

The Bible's View of the Atonement

SERMON

By the REV. J. GRESHAM MACHEN, D.D., Litt.D.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the twelfth and last sermon in the series of radio addresses broadcast on the Westminster Seminary Hour during the fall of 1936. It was delivered by Dr. Machen on December 27, 1936, just five days before his death. The manuscript of this sermon was not found with the others of that series, and hence could not be included in the sermons published by THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN during 1940. It was discovered only a few weeks ago, and is here presented, with real thanksgiving and joy, to our readers on this the eighth anniversary of Dr. Machen's death.)

HAVING observed last week what are the leading views that have been held regarding the Cross of Christ, we turn now to the Bible in order to discover which of these views is right.

Did Jesus on the Cross really take our place, paying the penalty of God's law which justly rested upon us? That is the orthodox or substitutionary view of the atonement.

Or did He merely exert a good moral influence upon us by His death, either by giving us an exhibition of the love of God or by inspiring us to sacrifice our lives for the welfare of others as He sacrificed Himself? That is the so-called moral influence theory of the atonement.

Or did He by His death merely conserve the good discipline of the world by showing that, in the interests of the welfare of the greatest number, God cannot simply allow His law to be transgressed with complete impunity? That is the so-called governmental theory of the atonement.

We shall try to test these three views of the Cross of Christ by comparing them with what the Bible actually says. But before we do so, there are two preliminary remarks that we ought to make.

Our first remark is that the three views of the atonement really reduce themselves to two. Both the moral influence and the governmental view of the atonement really make the work of Christ terminate upon man, rather than upon God. They both proceed

on the assumption that, in order that man shall be forgiven, nothing but man's repentance is required. They both of them deny, at least by implication, that there is such a thing as an eternal principle of justice, not based merely upon the interests of the creature but rooted in the nature of God—an eternal principle of justice demanding that sin shall be punished. They both of them favor the notion that the ethical attributes of God may be summed up in the one attribute—benevolence. They both of them tend to distort the great Scriptural assertion that "God is love" into the very different assertion that God is *nothing but love*. They both of them tend to find the supreme end of the creation in the happiness or well-being of the creature. They both of them fail utterly to attain to any high notion of the awful holiness of God.

No doubt the governmental theory disguises these tendencies more than the moral influence theory does. It does show some recognition of the moral chaos which would result if men got the notion that the law of God could be transgressed with complete impunity.

But, after all, even the governmental theory denies that there is any real underlying necessity for the punishment of sin. Punishment, it holds, is merely remedial and deterrent. It is intended merely to prevent future sin, not to expiate past sin. So the tragedy on Calvary, according to the advocates of the governmental view, was intended by God merely to shock sinners out of their complacency; it was intended merely to show what terrible effects sin has, so that sinners by observing those terrible effects might be led to stop sinning. The governmental view, therefore, like the moral influence view, has at its centre the notion that a moral effect exerted upon man was the sole purpose of the Cross of Christ.

Very different is the substitutionary view. According to that view, not a mere moral effect upon man but the satisfaction of the eternal justice of God was the primary end for which Christ died. Hence the substitutionary

view of the atonement stands sharply over against the other two. The other two belong in one category; the substitutionary view belongs in an entirely different category. That is the first remark that we desire to make before we begin to consider the Biblical teaching in detail.

That remark, however, would be decidedly misleading unless we went on to make a second remark. Our second remark is that the substitutionary view of the atonement, though it makes the work of Christ in dying upon the Cross terminate primarily upon God, yet does at the same time most emphatically make it terminate also upon man. What a distortion of the substitutionary view it would be to say that Christ, when He died, did not die to produce a moral effect upon man!

Of course He died to produce a moral effect upon man. If He had not died, man would have continued to lead a life of sin; but as it is, those for whom He died cease to lead a life of sin and begin to lead a life of holiness. They do not lead that life of holiness perfectly in this world, but they will most certainly lead it in the world to come, and it was in order that they might lead that life of holiness that Christ died for them. No man for whom Christ died continues to live in sin as he lived before. All who receive the benefits of the Cross of Christ turn from sin unto righteousness. In holding that that is the case, the substitutionary view of the atonement is quite in accord with the moral influence theory and with the governmental theory.

Well, then, is it correct to say that the moral influence theory and the governmental theory are correct as far as they go and merely differ from the substitutionary view in being inadequate or incomplete?

No, I do not think that that is correct at all. You see, the heart and core of the moral influence theory and the governmental theory is found in the denial that Christ on the Cross took our place and paid the just penalty of our sins that we might be right with God. Denying that, the

moral influence theory and the governmental theory are, if the substitutionary view is right, not merely inadequate but also false.

Moreover, the moral influence theory and the governmental theory are not even right in what they affirm, to say nothing of their being right in what they deny. They are indeed right in holding that Christ died to bring about a moral change in men, but they are wrong in thinking that that moral change can be brought about if the moral influence theory or the governmental theory is true. They are wrong in not observing clearly that fallen man, dead in trespasses and sins, can never be made to live a holy life merely by the introduction of new motives or new incentives to goodness, but only by the new birth which is the work of the Spirit of God. They are wrong in not observing that that new birth, which is the necessary prerequisite for any living of a holy life by fallen man, is part of the benefit purchased by Christ when He died on the Cross to make sinners right with God by His payment, for them, of the penalty of sin.

I do not mean that all of the advocates of the moral influence theory or the governmental theory of the atonement deny the necessity of the new birth, but I do mean that the denial of it is part of the logical implications of their views. If Christ died on the Cross merely to bring to bear a good moral influence upon men, then it does look as though a good moral influence is all that men really need; and if a good moral influence is all that they need, then it does look as though Jesus was wrong when He said, "Ye must be born again."

Moreover, how feeble is the moral influence exerted by the Cross if the Cross of Christ is only what the advocates of the moral influence theory suppose it to be! If Jesus' death on Calvary was merely a sort of exhibition of the love of God, not necessary in itself but merely necessary in order that our hearts may be touched and we may be moved to salutary tears, then, the moment we find out that that was all it was, it seems to me our tears of repentance are apt to be dried up. It is as though we had sat in some playhouse witnessing some heart-moving tragedy, entering into the struggles of the characters on the stage, imagining that it was all real. But then the curtain has fallen, and out we go into

the work-a-day real world again, half ashamed of the tears that we have shed over what was after all a play. The Cross of Christ might exert some moral influence upon us when we thought that it was intended for something far profounder than the exertion of a moral influence upon us. But the moment we discover that after all it was but an exhibition and that Christ after all did not really do anything upon the Cross that was absolutely necessary for our soul's salvation, then even that moral influence tends to disappear.

The true moral influence of the Cross of Christ really comes, in other words, only when we see that the moral influence theory regarding it is false; it comes only when we see that on the Cross Christ truly bore the penalty of our sins and buried it forever in the depths of the sea. He loves little to whom little is forgiven. If the sin for which we are forgiven is merely the light, easily forgiven thing that the advocates of the moral influence theory of the atonement think it is, then no great spring of gratitude will well up in our souls toward Him who has caused us to be forgiven; but if it is the profound and deadly thing that the advocates of the substitutionary view of the atonement think it is, then all our lives will be one song of gratitude to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us upon the accursed tree.

From every point of view, therefore, the question with which we are now dealing is the most momentous question that could possibly be conceived. Did Christ die on the Cross merely to influence us to holy and sacrificial living? Did He die on the Cross merely to exhibit the necessity of some deterrent against sin in the interests of an orderly world, or did He die on the Cross in order to pay the penalty of our sin and make us right with the holy God?

Which of these three views is right? That is the question which we shall seek to answer by an examination of the Word of God.

At the beginning of the examination there is one fact which stares us in the face. It has sometimes been strangely neglected. It is the fact of the enormous emphasis which the Bible lays upon the death of Christ.

Have you ever stopped to consider how strange that emphasis is? In the case of other great men, it is the birth that is celebrated and not the death.

Washington's birthday is celebrated by a grateful American people on the twenty-second day of February, but who remembers on what day of the year it was that Washington died? Who ever thought of making the day of his death into a national holiday?

Well, there are some men whose death might indeed be celebrated by a national holiday, but they are not good men like George Washington; they are, on the contrary, men whose taking off was a blessing to their people. It would be a small compliment to the father of his country if we celebrated with national rejoicing the day when he was taken from us. Instead of that, we celebrate his birth. Yet in the case of Jesus it is the death and not the birth that we chiefly commemorate in the Christian church.

I do not mean that it is wrong for us to commemorate the birth of Jesus. We have just celebrated Christmas, and it is right for us so to do. Happy at this Christmas season through which we have just passed have been those to whom it has not been just a time of worldly festivity but a time of commemoration of the coming of our blessed Saviour into this world. Happy have been those men and women and little children who have heard, underlying all their Christmas joys, and have heard in simple and childlike faith, the sweet story that is told us in Matthew and Luke. Happy have been those celebrants of Christmas to whom the angels have brought again, in the reading of the Word of God, their good tidings of great joy.

Yes, I say, thank God for the Christmas season; thank God for the softening that it brings to stony hearts; thank God for the recognition that it brings for the little children whom Jesus took into His arms; thank God even for the strange, sweet sadness that it brings to us together with its joys, as we think of the loved ones who are gone. Yes, it is well that we should celebrate the Christmas season; and may God ever give us a childlike heart that we may celebrate it aright.

But after all, my friends, it is not Christmas that is the greatest anniversary in the Christian church. It is not the birth of Jesus that the church chiefly celebrates, but the death.

Did you know that long centuries went by in the history of the church before there is any record of the celebration of Christmas? Jesus was born

in the days of Herod the King—that is, at some time before 4 B.C., when Herod died. Not till centuries later do we find evidence that the church celebrated any anniversary regarded as the anniversary of His birth.

Well, then, if that is so with regard to the commemoration of Jesus' birth, how is it with regard to the commemoration of His death? Was the commemoration of that also so long postponed? Well, listen to what is said on that subject by the Apostle Paul. "For as often as ye eat this bread," he says, "and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." That was written only about twenty-five years after the death of Christ and after the founding of the church in Jerusalem. Even in those early days the death of Christ was commemorated by the church in the most solemn service in which it engaged—namely, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Indeed that commemoration of the death of Christ was definitely provided for by Jesus Himself. "This cup is the New Testament in my blood," said Jesus: "this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." In those words of institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus carefully provided that His church should commemorate His death.

Thus the Bible makes no definite provision for the commemoration of the birth of Jesus, but provides in the most definite and solemn way for the commemoration of His death.

What is the reason for that contrast, which at first sight might seem to be very strange? I think the answer is fairly clear. The birth of Jesus was important not in itself but because it made possible His death. Jesus came into this world to die, and it is to His death that the sinner turns when He seeks salvation for his soul. Truly the familiar hymn is right when it says about the Cross of Christ:

"All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

The whole Bible centres in the story of the death of Christ. The Old Testament looks forward to it; the New

Testament looks back upon it; and the truly Biblical preacher of the gospel says always with Paul: "I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

I ask you, then, which of the theories of the atonement suits this supreme emphasis which the Bible puts upon the Cross.

Does the moral influence theory suit it? I think not, my friends. If Jesus died on the Cross merely to give us a good example of self-sacrifice or merely to exhibit, without underlying necessity, the love of God, then the Bible does seem strangely overwrought in the way in which it speaks of the death of Christ. Then indeed all the talk in the Bible about the blood of Christ and the blood of the sacrificial victims that were prophecies of Him becomes just about as distasteful as so many modern men hold it to be. Some very much greater significance must be attributed to the death of Christ than a mere hallowing of some universal law of self-sacrifice or a mere pedagogic exhibition of God's love, if we are to explain the way in which the Bible makes everything to center in the event that took place on Calvary.

The case is not essentially different when we consider the governmental theory. It is true, the governmental theory does seek, as over against the moral influence theory, to do justice to the emphasis which the Bible places just on the death of Christ. It regards the tragic horror of the Cross not as merely incidental to the meaning of what Christ did but as essential to it. It regards that tragic horror as being the thing that shocks sinners out of their complacency and makes them recognize the seriousness of sin. Hence it seeks to show why just the death of Christ and not some other exhibition of self-sacrificing love was necessary.

But, after all, what a short way such considerations go toward explaining the Biblical emphasis on the Cross of Christ! The truth is that there is just one real explanation of such emphasis. It is found in the fact that Christ on the Cross did something absolutely

necessary if we sinners are to be forgiven by a righteous God. Once recognize the enormous barrier which sin sets up between the offender and His God, once recognize the fact that that barrier is rooted not merely in the sinner's mind but in the eternal justice of God, and then once recognize that the Cross, as the full payment of the penalty of sin, has broken down the barrier and made the sinner right with God—once recognize these things and then only will you understand the strange preëminence which the Bible attributes to the Cross of Christ.

Thus even the mere prominence of the death of Christ in the Bible, to say nothing of what the Bible says about the death of Christ in detail, is a mighty argument against all minimizing theories of the significance of the death of Christ and a mighty argument in favor of the view that Christ on the Cross really died in our stead, paying the dread penalty of our sin that He might present us, saved by grace, before the throne.

In presenting what the Bible says in detail about the death of Christ, I want to speak first of all of those passages where Christ's death upon the Cross is represented as a ransom, then about those passages where it is spoken of as a sacrifice, then about those passages where, without the use of either of these representations, its substitutionary or representative character is plainly brought out.

The first passage that we shall speak of, next Sunday afternoon, is that great passage in the tenth chapter of the Gospel according to Mark where our Lord says that the Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many.

On this last Sunday of the old year, I just want to say to you who have been listening in on these Sunday afternoons how much encouraged I have been by your interest and by your Christian fellowship. I trust that you have had a very joyous Christmas and I trust that the new year which is so soon to begin may be to you a very blessed year under the mercy of God.



"In the modern world, it may turn out that the most intolerable thing for Christians is to be tolerated."

—T. S. ELIOT

Bethlehem At Christmas

TRAVELOGUE

By the REV. EDWARD J. YOUNG, Ph.D.

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"Walks In and About Jerusalem"—PART 2

IT IS morning—morning in Jerusalem. Bright sunlight is streaming in the window, and from the street come the raucous cries of vendors. "Aina-a-ab, aina-a-ab," calls out one seller of grapes, in a loud voice, giving the gutturals of Arabic their full recognition. "Ha-lee-e-b," cries another, who is selling milk. The bells of camels may be heard, the honking of automobile horns, the rattling of carts. Jerusalem has come to life, and we want to mingle with the life of the city.

Sunlight streams in the windows and it is time to rise. To get out of bed in Jerusalem one must first push back the *namousiyah* or mosquito-netting which hangs over the entire bed. This is a very useful and necessary article, for in Jerusalem the mosquitoes are not content with halfway measures. They know how to sting, and they employ their knowledge to the best of their ability. The mosquito-netting is a real disappointment to them, for during the night they approach in flight formation and dive-bomb at the sleeper. Then, when frustrated by the netting, they race their motors in exasperation. The *namousiyah* is a true friend of man in Palestine.

In Jerusalem I lived for several months at the Majestic Hotel, a small Arab hotel near the Jaffa Gate. In such an atmosphere one could learn much about the language and people of present-day Palestine. The kindly manager, Mr. Haddad (Remember the Biblical name Ben-Haddad?) did all in his power to make me at home.

During my stay in Palestine I taught algebra and geometry at a mission school in Beit-Jala, a village near Bethlehem. For commuting between Jerusalem and Beit-Jala, a bicycle proved to be most effective, and three times a week it was necessary to be present in Beit-Jala for an eight o'clock class.

The Road to Bethlehem

After a breakfast of milk, fried eggs, bread, butter and jam, I set out for Bethlehem. The road between Jeru-

salem and Bethlehem is paved, and the distance is five and a half miles, about half of which (the longer half) is decidedly uphill. There is a little Ford bus which will carry you to Bethlehem for fifteen cents and you may also hire a private car or join a tour, if you enjoy spending money. However, the best manner of reaching Bethlehem is either by foot or by bicycle. By these means you may really see the country.

If you would travel by bicycle in the Holy Land, you must reconcile yourself to steep hills. From Jerusalem the road climbs fairly steadily. On either side are stone walls, and the way traverses large olive orchards and vineyards. Now and then Arabs pass by, sometimes walking, sometimes riding a donkey and carrying an umbrella, and sometimes astride the first camel of a caravan of six or seven.

Invariably the greeting will be "Enharak sah-ced" (Thy day be happy) to which the reply is "Enharak sah-ced umbahrak" (Thy day be happy and blessed). Sometimes, after this greeting, which is generally used by Moslems in speaking to Christians, there will follow the question, "Keef hahlak?" (How is your health?) to which the reply is, "Mahbsoot, Al Hamdu li lah" (Content, thanks be to God).

About two and a half miles from Jerusalem the traveler passes a cistern on the left-hand side of the road which is pointed out as the traditional Well of the Magi, from which point they are supposed again to have seen the star (Matt. 2:9). The road continues ascending the rock hillside until at the summit (three miles from Jerusalem) it passes the monastery of Mar Elyas, an extremely ancient edifice, the origin of which is not fully known.

The First Glimpse of Bethlehem

Before our eyes breaks forth a remarkable view as we reach the summit. Directly ahead are sloping hillsides, covered with vineyards. To the left, the wilderness of Judea sinks into that abyss known as the Jordan Valley.

Beyond stand the hills of Moab. Ahead, and slightly to the left, situated upon a promontory, is the little gray, haze-covered village of Bethlehem. "Little among the thousands of Judah," she stands off the main highway to the south. The traveler who knew nothing of Biblical history might conclude, as he first beheld Bethlehem, that here was merely another Palestinian village of no particular importance. But when one who knows the record of the Bible first beholds Bethlehem from this height, strange feelings arise in his breast. Is this the city of David? this little out-of-the-way village, so small that it hardly deserves a place on the map? And tears come to his eyes as he realizes that in this strange place a Child was once born unto us, a Son was given unto us, whose Name is Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The first view of Bethlehem recalls the mind from previous thought and focuses its attention upon a consideration of the remarkable events of Biblical history which there transpired. A desire to reach the village takes possession of us.

At a distance of four and a half miles from Jerusalem, we pass a small building on the right of the road, which is traditionally known as Rachel's Tomb. Beyond this point the road divides and, taking the left fork, we soon find ourselves in the city of Bethlehem.

In the Old Testament the word Bethlehem means "house of bread." The modern Arabs, however, call the place Beit Lahm, "house of meat." This name, Beth-lehem, has been applied to the city for thousands of years, its first Biblical mention being in Genesis 35:19. Here occurred the principal events of the book of Ruth, and here was the home of David's family. But, of course, the town is principally known as the birthplace of our Saviour.

The present city has about sixty-five hundred inhabitants and is some
(See "Young," page 15)

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EDITORIAL

Have We Changed?

IN THIS issue of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN there appears an article by Dr. Gordon H. Clark entitled "Blest River of Salvation," in which he charges that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has changed. He says, "The corporate emphasis of the church as a whole has changed." He states that we have been turned away from our original course and begs us to return to the ideals and emphasis that characterized our church when it was formed in 1936.

Dr. Clark contends that before 1936 in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. our main emphasis was against Modernism, against the theology summarized in the Auburn Affirmation. We were conscious Presbyterians "but our chief emphasis was on the Scriptures, the Atonement, and the Resurrection; and our chief activity was our opposition to soul-destroying Modernism." Now, he complains, we have largely forgotten our controversy with Modernism and, withdrawing from the "blest river of salvation" into a little eddy all of our own, are engrossed in developing minor refinements of the Reformed theology. He implies, if he does not charge, that in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church we are debating questions of some, but of relatively little, value; that we are pushing principles beyond the limits of sound judgment; that we are raising a testimony to some infinitesimal sectarian oddity, although he does not state what that oddity may be; and that even the customs, procedures and temperament of American Presbyterianism are in certain quarters matters of disparagement. So, he says, the church has gone off on a tangent and

he appeals to it to return to its original course.

THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN was not eager, at this particular juncture in the history of a controversy involving Dr. Clark, to print his article on a totally different matter, since it seemed likely that the result of any opposing editorial would be to place the GUARDIAN in an unfortunate light. The editorial council, however, did not have an entirely free choice in the matter. Dr. Clark's article was submitted to it through a third party who vigorously champions the position Dr. Clark outlines and who indicated to the editorial council that, unless the article were published with reasonable promptness, he would consider that he and those who agree with him were being "given the brush-off." The council therefore felt that it was under some compulsion to print Dr. Clark's article without delay.

Apart from these considerations, however, we agree that the issues raised should be discussed openly and frankly in the church, that we may see more clearly just what we are doing and where we are going. It is our conviction that the church has not changed since 1936 in the way alleged by Dr. Clark. Let us examine the negative emphasis of our church against Modernism and its positive emphasis upon Presbyterian doctrine.

The Fight Against Modernism

Dr. Clark says we fought Modernism in 1936 but that we are not fighting it, at least in any whole-hearted fashion, in 1945. In defense, we appeal first of all to the character of the preaching in Orthodox Presbyterian pulpits. We are convinced that there is a decided anti-Modernist note in the preaching in our church and that both pastors and people are quite conscious of our quarrel with modern unbelief. Probably Dr. Clark agrees with this judgment, since he seems to exempt pastors from his criticism and to blame the defection of the church upon certain unnamed subversive forces.

Let us go on to examine the witness of the committees of the church. We appeal to the literature published by the Committee on Christian Education. Will anyone deny that the great thrust of the Committee's tracts and pamphlets has been a presentation of evangelical Christianity as over against Modernism and Romanism? In

addition to the large number of short tracts that simply present Christ to the reader, we mention the widely distributed "God and the War" by Professor John Murray, "The Auburn Heresy" by Dr. Clark himself, "Why The Orthodox Presbyterian Church" by the Rev. John Patton Galbraith, "What About the Bible?" by the Rev. Robert L. Atwell, and reprints of articles by Dr. J. Gresham Machen. Is the Christian Education Committee campaigning for some sectarian oddity? We think not.

The Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension is one of the most important agencies of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. It was only a little over a year ago that this Committee sent a letter to twenty-five thousand elders of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. urging them to leave that church on account of its Modernism. It would not appear that the Committee on Home Missions has forgotten our church's controversy with Modernism.

While THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN is not an official organ of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, it has been so closely associated with the church since its inception that the type of articles appearing on its pages is a primary indication of the witness and interest of the church. The GUARDIAN has never ceased to raise its voice against Modernism. It has recently been publishing a series attacking the Federal Council of Churches on the ground primarily of its Modernism. The recent articles by Mark Fakkema against progressive education are an attack upon unbelief in the public schools. The GUARDIAN has even criticized the National Association of Evangelicals for not taking a sufficiently strong stand against Modernism. We challenge anyone to review the issues of the GUARDIAN throughout the year 1944 and to say that the unofficial organ of the church is no longer opposed to soul-destroying Modernism.

Finally we appeal to the teaching and testimony of Westminster Theological Seminary. Over ninety per cent. of the ministers of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church are graduates of Westminster. The members of the faculty are prominent ministers in the church and, in the public mind, church and seminary have always been closely associated. The writer recalls how in his student days at Westmin-

ster he was taught to defend the truthfulness of the Bible against all the attacks of unbelief. This was and is the distinctive stamp of Westminster classroom instruction. Westminster students are shown the fallacies of the old "liberalism", the newer and more subtle errors of Form Criticism and Barthianism. As confirmation of our contention we point to the articles and book reviews of *The Westminster Theological Journal*. Above all else, the *Journal* is a scholarly witness against the Modernism that has captured the modern church. Also we refer you to the recent book, *The Witness of Matthew and Mark to Christ*, by Dr. Ned B. Stonehouse, Professor of New Testament in Westminster Seminary. The whole thrust of this book is against the rationalistic interpretations of Matthew and Mark. It is a detailed and scholarly defense of the faith in the best tradition of Hodge, Warfield and Machen.

We hope we have proven that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has not ceased to fight Modernism.

Zeal for the Reformed Faith

Dr. Clark says that the church has changed its emphasis as regards its positive witness. While we were always conscious American Presbyterians, we are now said to be putting all our stress on the Reformed Faith and that not of the historic American Presbyterian variety but on some new and strange variation thereof. As we consider the remarks and statements of some in our church on our relationship with other evangelical churches and our attitude toward Arminianism, it would appear that there is a feeling abroad that while in the old days we were primarily evangelicals we are now primarily Calvinists.

We hold that we did not just begin to talk about Calvinism sometime after 1936 but have been doing it from the beginning of the controversy that led to the formation of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. On September 25, 1929, Dr. Machen addressed an audience that packed Witherspoon Hall upon the occasion of the opening of Westminster Seminary. It was a stirring moment in the great fight for orthodoxy in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Westminster had a great appeal to all Bible-believers in the country. It was a moment when there was every reason to emphasize the common struggle against Modern-

ism and be silent on the peculiar tenets of the Reformed Faith. Yet listen to Dr. Machen on that day:

That system of theology, that body of truth, which we find in the Bible, is the Reformed Faith, the Faith commonly called Calvinistic, which is set forth so gloriously in the Confessions and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church. It is sometimes referred to as a "man-made creed." But we do not regard it as such. We regard it, in accordance with our ordination pledge as ministers in the Presbyterian Church, as the creed which God has taught us in His Word. If it is contrary to the Bible, it is false. But we hold that it is not contrary to the Bible, but in accordance with the Bible, and true. We rejoice in the approximations to that body of truth which other systems of theology contain; we rejoice in our Christian fellowship with other evangelical churches; we hope that members of other churches, despite our Calvinism, may be willing to enter into Westminster Seminary as students and to listen to what we may have to say. But we cannot consent to impoverish our message by setting forth less than what we find the Scriptures to contain; and we believe that we shall best serve our fellow-Christians, from whatever church they may come, if we set forth not some vague greatest common measure among various creeds, but that great historic Faith that has come through Augustine and Calvin to our own Presbyterian Church. Glorious is the heritage of the Reformed Faith. God grant that it may go forth to new triumphs even in the present time of unbelief.

By the end of 1935 the great struggle in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. was reaching its climax. Within six months the Modernists would win completely in the General Assembly and the battle would be over. At this crucial time when we were all preoccupied with the struggle against Modernism, THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN began a series of articles by the Rev. Professor John Murray entitled "The Reformed Faith and Modern Substitutes." In succeeding articles, Professor Murray attacked both Arminianism and Modern Dispensationalism as inimical to the Reformed Faith. In a brief editorial announcing the series, the GUARDIAN said, "Mr. Murray will explain in a concise, exact, yet popular way, the content of the Reformed Faith and show wherein modern denials or perversions of it are contrary to the Holy Scriptures. THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN deems itself fortunate in being able to bring to its ever-growing international circle of readers

such a clear and needed statement of the great system of theology that usually bears the name of Calvin. For when we look at that system we see not the systematizing intelligence of a man merely, but the full glorious organism of revealed Truth set forth in the Word of God."

In the issue of February 3, 1936, Dr. Clark himself wrote an article opposing Independency on the ground of its abbreviated creeds and lack of church courts. We quote Dr. Clark, "Because doctrines such as total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and the perseverance of the saints, are integral and major parts of God's revealed will, it is regrettable that the independent churches usually adopt an abbreviated creed. If they wish to defend and propagate Christianity they might as well proclaim the message in its entirety instead of partially, however essential those parts are." A very fine statement, we would say, both in 1936 and in 1945.

Space precludes citation of more evidence. We would, however, call attention to the zeal shown by Dr. Machen for the Reformed Faith in his battle against the 1903 amendments to the Confession of Faith (THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, October 10, 1936; November 28, 1936); in his attack on the Scofield Bible (THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, November 14, 1936); in the editorial, "The Need of Edification", printed two weeks before his death (THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, December 12, 1936).

We maintain, then, that the present emphasis of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church upon its Reformed witness is not something new but is a continuation of an emphasis we made long before 1936.

In conclusion we wish to raise what seems to us to be the basic question: What constitutes change? By what criterion shall we judge the situation in our church today? Dr. Clark appeals to what he calls "American Presbyterianism" and seems to set that up as a sort of ultimate standard or norm. What kind of American Presbyterianism? American Presbyterianism of what date? The diluted Presbyterianism of 1930 or the New School Presbyterianism of the Cumberland union of 1906 or the Old School Presbyterianism of Charles Hodge? Is it not

rather hard to define exactly what American Presbyterianism is? And even if we could define it, should we set up any historical form of Presbyterianism as final? Many churches have done just this and so have fallen under the curse of "traditionalism". You cannot date Christianity nor can you nationalize it. It is universal and timeless.

Our appeal must not be to American or Scotch or Dutch Calvinism, but to the Scriptures. Let it be understood that we do not disparage American Presbyterianism of the nineteenth-century Old School variety. We are disciples of the Alexanders and the Hodges but we are not blind disciples. Their teachings must be compared with and found agreeable to Scripture. Moreover we live in the twentieth century. We face new conditions and new problems. The ministry of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is young. We have breathed the spirit and know the language of this modern world. We aim to be modern men. This, of course, means that we will not be content with a traditional presentation of our faith but will strive to present it in a modern form to meet contemporary needs. Our modernist enemies regard us as hopeless obscurantists, but they are wrong. The very youth and newness of our church gives us a glorious opportunity, free from the shackles of tradition, to present the old gospel in a new way. Our gospel and our faith must be dynamic. They must never become static. It is in this sense we hope there will always be change within our church, but we do not conceive this type of change to be inconsistent with an essential unity.

We freely concede that all has not remained static in the life of the church since 1936. We also hope that we have made some progress in our understanding of the Reformed Faith since 1936. But we believe the evidence abundantly proves that both in its negative emphasis against Modernism and in its positive emphasis upon the Reformed Faith The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is essentially the same today as it was at its inception in 1936. We have not changed.

—J. P. C.

"When Christianity loses its active dislike of heresy, it loses its dignity as a revealed religion and becomes no better than one among many warring creeds."

—MORTIMER J. ADLER

Perspective

GENERAL

DEAR Editor: Perhaps you have observed how each community contrives a calendar according to its interests. The professional baseball player begins his year's work in April and has completed a season at the beginning of October. The farmer marks the year according to the time for plowing, planting, cultivating and harvesting. The people of the churches have a time for the Fall "push", presbytery meeting, general assembly, and a summer slump. And the end of each cycle is a time for taking stock, a time to stand up for a moment to see how things are going—straight or crooked, ahead or backwards, up or down. It may be that the community of those acquainted with the name and work of J. Gresham Machen has marked the time of the New Year by his death, for it was on New Year's Day 1937 that he died. Perhaps they have paused to take stock of the movement in the service of which he gave his life.

We don't mean to be unnecessarily sentimental, or to imply that the institutions begun with Machen's influence must forever be regulated by his memory. However, it is undeniable that, as Gresham Machen took up arms to serve his King, there followed in his train those who would serve in like manner with him, and the institutions founded upon the way are

therefore monuments to his courage and devotion. Machen is at rest but we judge that the Gideon's band that followed him want to believe, almost with a prayer, that they are still steadfastly treading the course he set.

The course is long—perhaps it has no end. But the technique for sticking with it is simple and the promise of progress is sure. There is just one grand principle of action and that is utter obedience to the Word of God in all its length and depth and breadth. Such obedience engages and requires the whole man, for the glory of God is the basic motive.

Under these conditions the kingdom is most effectively served. And how else?

Right here perspective is held or lost. There is no other way to gain the ultimate objective than through steady progress by way of principle alone. But men think of many things.

Anyone who has played a game of ball, even croquet, knows what is meant when he is told: "Keep your eye on the ball!" There is hardly a more pointed piece of advice and it can be applied in all of life. It simply means sticking to the basic technique which alone guarantees progress and success. Babe Ruth never hit a home run by glancing at the stands as the ball passed over the plate. A golfer ruins a shot whenever he becomes impatient to see how he is doing and takes his eye from that impudently despotic ball. And the more one goes in for razzle-dazzle, the more imperative is the advice: "Keep your eye on the ball!" There is no other way. One hates to fumble. A fumble halts the drive.

But fumbles keep us humble. They remind us that the game is not ours to play it according to our whims. And they wound our pride for they insist that zeal is no substitute for concentration, that ingenuity is not before obedience.

J. Gresham Machen in all his brilliance was humbly serving by obedience to principle. The progress of the kingdom is marked by the works of those who obey God rather than men, and who do not forget that they too are men of whom they must be wary.

"The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."

Yours sincerely,
AUGUSTINUS AMERICANUS

A New Address

ALL correspondence for the Rev. Egbert W. Andrews, who is now in Free China and hopes soon to be able to do missionary work, should be addressed to him as follows: The Rev. Egbert W. Andrews, c/o Bureau of Foreign Affairs, China Military Council, APO 465, New York, N. Y.

Blest River of Salvation

THE OPC

By the REV. GORDON H. CLARK, Ph.D.

FROM time to time Christians do well to trace the course of the gospel through history and to refresh their memories of days gone by. Thoughts of the early Christian martyrs renew our courage and zeal. A study of the Reformation will strengthen our determination to preserve the purity of the church. And while it is on a lesser scale, it is none the less true that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church should occasionally review its first years and the events leading up to its formation. Though our church is far from old as churches go, there have been many changes. Some ministers have died, whose loss we mourn; some people have left us for good or bad reasons; young men have entered our ministry who naturally took no part in the activity of the early thirties; and so it is not too soon to look back over those days.

Some of us will remember the great mass meeting held in the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in 1924 when a somewhat optimistic audience heard Dr. Maitland Alexander declare that there would be no exodus of orthodox Presbyterians from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The implication was clear that he expected the Modernists to leave or to be driven out. But neither he nor Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney, who sat with him on the platform, took measures to drive them out and, as events had it, they did not leave. Instead, the Modernists went to work and gained control of Princeton Seminary; and then Westminster was founded. Later came the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. There were also two organizations which tried, by holding meetings and mailing literature, to acquaint the membership of the church with the seriousness of the situation. Finally came that travesty on judicial procedure: the condemnation of Dr. J. Gresham Machen without his being permitted to present his defense. And a few days later what is now called The Orthodox Presbyterian Church came into existence. Those were stirring times.

But what were we stirred up about? What were the topics discussed in

the meetings and in the literature? What was the emphasis of the new church? The one great object of our attack was the theology summarized in the Auburn Affirmation. That document, signed by about thirteen hundred Presbyterian ministers, asserted that none of them believed in the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures and that none of them believed that the virgin birth, the miracles of Christ, the substitutionary atonement, and the bodily resurrection were doctrines essential to Christianity. These men, and others who did not actually sign the document, held to a type of religion from which the atonement and the resurrection could be excluded without harm to their faith. Whether or not Christ offered Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, whether or not He arose from the grave—all such questions were matters of indifference to them. In certain cases their remarks about a gory, butcher-house religion showed that they had trodden under foot the Son of God and had counted the blood of the cross an unholy thing.

It was on these matters that we then placed our great emphasis. We contended for the full truthfulness of the Scriptures and for the vital doctrines of our faith. We did not merely believe these doctrines; we did not merely mention them on occasion; but rather we put our chief emphasis upon them. This does not mean that we cared nothing for Presbyterianism. For example, we all agreed on the Presbyterian principle of an educated ministry. In November, 1932, *Christianity Today* carried an excellent article by Dr. Machen on "The Importance of Christian Scholarship for Evangelism." It is an article that may well be re-read now. Along with the Presbyterian insistence on an educated ministry, there was the correlative principle of requiring of communicant members only what is absolutely essential. In those days, none would have attempted to reject this principle so well stated by Charles Hodge in his *Church Polity*, pages 237-239:

... the terms of Christian communion

are unalterably fixed in the word of God, and can be neither increased nor diminished by any human authority. . . . Nothing can justly be required as a term of Christian communion, which Christ has not made necessary to admission to heaven. In other words, [that] we are bound to receive and treat as Christian brethren all whom Christ receives as disciples. We are not to make ourselves stricter or holier than he. . . . Therefore the lowest terms of salvation are the highest admissible terms of communion. If these principles are correct, it follows that however restrictive are the conditions a Church may see fit to establish as the terms of ministerial fellowship, it must recognize as a sister Church every body which holds and teaches the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, however erroneous it may be in other respects; and therefore it cannot with any consistency refuse either to receive members from such a Church, or to dismiss them to it.

And so on with other points of Presbyterian government and doctrine. We were indeed consciously Presbyterians. But our chief emphasis was on the Scriptures, the Atonement, and the Resurrection; and our chief activity was our opposition to soul-destroying Modernism.

Is there any less reason now to contend vigorously for these doctrines? Has unbelief been routed? Has Christendom so improved since 1936 that now these vital doctrines ought to receive less emphasis? Instead of stressing the inerrancy of Scripture and verbal inspiration, instead of insisting that there is only one way of salvation, the glorious way of the cross, should we spend hours of time debating questions of some, but of relatively little, value? Should we dissipate our energies by pushing principles precariously beyond the limits of sound judgment? Should we exhaust our force in raising a testimony to some infinitesimal sectarian oddity? No, we shall not, if our memory goes back fifteen years. No, we shall not, if we appreciate American Presbyterianism.

Further, in 1936 we frankly rejoiced when any non-Presbyterians upheld the authority of Scripture against the

(See "Clark," page 16)

The Eritrean Challenge

MISSIONS

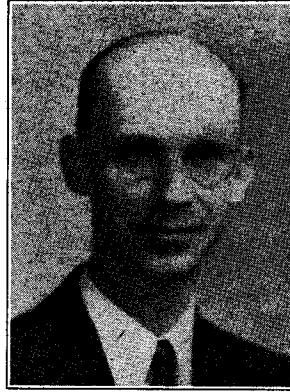
By the REV. CLARENCE W. DUFF
Orthodox Presbyterian Missionary to Eritrea

SEVEN months ago I saw the grass houses of Irafalo here in East Africa for the first time, at the end of a four-hour camel ride from Zula, where the native truck on which I was traveling had stalled the day before. A month later I came back, bag and baggage, to occupy what I hoped would be the first station of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church's mission in Eritrea, having in the meantime obtained permission from the British authorities to commence work.

A young hurricane the night before I arrived had partially destroyed and spoiled beyond repair the government's barracks, one building of which I had hoped to rent. I moved into the best end of the only habitable house and made myself the guinea pig on which the experiment was carried out to see whether summer on the Red Sea without ice or fans was feasible. It was, but I'm hopeful another summer will not need to be spent just here. I am afraid some of the letters home were a bit on the pessimistic side. I do not know that I overstated the difficulties of climate and geography and religion in the field our church has to face in its first African mission, but I allowed them to occupy too much space in my writing and thinking. All along, however, I believed God would show His strength in overcoming the difficulties. I would like now to report the progress that by God's grace has been made.

One Plus One Is More Than Two

A great step in advance is the doubling (!) of our missionary force on the field by the arrival in September of the Rev. Charles E. Stanton. Two are not many, but much more than twice as good as one. My coming alone in the first place was an emergency measure. Now that we are two we feel that we are more closely following Scriptural precedent. Permission has been granted for our families also to enter Eritrea, and we are anticipating the day when they will arrive. We shall feel then that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is really established in its Eritrean mission.



The Rev. Clarence W. Duff

Progress has been made toward providing suitable living arrangements at Irafalo. Mr. Stanton and I are now occupying the new kitchen and store-room while the main house is going up. The house is perhaps a third done, and should be ready for use in a month or six weeks. With proper housing, including some protection from flies and mosquitoes, the months in which we shall need to be in Irafalo should be quite healthful and not unpleasant. We have the beginnings of a garden and hope to enlarge it as we can get more water, eventually from our own well. There is much that is beautiful at Irafalo, especially the sea-view looking up the Gulf of Zula and the tumbled, rugged mountains just across the narrow plain.

Since Mr. Stanton's arrival one of our chief concerns has been the language of the tribes among which we were given permission to work. This is a language known as Saho, and is spoken by the tribes of Assaorta, Miniferi, Debrimela, Hazu and Irob, altogether numbering about thirty-two thousand people. Very little had been done toward reducing this language to writing and, so far as we know, no foreigner had learned to speak it. We have made a little beginning and have good hopes of learning its mysteries and of being able to use it to proclaim the gospel to these tribes. Mohammed Hasan, a Miniferi (Saho-speaking) man who also speaks Amharic and several other languages fairly well, is a very helpful informant.

A Friendly Administration

We have been greatly encouraged by the gradually increasing willingness on the part of the British Military Administration to grant us wider opportunity for missionary work in Eritrea. I felt from the beginning that without a highland station for at least the summer months we could not satisfactorily live or profitably carry on the work among these semi-nomadic peoples. In the summer, when there is almost no rain and very little pasture for their flocks and herds, the majority of the people from the coastal plain migrate to the mountain plateaus along the crest of the divide that separates between the waters that flow to the Red Sea and those that flow into the Nile basin. They live for some months in the vicinity of Saganeti, Addi Caieh and Senafe and on over on the western slope of the ridge on the Hazame plain. The rains in these areas are during the opposite season from those on the coastal plain and the eastern slope of the hills. In order to reach the people most effectively, we should migrate with them into the highlands.

At first the Administration was unwilling to grant us the privilege of living in the highlands. However, when permission was granted for my family to come to Eritrea, the Chief Administrator did not want them to live in Irafalo for the present because of its rather isolated situation. He suggested Addi Caieh or somewhere near-by as a suitable place for them to live. Later when permission was granted for Mrs. Stanton and the children to come, the Chief Administrator intimated that the reasons for restricting our mission activities to the coastal plain were less important now, and he thought the way would soon be clear for us to work in the highlands of Akele Guzai Division also. Quite without our mentioning it he asked if we expected to work among both Mohammedans and Ethiopic Christians in the highlands and, when we answered that we did not see how we could refrain from preaching the gospel to any who might be about us, he expressed himself as being fa-

vorable to our reaching both groups, as he thought one as needy as the other. He said he thought the Coptic (or Ethiopic) church of Eritrea was just about the lowest form of Christianity.

These developments have definitely brightened the whole picture as regards healthful living for our missionaries and opportunity for more effective and wider work. To be able to follow our Mohammedan tribespeople into the mountains during the heat of summer means not only more continuous contact with them but also better health for us; and to have our right recognized to establish work among the Tigrinya-speaking Copts of the highlands around Addi Caieh, Senafe and Saganeiti adds many thousands of souls to the responsibility which our church has undertaken in Eritrea.

The Challenge

I want to sketch briefly for you what seems to me to be the challenge of the field in Eritrea that God has opened for our church. Roughly speaking, the area that appears to be opening to us is the Akele Guzai Political Division, with certain parts of the Massawa Division which are inhabited by our Saho-speaking tribes. In this area we are responsible for reaching with the gospel about seventeen thousand Assaortini, ten thousand Miniferi, four thousand Hazu, and almost one thousand Debrimela. These, with the exception of part of the Debrimela, are almost solidly Mohammedan.

The Rev. Robert S. Marsden's articles on Islam have better acquainted many of you with this faith. It will be difficult to preach the gospel to these Moslem tribes. The history of missions in Moslem countries has generally speaking been a story of long years of work with meager results in numbers converted. This need not be the case in Eritrea, however. It may be that God will be pleased to draw many to Jesus Christ from among these tribes. The fact that we were in the beginning prevented from going elsewhere and practically shut up to the work among the Saho-speaking tribes greatly encourages us to believe that God has much people here.

Our people are staunch Mohammedans and prejudice is very great, but "fanatical" would seem to be almost too strong a term for it. They

have lived side by side with Christians of the Coptic church for centuries and are in a land whose religion is predominantly Coptic. It is not an unheard-of thing for one of them to change his religion. We, of course, are looking for a change of heart. My point is, however, that when one does come to believe in Christ it is quite possible that he may not be so terribly persecuted as some have been in Moslem countries such as Arabia. We do not know, of course.

If, as seems very probable, we are allowed to work also among the Tigrinya-speaking population of Akele Guzai, our church will have a marvelous opportunity to influence the Ethiopic church of Eritrea, and if Christ is pleased to build His true church among these people it may be that He will use that church in reaching many other thousands of Ethiopic Christians in Ethiopia proper. The decree of the Ethiopian emperor published last August excludes foreign missions from Ethiopic church areas in that country, except to minister to adherents of their own churches. A sound, strong, native church, however, could conceivably grow over the border and be used in evangelizing the almost solid Ethiopic church areas in northern Ethiopia. Christians from the evangelical church that has grown out of the work of the Swedish Evangelical Mission in Eritrea have already influenced the church in Ethiopia to no small extent.

Hard Work for God's Glory

The Ethiopic (or Coptic) church members are little, if any, less prejudiced in their religious faith than the Muslims. The common opinion of those foreigners who know them closely is that they are quite as corrupt as, or more so than, the Muslims, though here and there we find what appears to be a true seeker after righteousness. They are in desperate need of the gospel of God's grace to free them from the legalism that has so dominated their religion. There are over eighty thousand Tigrinya-speaking people in Akele Guzai, most of them Ethiopic church adherents, with a minority of Roman Catholics of Ethiopic rite. It is a shame that most of what the Moslem peoples of Eritrea know about Christianity is what they have observed concerning one of its most corrupt forms.

Whether we think, then, of the

work among Mohammedans or among Ethiopic Christians, the field that God has given us is not likely to prove an easy one. Hard, persevering work, much earnest prayer to God for His blessing, great faith to believe Him for the building of His church here will be essential to any success. If visible results do not come quickly, yet we believe they will come in God's good time. God has said: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." We must faithfully proclaim the Word of God, assured that God will bring the results that will be to His glory.

The Saho-speaking tribes and the Tigrinya-speaking people of Akele Guzai need the true gospel of the grace of God. Has The Orthodox Presbyterian Church the courage and faith to bring it to them?

Your Family Altar

From the Cradle to the Grave

III YOUTH

JAN. 16TH. DAN. 1:3-17 (8a)*

WHEN in Rome, do as the Romans do" is certainly not a Christian proverb. While we are in the world, we are not of the world. As Daniel resisted the temptation to high living and defilement, so must we in this present evil world. Purity, restraint and self-control on the part of young people always brings its own reward. This reward is from God who gave to Daniel and his friends knowledge, wisdom, skill, understanding and a long life of honor.

17TH. MATT. 6:24-34 (33)

The memory verse for today is a precept which it is well for us to take to heart and put into practice early in our youth. Failing to put first things first has been the underlying cause for more failures in business and in the spiritual life than any other reason. It is easy to understand how too much attention to earthly things will detract from our value of heavenly things. It will eventually wean us completely away from God. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness!"

*Verses printed in the headings in parentheses are those chosen to be memory verses.

18TH. PROV. 1:10-19 (10)

This and tomorrow's selection deal with the companionships we form. Especially in young manhood there are many snares. Those who go about to do wickedness use a variety of enticements. An understanding parent will warn against all such; and the wise son and daughter will heed the paternal counsel. Put not one foot in the same path with them. Pray God to help you find and enjoy Christian companions.

19TH. PSALM 1 (1)

The way and end of a life of righteousness is contrasted with the end of the ungodly. Blessing is pronounced upon the man who neither heeds the words nor follows the ways of the sinful. Christian youths must discern between the godly counsels of the righteous and the evil ways of the wicked. Do not let the exciting things spoken of by the gang lure you. If your conscience warns you the first time you come into a new group, get out fast and stay away always from their perishing ways.

20TH. PROV. 4:14-27 (23)

"Let thine eyelids look straight, before thee." In this day of unblushing immodesty, vile magazine illustrations, lustful art, suggestive signboards and pin-up girls, it is necessary for our young folk to remember these words. Fill not your eye with these provocative sights else your heart will soon be corrupted. Out of the heart are the issues of life; therefore keep thy heart with all diligence!

21ST. JAMES 1:1-12 (5)

Temptation is certainly a trial of our faith. To meet it one needs much wisdom. This may be received in abundance from God if we ask sincerely. It is the tendency of youth to be self-confident; but it is the path of wisdom to call upon the Lord for strength to resist temptation. What a glorious crown awaits the person who loves the Lord and overcomes temptation by heaven-sought wisdom!

22ND. ISA. 6 (8)

During the period of your high school course there comes the time when you must choose a vocation. In this day there is a very wide variety from which to select. When giving consideration to this, be sure you take account of the claims of Christ upon your life. What is your relation to the great commission? Ask the Lord to

help you respond as did Isaiah, "Here am I; send me."

23RD. MARK 16:14-20 (15)

To those young people who answer the call of Christ to full-time gospel work there come sure promises. In the corresponding passage in Matthew 28 the presence of Christ is promised: His presence going before and preparing the way, faithfully sustaining you over the rough experiences of life. Here are promises of your preservation from otherwise deadly things. And, again, there is empowerment for the task assigned.

24TH. MATT. 25:14-30 (21)

There are those who do not go forth into full-time service. What of them? Surely our passage would teach the following truths: (1) To each one is entrusted some talent (good judgment, organization, musical ability, patience, artistic taste, literary talent, etc.). (2) These talents can be used or wasted. (3) We are responsible to God for how we use them. (4) They may be fully dedicated to glorify Christ. (5) If rightly furthered, they will bring joy and reward to the possessor.

25TH. PROV. 31:10-31 (30)

Almost every young person has some thoughts about a life partner. What kind of a husband or wife shall you seek and pray for? This chapter gives good counsel to the young man. But for either sex it is imperative that you look for spiritual beauty, godly piety, moral strength, sobriety and a peaceable and quiet spirit. Ask yourself if you would want to marry one of the gang you now go with. If not, get in a better crowd.

26TH. JOHN 3:1-17 (17)

Though born in a Christian home, a child of the covenant, raised in a fine Christian atmosphere, perhaps even now a communicant member of the church, there may be some young man or woman who is not born again. To a man learned in the law the Lord addressed these words, "Ye must be born again." To you the same message comes fraught with the love of God who sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

27TH. I TIM. 4 (12)

That youth must have its fling is an entire perversion of the Scripture. Every young man ought to live so that he may look back upon his youth with

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no regrets. There is a higher motive for living godly in Christ Jesus and that is your own salvation and that of others. The epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus are full of good counsel for young folk. Pray that God may direct your ways and use you to honor Him.

28TH. EPH. 6:10-24 (11)

Early in our Christian experience we become aware of the struggle between the forces of evil and of righteousness. This struggle is not limited to external strife and combat but also exists in the inner man, in the spiritual world! Therefore, we must have spiritual armor and weapons. These are described in our text, but each of you take time to study their use and application. Be sure Christ is your Captain in this warfare.

29TH. GEN. 1 (1)

On every hand you will meet advocates of evolution. Even otherwise conservative ministers sometimes give some credit to evolutionary statements. Never forget that God created the heavens and the earth and all that is therein, in the space of six days; and that each species was to bear after its kind, and always has. If we remember that God is all-powerful and sovereign, we can understand how these things may be. (Compare Heb. 11:3.)

30TH. II PET. 1:10-21 (21)

Young people, on the basis of the authority of the greatest Old Testa-

ment scholar of our generation, "No man knows enough to prove an error in the Scriptures." Take it as a Christian principle, basic and positive, that the Scripture is God's inerrant revelation, that it was given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and has been preserved unto our day. Pray God that your faith in and obedience to the Word may never be shaken.

31ST. II TIM. 3 (16, 17)

Not only are we to have a high view

of the sacred Scriptures but also we are to have an intimate acquaintance with its doctrines. It is our only rule of faith and practice—how we may glorify God. It teaches us what we are to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of us. The Word of God is designed for our full use, as described in verse sixteen, and our richest benefit, as seen in the last verse.

—HENRY D. PHILLIPS

Confucian Good Works

MISSIONS

"Faiths Men Die By"—PART 10

By the REV. ROBERT S. MARSDEN

THE Confucianist virtue which most manifests itself in relations with others is that of filial devotion. The keen sense of duty which characterizes the Chinese in general finds its chief expressions in filial piety. Again we can learn the essence of this quality by looking at the Chinese ideograph by which the quality is expressed. The ideograph shows the symbol for "young man" and above it the symbol for "old man"—the aged supported by the young; the forefathers revered by living sons.

Respect for the aged and veneration of the dead is the most notable characteristic of Confucianist life. A strong sense of family ties has made for a conservatism such as no nation of the world has known. The thing which has always been done is the thing that should be done, for no reason than that it always has been done. When this is carried to its logical extreme there can be absolutely no progress—the son must do what the father has done, and in the way the father did it. This is the greatest force for conservatism, reaction and stagnation.

In classical education elaborate rules for filial piety are memorized. Quite late in Chinese history there were composed twenty-four stories in illustration of filial virtue. These twenty-four examples became a part of the instruction given thereafter in Chinese schools. Here are some instances of the extremes to which filial devotion is expected to go:

"Among the paragons of piety were the emperor Wen who during a three-year illness of his mother never left her

bedside, and tasted first all the soups and medicines prepared for her; Yen, who disguised himself in deer-skin and endured hardship in the forests in search of deer's milk for his parents; Chiang Ko, who hired himself out as a common laborer to support his widowed mother; Huang Hsiang, who cooled his father's bed in summer, and in winter warmed the bedding with his own body; Wang Hsiang, who melted the lake-ice with the heat of his own body to procure fish for his step-mother, who had no affection for him; and the lad Wu Meng, who went to bed early and allowed legions of mosquitoes to attack him, thereby diverting them from his parents, who, too poor to buy a net, slept in peace, nevertheless."*

The Chinese classic defines filial piety thus: "The service which a filial son does to his parents is as follows,—in his general conduct toward them he manifests the utmost reverence; in his nourishing of them he seeks to give them the utmost pleasure; when they are ill, he feels the greatest anxiety; in mourning for them when they are dead, he exhibits every demonstration of grief; in sacrificing to them, he displays the utmost solemnity."

The Chinese are known for their wise sayings. It is no accident that popular writers of comic strips take as their wise character a Chinese sage, for many of the wise sayings with which we are familiar are Chinese in origin. A few of the best of them are worth pondering:

* *Faiths Men Live By*—Confucianism, by John Clark Archer.

"What the superior man seeks is in himself, what the small man seeks is in others."

"The superior man is dignified, but does not wrangle; social but not a partisan. He does not promote a man simply because of his words, nor does he put good words aside because of the man."

"Learning, undigested by thought, is labor lost; thought, unassisted by learning, is perilous."

"Extravagance leads to insubordination, and parsimony to meanness. It is better to be mean than insubordinate."

"A man can enlarge his principles; principles do not enlarge the man."

"The cautious seldom err."

The placidity that Confucius emphasized in his ideal man led to an almost complete pacificism, a pacificism which has made China an easy prey to aggressors. It is little wonder that the aggressive modern Chinese communists, the Kuomintang, made violent attempts to stamp Confucianism from China, and it is perhaps significant that the Chinese leaders of the present conflict which they have waged aggressively against Japan since 1937 are either communists or Christians—not Confucianists.

The godlessness of Confucianism is startling. There is no evidence to show that Confucius had a well-defined faith in any god, although there does seem to be evidence that he was a practical monotheist. He refused to speculate concerning his god or concerning the future life. The gloom at the end of his life was pathetic. He complained that his life was over because no ruler would take him to be his master. He claimed no divine revelation, and his wisdom was not thought by him to be anything more than the product of a disciplined mind. His false anthropology—the notion that all men are essentially good—led, of course, to a false religion of works.

To be sure, Confucius himself became a god to his followers, for they proved themselves incorrigibly religious. They still worship their ancient gods in the fields and, in place of any well-formed theology, their religion is but vague superstition.

As will be seen, the Chinese virtues have much in common with the Christian virtues. If Confucius had written a Decalogue, he would have begun with the fifth commandment, for he was not interested in man's relationship to any god but in man's relation-

ship to his fellow-man. Here is an example of what humanism can accomplish in twenty-five centuries! Those who tell us that the emphasis in Christianity must be shifted from man's relationship to God to man's relationship to his fellow-man have an example of a religion which developed that emphasis twenty-five hundred years ago! The great social progress that resulted from such humanism must be apparent to all! China presents an example of morals divorced from God; of comparatively good conduct practiced for unworthy reasons. It illustrates very clearly for us the need of proper motivation of good acts for, in the last analysis, no act is good unless its motivation is good—no act is really good unless it is done to the glory of God.

What is the future of Confucianism? It must be obvious to all that it cannot survive as a great force in the modern world. Unless it can be replaced with the gospel of Christ, it will be replaced with the godless Communism of the Kuomintang. The challenge to orthodox Christians to evangelize this great country is overwhelming. To be sure, many mission boards have established work in China, and some of them have been able to remain even through the war which has so successfully cut China off from civilian communication with the rest of the world. But the challenge of a great nation, under domination of a decadent religion long since outmoded in a modern world must be a challenge to us to win those people to Christ.

Young

(Concluded from page 6)

twenty-five hundred feet above sea level. It serves as a market place for the Bedouin of the vicinity, and its inhabitants live largely by agriculture. Also, for centuries, some of the inhabitants have engaged in making religious objects of mother-of-pearl, wood, and similar materials. New Testaments and Bibles with covers of olive-wood are sold here, and most tourists seem to feel that their visit is not complete unless they purchase some such object.

The Church of the Nativity

The principal attraction of present-

day Bethlehem, however, is the great Church of the Nativity, which is built over the traditional site of the birthplace of Christ. This is probably the oldest Christian church in existence. It was built by Constantine in 330 A.D. and, during the sixth century, was restored and enlarged by Justinian. It is the joint property of the Greeks, the Romanist church and the Armenians.

The entrance to the church is exceedingly small, and one is told that this is to keep out wandering camels and donkeys. The church itself is simple in structure, the auditorium consisting of a nave and double aisle. The floor is paved with large slabs of stones. Near the altar two flights of steps descend into the chapel of the nativity. In this grotto hang several lamps, and on the floor is a silver star bearing the Latin inscription, *Jesus Christus natus est hic de Virgine Maria* (Jesus Christ was born here of the virgin Mary).

It is when we read this inscription that we pause. Whether or not this is the true place of Christ's birth—and no one knows the actual site—yet at least we are not far from the place where the stupendous miracle of His birth occurred.

We desire to leave the confines of the church and to step again into fresh air. Below the city, in the open fields, we may pause to reflect. Somewhere in this city, in Bethlehem of Judea, the Saviour was born. It matters not that we cannot identify the actual place of birth. Perhaps it is better that we do not know the place, else we too might be tempted to erect a shrine and to become superstitious. We might become more interested in the spot as such than in the great event that there took place.

It was my privilege to be in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve. Out on the Shepherds' Fields, the night air was clear and cold. The stars shone brightly and distinctly. There was gaiety and festivity in the town, and many were preparing to attend the various religious services.

However, it was a time when a Christian preferred to be alone. Bethlehem! "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight." For Christ was born in Bethlehem. Here occurred that remarkable miracle in the womb of the virgin Mary. Here God became Man, the Word became Flesh, the One who exists in the form

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Bethlehem and the Prophets

Throughout the ages God's prophets had turned their eyes toward Christ's day and rejoiced. "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem," Noah had said. And Jacob had promised, "The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." And even the heathen Balaam, under the compulsion of the Holy Spirit, had cried, "I see him, but not now, I behold him but not near; a Star shall arise out of Jacob and a Sceptre out of Judah." "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you," declared Moses. "I shall establish the throne of his kingdom for ever," said Nathan. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive," prophesied Isaiah. And again, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," "Behold my servant, whom I uphold." "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground." And Micah, "But thou Bethlehem . . . out of thee shall come forth one. . . ." "In that day will I build the booth of David that is fallen," said Amos. "The Lord our Righteousness," declared Jeremiah. "The Lord is there," said

Ezekiel. "Messiah the Prince," proclaimed Daniel.

Like a mighty wave the line of prophecy increased, pointing toward the Desire of Nations, growing in force, until finally the fullness of time had come and Mary "brought forth her first born son and laid him away in a manger."

Bethlehem! What a privilege to visit this little town! What a far greater privilege to be united by living faith to Him who "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Clark

(Concluded from page 10)

destructive criticism of the Modernists. We thought that if one could chase a thousand, two could put ten thousand to flight. Convinced Presbyterians as we were, we could not agree in several points with our Baptist or independent fundamentalist brethren, but we held them to be brethren none the less, and with Charles Hodge we looked on their churches as sister churches.

Of late, however, it seems that our emphasis and direction have changed. We still hold that the Scriptures are the Word of God. We still hold to the substitutionary atonement. We still oppose Modernism. But the emphasis is no longer there. We are no longer fighting shoulder to shoulder

with other Bible-believing Christians. Maybe we are not fighting very much at all. We have changed. No doubt we are still Presbyterian, though the word is curiously avoided; and the customs, procedures, and temperament of American Presbyterianism are in certain quarters matters of disparagement. We have changed.

It is not here asserted that the majority of our pastors have so turned away from the original emphasis of our church. The contact that the pastors have with their members and with the outside world keeps them alive to the actual religious condition of our age. I can name one, yes two, who in physical pain drive themselves to the limit. I can name two, yes many, who, it would seem, put in an honest twelve-hour day seven days a week. No, it can never be said that our pastors are loafing on the job. But it is here asserted that the corporate emphasis of the church as a whole has changed. If anyone in the church does not recognize it, those outside the church see it plainly. Whereas our movement at its start was widely hailed by Bible-believing Christians as a great force for righteousness against unbelief, it has by this time through some form of mismanagement earned an unenviable reputation. Instead of leading the Christian forces of our country, we have assumed the position of an isolationist porcupine.

It is fruitless to excuse ourselves because other groups have wronged us. To be sure, they have. We gain nothing by complaining of misrepresentation, though we have been misrepresented. On the contrary, we ought to be honest enough to admit that some of the blame rests on us. In any case the emphasis of our church has changed and we have been turned away from our original course. Once we were a strong current in that blest river of salvation. Are we now but an eddy? Are we now in danger of narrowing our stream to an impoverished trickle that will dry up in the sands of a burning desert? Or can we hear a choir invisible telling us

"Pursue thy onward way;
Flow thou to every nation,
Nor in thy richness stay"?

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