otherwise!

January 26th

Why Partake of the Lord's Supper?

It was Communion Sunday. Several boys and girls had been received into

church membership during the early part of the service. Now they heard the pastor announce that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper would be observed. They were to partake of it for the first time. They thought back to the time in the pastor's class when he had told them why Christians should accept the invitation to sit at the Lord's Table. This is what he had told them about the invitation:

(1) *It was an invitation to celebrate their Lord's death*. Some persons seem to think that Good Friday is the proper time to do this, and that the rest of the year we should remember His life. The church, however, has always insisted on observing the communion sacrament with frequency and regularity, and Paul says that when we partake of the Lord's Supper we "shew the Lord's death" (II Cor. 11:26).

How necessary it is that we should be continually reminded of our Saviour's death, for it was by death that He became our Saviour! This truth confronts us very plainly at the Lord's Table. We hear the words, "Take, eat: this is my body which is broken for you" (I Cor. 11:24). And again, "This is my blood . . . which is shed for many" (Mark 14:24). Thoughts turn to the cross where nails pierced His blessed hands and feet and a cruel spear lacerated His side, and communicants remember the Lord Jesus as the one who died in their stead, bearing their sins in His own body on the tree (I Pet. 2:24). This is the heart of the Christian gospel.

(2) *It was an invitation to profess publicly faith in Christ*. In baptism one makes profession of his faith, but sometimes one is baptized in infancy only to turn away from Christ when he comes to years of discretion. Baptism is therefore not always a reliable sign of one's Christian faith. But when one comes to the Lord's Table, he invites condemnation to himself if he be not a true believer, because the invitation is for Christians only. Unbelievers and hypocrites are warned to stay away. And since participation in the Supper is an enduring sign of discipleship, one recognized the world over, surely the Christian wants that sign to be his.

(3) *It was an invitation to satisfy spiritual hunger*. Physical life is weakened when food is withheld. Is it strange that spiritual life must like-

wise be nourished if it is to remain normal and healthy? Christ's invitation is: "Take, eat." The Lord's Supper is built about the thought of eating and drinking, a thought interpreted literally by the Roman Catholic Church, but one considered as only symbolic by Protestants. We partake by faith, and just as we pray with faith and apply faith in the reading of the Word, so that which we receive in each case is the spiritual blessing of God's grace. Union with Christ is strengthened. Faith becomes more perfect. Christian hope is heightened. The love of God has greater dominion over the heart. The entire life approaches more unto the image of God's Son.

(4) *It was an invitation to have fellowship with believers.* Only Christ's disciples are invited. It is their Lord whose table it is and who bids them come. Each one sustains a personal relationship to Him, and since that relationship is the same in every case—one of a sinner to his Saviour—it follows that each bears a close relationship to the others who come. He is the Shepherd; they are the sheep. He is the Head; they are all members of the one body. He is the Host; they are all guests by grace. The Scriptures bear witness to this conclusion: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (I Cor. 10: 16, 17).

Yes, all Christians would do well to blend their thoughts with those of the children who were to sit at the Lord's Table for the first time, for in the invitation to the Lord's Supper is found abundant reason for the Christian to partake.

The Bible as the Word of God

(Concluded From Page 2)

those most unfriendly to supernatural Christianity, have agreed that the growth of democratic governments, the free press, free speech and the right of free assembly, were directly traceable to the Protestant Reformation.

The history of the universe, the experience of the race, the joy of every regenerate heart, echoes this declaration of Isaiah, "The word of our God shall stand forever."

Application

Finally, let us note briefly the personal application of the Word. It is quite impossible to believe wholly that the Bible is inspired of the sovereign God, that it stands forever, without joining with the Psalmist in the confession, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet." We cannot believe what the Scriptures teach about themselves without applying those truths to our own lives.

You are not a Protestant in your attitude toward the Bible if you stop when you have confessed that it is God's Word. On the contrary, you must press forward to an understanding of what it teaches about God and become acquainted with the principles enunciated, the commandments given and the duties set forth. To that end you must *read* it "with diligence, preparation and prayer; *receive* it with faith and love, lay it up in your heart; and *practice it in your life.*"

For the Protestant, the Bible is a lamp unto the feet at every step of life's pathway. It affords sufficient light for all his walk. This also applies to the questions which face him as a member of society. As a matter of fact, he will realize that the Bible offers the only ultimate solution for the problems of society. Consider, for example, the matter of war. Says the Word: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Not until the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth will all wars cease. As for industrial conditions, the simple commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," reproves the employer who pays starvation wages and at the same time condemns the employees who stage sit-down strikes. The Word of God and that Word alone is able to light our path in the many complex problems which today face us as individuals and also as members of society.

The Bible is a lamp unto our feet. In it all wisdom is found. It is the best guide concerning all earthly things. But there can be no right understanding of the Bible, no true enjoyment of its blessings, unless it be received as more than a human book,

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unless it be realized as the Word of God and the revelation of the way of eternal life. Its heart, its center, its key, its content, its end is the crucified Christ of Calvary. Unless it points you to Him, you have read it with eyes that are blind and you walk an unlighted path that ends in eternal gloom. On every page it speaks of these three things: man's lost estate by nature; redemption through Christ's blood; and regeneration by

the power of the Holy Spirit. If that message has not yet reached your heart, will you not turn prayerfully

to this blessed book that you may learn these saving truths and by sovereign grace receive them?

Today in the Religious World

By THOMAS R. BIRCH

Modernism's Santa Claus

MOST of us hear, with sickening regularity each Christmas season, of little Virginia O'Hanlon, who in 1897 began to doubt the existence of Santa Claus, and who wrote of her perplexity to the editor of the *New York Sun*. The reply by editor Francis P. Church is a hardy perennial in the Christmas gardens of the fourth estate. "Yes, Virginia," said Mr. Church, "there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist. . . . Not believe in Santa Claus? You might as well not believe in fairies. . . . Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor man can see. . . . Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernatural beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding. No Santa Claus! Thank God he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

Modernists have a great deal in common with Editor Church. And for them the Babe of Bethlehem has essentially the same significance as

Santa Claus for Virginia. The story of the manger is to them only another example of "beauty and glory" to be revealed by "faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance." When they declare that Jesus Christ lives today, they mean what Mr. Church meant when he told Virginia that Santa Claus "lives, and he lives forever."

Compare the editorial to Virginia with the pre-Christmas pulpit declarations of a leading churchman. On the Sunday before Christmas Dr. John Sutherland Bonnell told a congregation of 1,200 persons in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York City, "If we despair, it is because we have forgotten the Babe of Bethlehem. Above the noise of battle and tragedy and heartbreak of our time, those who are attuned to the Infinite can hear the angels sing. And in the blackest night that ever fell upon the earth, they can see a star."

How similar to those words of Dr. Bonnell are these from the pen of the arch-atheist, Bob Ingersoll: "In the night of death, hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing." Is man's faith in a risen Christ to be founded upon the gossamer mysticism of Virginia's Santa Claus? Is the music of the Christmas story just a fitting setting for a romantic legend?

Once a year Modernists like to talk about the birth of Jesus Christ. Since they do not accept the Virgin Birth, they ignore that most essential part of the story. Since they do not believe in a vicarious atonement, they say little about the death of Christ until Good Friday. Easter is plenty of time to speak of a risen Lord—risen, that is, in the hearts of those who "try to live the Christ life." And what is left? If only they would look more closely at the manger they have created, they would be amazed to discover that it holds, not the Saviour which is Christ the Lord, but just Virginia's Santa Claus—the spirit of gentle, golden, childish dreams, the

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The Bible in Journalese

When the Bible is no longer regarded as the Word of God, we may expect almost anything to happen to it. The latest proposal, however, that it be "translated" into modern American newspaper English, is about as shocking as anything yet offered. William L. Bailey, writing in *Books Abroad*, a quarterly published by the University of Oklahoma Press, believes that the Bible would be of greater value to the common man if it were thus modernized. Under the proposal, "publicans" would become "tax officials"; "multitudes" would be "the masses"; and "foolish virgins" would be "flaming youth." We trust that no one will take Mr. Bailey seriously.

Butler and Minority Rights

In his Report for 1940, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University, joins the ranks of those who feel that the rights of minority groups are no longer to be respected. This growing tendency in America has alarmed us frequently during recent months, and it is our opinion that, unless the tide is turned, we shall sooner or later be engulfed in a sea of totalitarianism. When that day comes, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church will be among the first minority groups to be swept away. A portion of Dr. Butler's report follows:

There are in all forms of social, economic or political organization individuals or small minority groups bent upon making trouble. These individuals or small minority groups are stirred by an insistent desire for controversy which leads quickly to that publicity which is their dominating ambition. If the activities and outgivings of these individuals or groups can be directed against a well-known personality, whether in public or in private life, or against an institution of high repute, whether academic, religious, industrial or financial, they are made happy in highest degree by the publicity which so usually attends their performances. These facts are coming to be pretty well recognized by the American people, and sooner or later the press

will grow tired of giving to these individuals and groups that publicity which means so much to them.

Those of our readers who withdrew from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in 1936, or who followed the details of the struggle in that denomination, will find a strangely familiar ring to these words of Dr. Butler's. We heard this same perverted philosophy from the platforms of assemblies and synods and presbyteries; we felt it in our churches; we heard it expounded in the courtroom by the custodians of the property of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Many of us suffered because of it. And the trend toward this totalitarian concept is growing. In recent months, a majority opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States completely ignored the rights of minorities. And now the president of a great American university has favored a denial of those rights by the press. We are gratified to be able to report that the *New*

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York Times, commenting editorially on this portion of the report, took vigorous issue with Dr. Butler:

Small minorities, as Dr. Butler seems to forget for a moment, have their rights. Sometimes they turn out to be right in the end. If they make trouble, that is sometimes part of their business and duty. In a political, educational or any other kind of association the majority vote isn't necessarily sacred or final. A minority has its role.

The press is no mind-reader or heart-reader. It cannot impute motives nor suppose that a member of the minority is more eager for notoriety than a member of the majority. It cannot report or omit opinions merely because it agrees or disagrees with them, or thinks them sensible or foolish. As long as people say such things and do such things as have to be reported for instruction or amusement, the press will keep on reporting them. It will play no favorites. The responsible press will put nobody in or leave him out by request.

Similarly, we are both surprised and gratified to read of another defense of minority rights; frankly, we would not expect support from such a source. Dr. Everett R. Clinchy, President of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, an openly modernist-union organization, in a report submitted to the semi-annual meeting of the Board of Trustees warned Americans against the dangers of a national unity "achieved in hysteria" which, he said, can "easily become a uniformity that penalizes the holding of an opinion at variance with popular opinion."

Dr. Clinchy endorsed a "deep and lasting national unity which is reached in common understanding," as contrasted with a "patched-up uniformity which merely mends the cracks." He declared that the emphasis upon unity has "in some instances been characterized by all the dangers of a stampede."

"Fanatical insistence on conformity," he said, "may carelessly distort national unity into precisely the kind of totalitarian tyranny we wish to avoid. There is hope for a democratic community and a peaceful world only if those who hold conscientiously to convictions which are different from those of their fellows recognize cordially the right of their fellows conscientiously to differ from themselves. This is essential. As Chief Justice Hughes has said, 'When we lose the right to be different, we lose the right to be free,' and the right to be different belongs to all and must be recognized by all."

Federal Council President

Our prediction last month that a layman would be the next president of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has proven false. Dr. Luther A. Weigle, Dean of Yale Divinity School and a prominent Modernist, has been elected. Dr. Weigle succeeds Auburn Affirmationist George A. Buttrick of New York City.

Dr. Weigle is expected to continue the liberal policies of his predecessor with the same anti-evangelical zeal and vigor.

Japanese Resolution

The full text of the resolution recently adopted unanimously by the All-Japan Christian Conference is now available. The adoption of this resolution is credited with hastening the evacuation of many missionaries from Japan and Japanese-controlled territory. The resolution said, in part:

From the time that H. I. M. Emperor Jimmu founded the Empire 2600 years ago the Imperial reign, in an unbroken line, has radiated its glory around the world. When we contemplate this glorious history we are deeply moved. On this occasion the Christians of all Japan unite in reverently acclaiming "His Majesty the Emperor, Banzai!"

In the present greatly disturbed condition of the world no nation can be at ease, not even for a moment. In the West a calamitous war is being waged. In the East the China Incident has as yet reached no conclusion.

In the midst of these calamities our nation, steering its course unerringly, is developing its resources and power. This we firmly believe to be due to the help of Heaven and the august and unique national constitution based on one Sovereign and all the people.

Faced with a changing world our nation has established a new structure and is pushing forward in building a new order in Greater Eastern Asia. We Christians in instant response, casting aside Church and denominational differences and through Church union and united effort, join in the great task of giving spiritual leadership to the people, in respectfully and loyally assisting the Throne in government and in rendering service to the Nation.

Fifty-one Methodist missionaries are preparing to leave Japan-dominated Korea. Reasons for their action, according to the secretary of the church's Board of Foreign Missions, were State Department pressure, the political situation in Eastern Asia, and the recent enforced reorganization of the Christian churches in Korea and Japan into one "All-Japan Church of Christ."