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*The Presbyterian*

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## Meditation

### THE CHOICE OF FAITH

*"By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked unto the recompense of the reward."*—HEBREWS 11:24-26.

Many a man would call Moses a fool. He was born with the shadow of death over his head. When the sun broke through, he turned his back upon it and voluntarily chose the stormy darkness.

According to the law of the land at the time, he should have been drowned in the river Nile when he was born: he was born the son of Jewish parents. But by a marvelous turn of Providence, he not only was not drowned, but was adopted by the king's daughter, and eventually became a great man in Egypt, mighty in word and deed.

But he turned his back upon all this, and chose the lot of the Jewish slaves.

Was he not defying Providence? What advantage could there possibly be in such a choice? What could he hope to accomplish? What could he expect to gain? Some would call him irresponsible.

But the leading of Providence may never be detached from the guidance of revelation. Moses was not ignorant of this truth. It was just because he considered the two together that he made his choice. And this fact made him an example to be followed.

Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. But he was undoubtedly also trained in the Covenant of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. His parents distinguished themselves for obedience of faith when he was born. And being given the opportunity of raising him in the first part of his life, we may be sure they raised him according to their deepest convictions. We may be sure of this, particularly in view of the favor God had shown them in connection with this very child. And if Pharaoh's daughter was willing to let them raise a boy she meant to adopt, she surely would not keep him ever after from visiting their home. He surely had occasion to see their example of faith

and hear their covenant hopes many times.

By the time he was forty years of age, and had come to be mighty in Egypt, he decided to come to the aid of the Israelites—to visit them. By so doing, he identified himself with them against Egypt, refusing to be known as son of Pharaoh's daughter.

He could have been content to stay in the palace. There he might have long enjoyed riches, prestige, power for many years. With his abilities, he might have gotten his name on the pages of history for all later generations to admire. But he realized that his dying day would have terminated his glory, and he would have entered into everlasting disgrace because he would have died without God and without hope.

Everlasting glory is for the people of God. There was no hope for one who could boast nothing better than to be son of Pharaoh's daughter. The everlasting inheritance was for the seed of Jacob, for the covenant of God was with Abraham and with his children. Moses had to choose his lineage, and so choose his destiny.

His choice was the only sensible choice. But it was not an easy one. Israel was in great distress. They were slaves under great oppression. To be identified with them was to invite affliction. For Moses it involved forty years of obscurity as a keeper of sheep, though he did not know it when he made his decision. There was not much that could be seen to encourage the choice he made.

The only encouragement lay in the promises of God, and in the reward those promises held out to him. He had to act by faith. Without a strong assurance of things hoped for and a conviction of things not seen, he would have remained a prince in Egypt, enjoying for a time the pleasures of a sinful choice. But feeling that union with the people of God would give him a part in their hope, he chose their lot also in their day of affliction.

A place for us in the Kingdom of God also involves the same choice, in principle. And we do well to consider carefully the danger of living always with an eye on a residence on Easy street. Ours is not a time when professing Christians are prepared to endure reproach with Christ. We live in

a day of great shallowness, and therefore of great barrenness. The preaching of the word does not yield much fruit unto life eternal because men will not make the choice of Moses. The ways of our times make him look foolish. But let us not forget that Moses has entered into glory!

HENRY P. TAVARES

### Duffs Arrive for Furlough

THE REV. AND MRS. CLARENCE W. DUFF, Orthodox Presbyterian Missionaries to Eritrea, East Africa, arrived in New York on Tuesday, May 29, and will be home on furlough during the current year.

Mr. and Mrs. Duff left Eritrea on April 20, and spent about two weeks in Syria and Lebanon, looking over a field which had been recommended to the Foreign Missions Committee as a possible location for a new foreign mission work.

Following this survey, they went to Italy and travelled overland through Europe, stopping en route in Geneva, Stuttgart, Amsterdam and other places. They sailed from England on the *Queen Elizabeth* May 24, and reached New York on schedule.

The early date of their furlough arrival made it possible for them to be present for the graduation from high school of their children, Donald and Dorothy, who have been in this country for three years attending Moorestown Friends' School in Moorestown, N. J.

During their furlough the family will be living in the house they own at 2338 Old Welsh Road, Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. The medical work at the clinic in Ghinda, Eritrea, is being carried on for the time being by a nurse, a Miss Thomas, of the Red Sea Mission Team. Evangelistic services are being conducted as opportunity offers by the other missionaries on the field, Herbert Bird and Francis Mahaffy.

### Son to Edwards

ALSON, Albert Gallatin IV, was born on June 6 to the Rev. and Mrs. Albert G. Edwards, III, of Crescent Park, N. J. Mr. Edwards is pastor of Immanuel Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Crescent Park.

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# Set for the Defense of the Gospel

*An address by the Rev. Robert S. Marsden*

**A** NUMBER OF WEEKS AGO a professor in a church-related college asked his class in religion the question, when was the Christian religion founded? A number of answers were suggested in the class, and finally, the story goes, an orthodox Presbyterian youth supplied the reply, in the Garden of Eden.

With that proper concept of the church one might well hesitate to speak on an occasion which is supposed to be an anniversary of the church. I am a little bit timid about referring to this occasion as the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of Presbyterianism, in this country even, and certainly as the twentieth anniversary of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

For the question, when did Presbyterianism begin, might very well be answered, in the Garden of Eden. For Adam and Eve were certainly consistent theists, and in that they were orthodox Presbyterians.

But we do have the significant dates of 1706 and 1936 to deal with tonight, and it is safe to say that if the events which occurred on those dates had not occurred, or events quite similar to them, we who are Orthodox Presbyterians in 1956 should hardly be here.

Now 1706 seems a long while ago. Actually it isn't so long ago. And 1936 I suppose seems a long while ago to some of you here who may not have been born then. But 250 years is a very short time in history. For instance it was only 250 years during the first eight generations of the kings of England after William the Conqueror. Eight generations doesn't sound very long. And 250 years ago was only the very beginning of the Revolutionary period in this country. For Benjamin Franklin was born, perhaps to the day, two months before the first Presbytery was founded in Philadelphia, in 1706.

The history of Presbyterianism could not begin to be understood if we were to suppose that Presbyterianism in this country and Orthodox Presbyterianism, even, in this country were founded on those dates. Rather we must think of the dates of 1706 and 1936 as milestones

along the way of Presbyterianism. But if I may change the figure just a little bit, I should rather think of them as monuments in the battle of the Lord. I live not very far from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and I have tramped over that battlefield. And I have seen the markers, granite many of them, standing marking the positions of the battle during those three dreadful days. I should like to think of 1936 and 1706 as monuments in the constant and never ending battle for the gospel.

Now I realize that this is not supposed to be a sermon, but I suppose

**T**HE MONTH OF JUNE is the twentieth anniversary of the organization of the denomination now known as The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. On the evening of May 23 members of Philadelphia area congregations of this denomination gathered at Calvary Church, Glenside, for an anniversary service.

We are glad to be able to bring our readers the address delivered on this occasion. As it appears in print it is much longer than the articles we usually carry. But in view of the special circumstances, we have decided to present the entire address in this issue.

The Rev. Robert S. Marsden, who delivered the address, is one of the charter members of the denomination. Following the church's organization in 1936 he served as pastor of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Middletown, Penna., until called in 1938 to be General Secretary of the Committees on Home and Foreign Missions. He filled this position for about ten years, and since 1948 has served as Executive Secretary of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

The text of the address is based on a tape recording, with slight modification at points for the purposes of publication.

the address should be based upon the Word of God, and it seemed to me that the most appropriate text to center our thoughts about was those words of the Apostle Paul recorded in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Philippians, the 17th verse—"I am set for the defense of the gospel."

That word "set" is used in the sense of "appointed." It is the word that is used in the second chapter of Luke where we are told that Jesus Christ was set for the falling and rising of many in Israel. He was appointed for that purpose. And my thesis is that the church in every age is appointed for the defense of the gospel and that every milestone in its history is a monument upon the battle field, which is the entire course of church history. The church's life is one long war from which there will be no discharge until what the Apostle calls "the day of Christ." And I insist that you cannot understand the history of the church unless you recognize that.

## Past Monuments in the Defense of the Gospel

So let us see, in the first place, the past monuments to the defense of the gospel. All the significant milestones in the history of the church are marked by battles in the great war for the defense of the gospel.

### PENTECOST

Let's illustrate this point of view. Last Sunday morning as I turned on the radio, I heard these words; "Today is Pentecost Sunday and Christians are aware of this because they know that on this day the church was born." This, to be sure is a false conception of Pentecost but I wouldn't be surprised, if that idea were promoted long enough, that the Christian church would begin to celebrate the birth of the church in something the same manner that it has come in the past hundred years or so to celebrate the birth of Christ.

But if Pentecost was not the birth of the church—and it was not—it was certainly a milestone in the great battle between the forces of God and the forces of Satan and it was a great victory for the Lord.

64 A.D.

If we accept the traditional figure of 64 A.D. as the time of the writing of the epistle to the Philippians we find Paul in prison at that time for the defense of the gospel. Now he didn't have to go to prison. He could, as a modern preacher might well

have done, have preached "positively," and then he would never have gotten in any trouble at all. But he used the most amazing psychology. The poor fellow apparently didn't know any better. For he introduced a most controversial subject, his appointment as a missionary to the Gentiles, before an angry Jewish mob. And introducing such a controversial subject assured his indictment and his arraignment. And so 64 A.D. became a year of crisis in the Christian church, with the incarceration of the great apostle and the leader of the church. And it was a time in which the church and the apostle could not but be set for the defense of the gospel.

#### COUNCIL OF NICAEEA

The year 325 was of course a milestone in the history of the church for it was the year in which the great Trinitarian controversy was formally settled at the Council of Nicaea in favor of Athanasius. It determined whether there would be any real continuity between the church preceding that date, and the church following that date. If the controversy had been settled in favor of Arius, to be sure a church of some sort might formally have continued its life, but it would have been an entirely different church and that date is certainly a monument in the defense of the gospel.

#### REFORMATION

In 1517 we mark the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. If the issues of the Reformation had not been brought to the fore Christianity would have perished from the earth although a church bearing the name of Christian might have persisted and plagued the earth for centuries to come.

#### 1706 AND 1936

And as we shall see, if the issues of 1706 had not been met by the organization of a presbytery religious freedom might well have perished from this continent for many years to come, as it had well nigh perished from the continent of Europe. And if the issues of 1936 had not been brought to the fore, then the church calling itself Presbyterian might well have developed into an even more powerful monopoly to oppress the people of God.

But whether the years 1706 and 1936 rank with these greater dates cannot accurately yet be determined. The movements begun in these years may yet prove to have been abortive. Who could have predicted that a little band of 7 ministers gathered in Philadelphia in March 1706 (the precise date of their gathering we do not know since the first leaf of the ledger has irreparably been lost), who could have imagined that that little band would be the manifestation of a great movement that would exert powerful influence in the life of the nation and in the life of the world.

Francis Makemie was the first moderator, and he, Samuel Davies, Jedidiah Andrews—he was the pastor of the church in Philadelphia, a church which I venture to guess was no larger than the Gethsemane Church, or the Mediator Church or the Knox Church of our day, he was one of the seven—John Hampton, George McNish, John Wilson and Nathaniel Taylor—they comprised the first meeting of the Presbytery. They were very much like the ministers of our own Presbytery. They were not exceptional men, and while their names to be sure have a very distinctly British flavor, much more so than the names of the present presbyters in the Presbytery of Philadelphia, perhaps the only real difference is that there were two Johns among them, and I suppose that if we picked any seven of the present presbyters in the Presbytery of Philadelphia you would find two Roberts instead of two Johns.

But the new organization was born for the defense of the gospel. It wasn't just that seven ministers decided, "Well,

**FRANCIS MAKEMIE—Statue on the banks of Holden's Creek, Accomack County, Virginia, erected by Presbyterian Historical Society, unveiled in 1908 on 200th anniversary of Makemie's death.**

wouldn't it be a nice thing if we could have a presbytery." That isn't what happened at all. Their very life was threatened by the increasing zeal and activity of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel which had been organized a few years before among the Anglicans. Its earliest missionaries had made a determined effort to bring all the dissenters into conformity with the Anglican church, and they had begun a vigorous campaign to secure the establishment of Anglicanism in all the colonies as it had been established already in the colony of Virginia. In this they had very powerful support, including the able Lord Cornbury, who was then governor of the province of New York.

Shortly after the presbytery meeting, Makemie and Hampton went to Long Island to conduct a preaching mission. There they were arrested at the instance of Cornbury very early in 1707, for preaching the gospel without a license. They remained in prison two full months, Trinterud tells us, before they were released on a writ of *habeas corpus* just in time to come to the second meeting of Presbytery which was held on March 22, 1707. Makemie was actually tried in June of that year, and — does this sound familiar?—though he was acquitted by the jury he was assessed the cost of the trial. The cost of the trial was 83 pounds, seven shillings, sixpence, which at that time was just about a year's salary of a minister of the gospel. He was acquitted all right, but Lord Cornbury saw that he was punished in a very effective way.

The Presbytery of Philadelphia was born in 1706. It was born for the defense of the gospel, and immediately after its inception it was called upon to defend the gospel, even by a prison sentence.

#### Organization of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

But if we cannot yet determine the full significance of 1706, how much less can we assess the significance of 1936 in the history of the Christian church. Will the little meeting of less than one hundred and fifty, elders and ministers and laymen gathered that hot Thursday afternoon in the New Century Club of Philadelphia on June 11—will that little meeting go down in history with a permanent monument in the battle for the defense of the gospel?

It was a dramatic moment that afternoon. The auditorium was not crowded.



But when the chairman got up to read the enabling act one could have heard a pin drop. As I look over the congregation tonight I see a number of you here who were there at that time.

And we hear the chairman say, "*In order to continue what we believe to be the true spiritual succession of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. which we hold to have been abandoned by the present organization of that body, and to make clear to all the world that we have no connection with the organization bearing that name, we a company of ministers and ruling elders having been removed from that organization in contravention as we believe of its constitution, or having severed our connection with this organization or hereby solemnly declaring that we do sever our connection with it, or coming as ministers or ruling elders of other ecclesiastical bodies holding the Reformed faith, do hereby associate ourselves together with all Christian people who do and will adhere to us, in a body to be known and styled as The Presbyterian Church of America.*" "We a company of ministers and ruling elders do hereby in our own name, in the name of those who have adhered to us, and by the warrant and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ constitute ourselves a General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America."

And as Dr. Machen took the Moderator's chair, maintaining the dignity of that office even amidst the unpretentious surroundings, there was in his face and in the hearts of us all a mark of the solemnity of the occasion. We trusted that in the power of God we were entering upon a new phase of history, set for the defense of the gospel. And we trusted that a new monument was being erected to mark a major battle in the war—a war declared by God Himself and recorded as early as the third chapter of the book of Genesis, a war to be fought throughout the entire age, to a successful conclusion in the Day of Christ. It was a Gideon's band indeed. Its weapons were not carnal but spiritual to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan. Its confidence was not in the arm of flesh, but in the arm of Jehovah of Hosts. The battle was not just a battle to maintain the pride of tradition, or to establish a name for anyone, but to uphold the banner of the Gospel of Christ before a lost and dying world which should be called upon to accept that faith.

There were set in motion the immediate events of history which bring us here tonight to celebrate the 20th anniversary of this denomination. None could predict what that history would be. There were all sorts of views, from the most pessimistic to the most sanguine. The latter saw churches established all over the country, by the dozens and by the hundreds, with people coming out of apostate organizations in large numbers. Our enemies saw the church dying before it was born. A recent writer in the Presbyterian Church has told us that we had 'but the zeal of despair. Our enemies had much more reasonableness for their prediction if they looked only at the outward aspects of a movement which resulted in the feeble actions of June 11, 1936.

That movement had been begun some years before. It had had a good deal of popular support within the Presbyterian Church in the early days of its inception. I'm only guessing but I think that perhaps as many as a quarter of the people within that Church had at least some tacit interest in what we stood for. But every time anything decisive was done, the band was cut in half, until by the time the enabling act was adopted that Thursday afternoon only a Gideon's band was left. And then within six months Dr. Machen was taken from us. And some of our enemies openly rejoiced and actually praised their god that he who had troubled Israel had been silenced. But whether there should come great and easy success or slow and painful struggle, the important point for the present consideration is that there can be no denying that the new organization was born of the need for an instrument that would be set for the defense of the gospel.

The gospel was seriously and immediately threatened. The organization which until that time had been the vehicle of grace for the proclamation of the gospel had grievously, deliberately and persistently departed from the truth which it was organized in 1706 to proclaim and defend. In the minds of many of us it had ceased to be a church, for it had ceased to possess at least two of the essential marks of the church — the gospel could no longer be preached in it in its purity, and government and worship and discipline could no longer be exercised in accordance with the revealed will of God. The word of man was placed on a par with the Word of God and the ordinances of man were

given precedence over the ordinances of God. But that the new organization was formed for the defense of the gospel needs no further elaboration. It was manifest at that time and it has been manifest since, to all.

It is refreshing to see the measure of honesty in the spokesman for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Dr. Lefferts A. Loetscher, Professor of American Church History at the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in Princeton, New Jersey, when he tells us in his recent book, *The Broadening Church*, that the church had opened its doors to a full recognition of moderate liberalism, which is simply another way of saying that the church had opened its doors both to faith and to unbelief and had put them upon a par.

#### What is the Gospel?

But perhaps we put the cart before the horse. We discussed the monuments in the battlefield of the gospel, but we have not yet defined what we mean either by *defense* or by *gospel*. What is the *gospel*, and against whom must it be defended. The gospel is certainly a statement of good news of salvation from sin. It is likewise an interpretation of the good news, and it is an application of that interpretation.

This is all implicit in the text of Scripture where the apostle tells us, "Christ died for our sins." It's a story — Christ died. It's an interpretation — *for our sins*. It's an application — *for our sins*. And without all three elements that which might pass for preaching is not the preaching of the gospel. It is just not the gospel simply to state the facts of gospel history. Nor is it the gospel simply to state an accurate interpretation of those facts. In other words it is not just a pious concatenation of words that comprises the gospel, no matter how earnestly or how zealously they may be proclaimed. If such were the case it would be accurate to say that we can preach the gospel in any church, and we should have been foolish to give up the great forum of the Presbyterian Church and unite ourselves in a little band like this for the proclamation of the gospel. But the gospel consists in the application of that truth to the sins of a particular age, to the sins of a particular church, and to the sins of a particular individual. The gospel is *for people*, and the sins from which it delivers are the sins of people.

And what are the sins of our age?

To be sure we hear a very great deal about juvenile delinquency, and statistics are printed concerning major crimes, and certainly in our age as in every age there are a great many violations of the sixth and the seventh and the eighth commandments. But I submit to you that in our day the sins which need to be ferreted out and to which the gospel must be applied are more particularly the sins against the first table of the law. And almost all "gospel preaching" so-called ignores the first table of the law. Morality has become moralism, and the most blatant violations of the first and the second and the third and the fourth commandments are tolerated and encouraged in high places within the church.

A few weeks ago I attended the banquet of the Military Chaplain's Association of the U.S.A. and one of the principle speakers was a very prominent Presbyterian clergyman. He told how the Protestant and the Roman Catholic and the Jewish chaplains worked together. And he told of a little band of soldiers that he had under his care, of many and various faiths, and how they all prayed together, and how, in his view, each found his own god in his own way, and then rose up to serve. Serve whom? Serve what? The answer of course is that each served the god of his own imagination, but that he served that god by serving mankind. And that, my friends, is true humanism. And if that is not a violation of the first and the second and the third commandments of God then I haven't the slightest idea what those commandments mean.

My friends, the gospel is good news that is given to sinners. It is given first of all to those who equate the God of the Bible with the gods of their own sinful imaginations, who worship God in ways that they devise themselves, and which He has not prescribed, who preach the revelation of God as if it were the revelation of man and not truly the Word of God, who trample His Sabbaths and turn them into a holiday, after they have tipped their hat to some sort of god, in some sort of church. These are the sins of our age, and they are the sins to which the gospel must be addressed. And these are the sins with which individual sinners and with which the churches must be faced, in the light of the law of God and of the gospel

of Christ. Unless this is being done the *gospel is not being preached, no matter in what pious terms the preaching may be cast.*

In preparation for another occasion I took the trouble to look over a number of volumes of sermons published by prominent evangelists of past days and of our day. Some of them were pretty good sermons, and I may say that the most prominent evangelist of our day, (who I understand may have cut into my crowd tonight), is about the best of them. But you know, hardly one of them referred in any direct way to the primary teachings of the first table of the law. Hardly one of them called upon men to forsake gods of their own imagination which they had created, and not one of them called upon apostate churches to repent, and upon members of such churches to sever their sinful ecclesiastical connections which were held in violation of the third commandment, and to forsake their loyalty to their leaders who had torn asunder the Word of God and who had trampled under foot the truth of God. And it is the gospel addressed to such churches and to such sinners that must be preached in our day.

#### **Against Whom Must the Gospel be Defended?**

But against whom must the gospel then be defended? Set for the defense of the gospel, yes, but defense against whom. The answer is very simple. It must be defended against the Devil, and all his agents. We in our sophisticated age have lost sight of the personality of the Devil. He is treated even in orthodox circles as an idea, and not a person. He might be useful to scare children, but hardly appropriate to discuss with sophisticated adults. Perhaps we have so emphasized the glorious truth of the power of God and the marvellous truth of the direct access which we have to God, that we have forgotten the important truth of the personality and the power of Satan. To be sure the manifestations of his power in the time of Christ were different than they are now, but there is not the slightest evidence that he is less powerful now than he was at that time. His craft and power are still great, and he fights battles against the forces of God with great and powerful weapons in every age. It is he who sets the

battle line and his battle line is different in every age. He is a clever general and he doesn't continue to fight battles which he has already won. And he has pretty well won the battle to make people think he doesn't exist. And the placing of the devil in the category of the boogey-man in our so-called enlightened age is one of his greatest victories.

But if the power of the devil is not as easily seen in our day as it was when he possessed individuals and in their form confronted the Lord Jesus Christ, his power is still great, and he now works subtly through agencies, frequently those agencies with the greatest show of piety.

#### **Present Battles in Defense of the Gospel**

Let us see in the second place the present battle in defense of the gospel. We've seen some past monuments, and incidentally what the gospel is and against whom it must be defended, but what are the present battles which must be fought. Let us turn from the past to the future, for, as the French statesman Mendes-France, who is in the news again today, reminds us, "nostalgia with the past is a drug that clouds the mind to the opportunities of the future." How shall we do battle in defense of the gospel in our day? Where shall the battles be fought in that defense? It is possible to discover hundreds of battle lines, but we shall confine ourselves to only three for we believe that under them are subsumed most of the activities of Satan in our day. All of them could, of course, be subsumed under the title, unbelief. However in the battle against unbelief there are many major skirmishes. There are to be sure other sectors in the battle line in other parts of the world and the worldwide church. We must also fight at these points. But if we confine ourselves tonight to the battle right here in America, the battle to be fought within our own ranks and the ranks of the society within which we move, we shall see the battle seems to center at three points. None of these fronts has lately been opened, but they are all continuations of earlier battle fields and battle fronts, and the lines have simply been shifted.

The names of the battles to be fought, are the battle against religionism, the battle against externalism and the battle against formalism.

(See "Marsden," page 92)

# The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

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## An Ecumenical Approach To Church Unity

“WE EMBARRASS CHRIST with our disunity,” was the declaration, according to the Philadelphia newspapers, of James A. Pike, an Episcopal Dean, at an interdenominational service of the 168th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. held in Convention Hall on Sunday, May 27th. As a practical approach to church unity, according to the reports, he stressed that each group must retain the emphasis which has made it great. He was further quoted as saying: “This is the way we’ll get together, not by the denial of these emphases, but by retaining the best of what each has. We need all this in a great common faith.” The special emphases which were then listed were the Presbyterian-Reformed emphasis on the sovereignty of God, the Lutheran justification by grace through faith, the Congregationalist stress on the responsibility of the local church unit, the Baptist insistence on a separation of the church from the world, the Episcopalian doctrine of the communion of saints and the Roman Catholic discipline and loyalty.

The position taken by Dean Pike is of significance, not so much as an

utterance of a particular individual, but because it rather effectively sums up the point of view which appears to be dominant in the ecumenical movement, especially in this country. As such, it underscores the observation that the ultimate and basic goal of the ecumenical movement is widely regarded as *church union of the broadest possible scope*. This is a point which must be kept in view whenever the claim is made that the World Council of Churches exists primarily or solely to provide Christian churches with an effective agency for *communication* with one another.

Of greater importance, however, is the observation that the statement of Dean Pike confirms the view that the basis of the modern program of church union is not obedience to Christ as the Head of the Church who has set forth His will for the Church in the Holy Scriptures. On this basis the Church itself is defined, not in terms of what Christ requires the Church to be, but inclusively of whatever today claims for itself the name of church. Thus the historic doctrine that organizations or societies worthy of the name of churches of Christ must display the marks of the Church falls by the wayside. The Westminster Confession of Faith, on the other hand, while taking care not to insist that the Church can attain perfection in the world, does maintain that in churches that are churches indeed the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances are ministered, and public worship performed more or less purely. Briefly stated, this position involves the judgment that we can speak of a manifestation of the Church only where there is a concern, in obedience to Christ, to proclaim and to maintain His Word faithfully. By the same token where there is a repudiation of, or a fundamental indifference to, the authority of Christ as that is expressed in His Word, the Church no longer exists.

It should be obvious that the effort to achieve church unity by way of retaining certain historic emphases of various denominations falls short lamentably of fidelity to the Scriptural emphasis of unity in the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. It is folly to suppose that true unity can be achieved by blending together these various historic emphases. For, in the first place,

it is evident that the historic emphasis of a particular denomination may have little resemblance to its emphasis today. Has the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., for example, been zealous to maintain the doctrine of the sovereignty of God as that is set forth in the Scriptures and expounded in the Confession of Faith? Moreover, in the second place, if the doctrine of the sovereignty of God or, as another example, the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, were retained in any particular church in full earnestness, it would become necessary to set these doctrines sharply over against other historic views which minimize or obscure the sovereignty of God and the doctrines of grace. Calvinism and Arminianism, for example, could not be allowed simply to stand alongside of one another. And finally, genuine union can never be achieved by a mechanical or artificial approach which does not have an eye for the organic character of truth.

The Scriptures indeed recognize diversity in the body of Christ as well as unity. The Apostle Paul emphasizes that there are many members in the one body (I Cor. 12:12f.; Eph. 4:1f.) but the diversity which he had in view was not a diversity of doctrine. It is a diversity of gifts of the Spirit. And Paul goes on to teach that these gifts are graciously granted with a view to the building up of the church by way of proclaiming and maintaining the truth in love.

It is rather ironical indeed that the modern devotion to the ecumenical ideal of unity, while allowing for and even insisting upon diversity and disunity regarding the very fundamentals of the Christian faith, has not spelled an advance in the recognition of Christian liberty. Its watchword in other respects has very largely been that of conformity, conformity to the reigning point of view and especially to the ecumenical goal and pattern. In general there is the utmost latitude with respect to faith and practice; on the other hand, the most basic test of loyalty is that of acceptance of this latitude and cooperation with the program that is based upon it. Accordingly it is not so strange after all that a situation characterized by the apparent breadth of the ecumenical movement is also one that is marked by the ascendancy of ecclesiastical domina-

tion. This is bound to happen wherever the church is not moved by a holy passion to recognize and acknowl-

edge in word and deed Christ's kingship over His Church.

N. B. S.

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## Philadelphia Area Christian High School

A CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL is to open in the area immediately north of Philadelphia this September, according to the Rev. Robert L. Thoburn, chairman of the Committee on Public Relations of the Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian High School Association, which will operate the school. During the first year grades nine and ten will be available, and grades eleven and twelve are to be added during the next two years.

The basis of the Association, the basis on which it will operate the school, is the "infallible and inerrant Word of God, the Bible, as interpreted in the Reformed Standards which include the following truths: Belief in the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; in the creation of all things out of nothing by a direct act of God; in the verbal inspiration of the Old and New Testaments in the original manuscripts; in the virgin birth and the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ and His substitutionary atonement for our sins; that salvation is by grace, through faith in Him who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification; in the bodily resurrection of the dead, both the just and the unjust; in the eternal joy of the saved and the eternal punishment of the lost; and in the personal return on the Lord Jesus Christ."

The Association is governed by these guiding principles: 1) that all things have been created to the end that the Triune God may be glorified in and through them. 2) That man was created by a special creative act of God, not by evolutionary process, and that all other forms of life were created by God and ordained to reproduce each after its kind. 3) That God by His wise covenant arrangement has obligated parents to educate their children to the end that God and His glory shall be central and supreme

in life's total experience. 4) That the education of children shall be continued under the parent's responsible supervision in a school that carries out the basic God-honoring, God-centered program begun in the home.

Academically the curriculum will be at least equal to that required by the Department of Public Instruction of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Present plans call for a general course, a college preparatory course, and a commercial course. The curriculum will include courses in English, literature, history, social studies, mathematics, science, Bible, church history, Latin, a modern language, music, art, health and physical education, and commercial subjects.

The school board elected by the Association has employed three teachers. Miss Johanna Timmer, Principal of a Christian elementary school in Ripon, California, has been secured to serve as principal. She is a graduate of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, has a M.A. degree from the University of Michigan, and has taken work at the University of Chicago Divinity School, at Calvin Seminary, and at the Presbyterian Seminary in Chicago. Her previous teaching experience includes the North Fourth St. Christian School of Paterson, N. J., the Grand Rapids Christian High School, Calvin College (where she also served as Dean of Women), and the Reformed Bible Institute of Grand Rapids, where she was Dean of Women and for a number of years acting president.

The two other members of the faculty are Miss Margaret Brown of Wycombe, Penna., who this past year has been teaching in the Central Bucks High School of Doylestown, Pa., and Mr. Charles Freytag of West Orange, N. J., who has taught in the Montclair High School. He will teach mathe-

matics and science, and Miss Brown will teach English. Part-time instructors will conduct the work in art, music and physical education.

Preliminary indications are that the enrollment the first year will be about 60 pupils. The high school will provide a continuing Christian education beyond the level now given by Christian elementary schools in the area. There are three of these schools, at Willow Grove, in Germantown, and in the Northeast. All are cooperating in the high school endeavor. Together their present enrollment is about 400. Students are also expected from the Camden County Christian school in New Jersey.

The Board is endeavoring to secure proper facilities for holding the school. Negotiations at present not entirely complete are being conducted in the hope of obtaining a former public school building in Wyncote. Conveniently located, this building contains five large rooms and some smaller ones.

In accordance with the view that education of the children is the work of the parents, not of the church, this school is not "parochial" in character, but will be conducted by a Board of Directors elected from the membership of the Association. A number of different denominations are represented in the Association and on the Board.

The members of the Board are the Rev. George Weeber, pastor of the First Reformed Church of America, Germantown, president; the Rev. Robert L. Atwell, pastor of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Glenside, vice-president; James Warden, Germantown, secretary; Walter H. Marchant, Hatboro, treasurer; and the Rev. Robert L. Thoburn of Hatboro, Mr. Howard Weber of Southampton, Mr. Thomas Irwin of Germantown, the Rev. Richard W. Gray of Willow Grove, Dr. R. Laird Harris of Elkins Park, Mr. Robert Adcock of Fox Chase, and the Rev. Robert D. Crees of Philadelphia.

Information concerning admission to the school may be obtained from the Rev. Robert L. Thoburn, 10 Hart Street, Hatboro, Pa. Persons who would like to assist the school through financial contributions should send them to Mr. Walter H. Marchant, Treasurer, 105 Newington Rd., Hatboro, Pa.

# Westminister Theological Seminary Commencement

THE REGULAR Commencement Exercises of Westminister Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, were held as scheduled on Wednesday, May 16, with the Baccalaureate Service the preceding Sunday afternoon and the Alumni Banquet on Tuesday evening.

## Baccalaureate

The Rev. Meredith Kline, Assistant Professor of Old Testament, preached the Baccalaureate sermon. Referring in particular to the exile of Judah, as recorded in the Old Testament, he indicated that it presented an illustration of the basic theme of all human history, the theme of exile and restoration. Man because of sin was exiled from the original paradise of God, and through faith in the Redeemer, Christ, finds restoration to the paradise of promise. On a smaller scale this pattern has been reproduced again and again in the history of God's dealings with His people. It is the glory of the ministry to proclaim the work of the Redeemer, that those now exiled may be restored to the Kingdom of God.

## Annual Banquet

Nearly two hundred persons gathered on Tuesday evening for the annual banquet which, though originally chiefly an Alumni affair, has now been opened to all friends of the Seminary as well. The Rev. William L. Hiemstra, President of the Alumni Association, presided over the gathering. Following the dinner, brief talks were given by Professor Woolley, Dean of Students, by Dr. Stonehouse, Dean of the Faculty, and by the Rev. Robert Marsden, Executive Secretary of the Seminary. Members of the graduating class were introduced to the gathering. The address of the evening was given by the Rev. Dr. Robert K. Rudolph, of the Reformed Episcopal Seminary of Philadelphia. Dr. Rudolph spoke on the subject, "Self Conscious Ortho-

doxy and the Ecumenical Movement." He emphasized the fact that small conservative denominations have a reason for existing, and that they should hold firm to their convictions, while at the same time rejoicing in the fellowship they have with others sincere in their faith in Jesus Christ, but not agreed on certain implications and applications of that faith in ecclesiastical life. Here an "ecumenical" fellowship can prevail and be a blessing, without an ecumenical organization which would necessitate the compromise of convictions.

## Women's Auxiliary

Nearly seventy five ladies were present for the luncheon of the Women's Auxiliary, held on Wednesday. Following the luncheon, the Seventeenth Annual meeting of the Auxiliary was held in the Seminary Chapel. The president, Mrs. Frank H. Stevenson, conducted the meeting. Mrs. Samuel McPheeters of Goldsboro, N. C., read the Scripture, and Mrs. Robert Churchill of Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, led in prayer. Special music was provided by Mrs. Edmund P. Clowney Jr., and Mrs. Willets. Minutes of the previous meeting were read by the secretary, Mrs. LeRoy Oliver.

The highlight of the meeting was the report of the treasurer, Mrs. Arthur Kuschke of Dallas, Pa. The Auxiliary has an annual quota of \$25,000. This year gifts totalling \$31,049.07 were reported as coming from members of the Auxiliary. This was the largest amount ever credited to the Auxiliary.

The roll of Auxiliary units in churches was called by Miss Ruth Stahl, and the number present from each church was noted. Members were present from Wisconsin, North Carolina, Virginia, New York, Maryland, Delaware, Ohio, and from New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

There are five vice-presidents of the Auxiliary—Mrs. Arthur W. Machen of Baltimore, Miss Marguerite Montgomery of Rochester, Mrs. Leslie W. Sloat of Eayrestown, N. J., Mrs. R. R. Stuart of Pittsburgh, and Mrs. Harry A. Worcester of Cincinnati.

Following the business session, the gathering heard a brief address by the Rev. Professor Edward J. Young of the Seminary, on the subject of the recently discovered Dead Sea Scrolls.

## Commencement

In spite of some clouds and occasional wind gusts which caused more than one uneasy glance at the sky, the formal commencement exercises were held in the Seminary garden. Following the awarding of the degrees, it was announced that an Eldridge A. Stuart Scholarship in the amount of \$150 for the year 1956-7, from the Carnation Company Scholarship Foundation, had been awarded to Mr. Harvie M. Conn.

The address of the afternoon was given by the Rev. William J. Jones, Editor of the American Sunday School Union, whose subject was "The Holy and the Common."

A brief address to the graduating class was given by Professor C. Van Til, Presiding Fellow of the Faculty. Dr. Van Til told the graduates that they had been trained for the task of bringing to men dwelling in darkness the Light of the World. This Light they did not have of themselves, but had been given it by Christ in the Scriptures. But he warned them that as they proclaimed this Light they would often find people who seemed to be receiving it gladly, but who, on careful investigation, actually did not understand at all what the message really was. So he encouraged them to make their message clear and specific, in the assurance that Christ who had called them to the work would in His own way and time make the message effective to accomplishing His purpose of grace.

## Trustees Meeting

The Board of Trustees of the Seminary held its meeting on Tuesday, May 15, with sixteen members in attendance. Reports were received from the Faculty and from the Executive Secretary. The latter reported that contributions during the fiscal year ending March 31 were the highest in the Seminary's history, and had enabled the

institution to meet current expenses from current revenue without legacies or large special gifts. On the other hand, the institution ended the fiscal year with a precariously low cash balance, and the contributions during the first five months of 1956 had shown no appreciable gain over the previous year, which suggested the urgent need of substantial support in the immediate future.

In other matters, the Board approved a plan of the Faculty whereby the school year will be lengthened by two weeks beginning with the academic year 1957-8. A Faculty recommendation that Mr. George Knight III, a graduate, be appointed Teaching Fellow in Greek for the coming year was approved. The Rev. William L. Hiemstra will again be giving a lecture course in Poimenics this fall. A letter from the Middle

States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, commending the Seminary for a "Progress Report" which had been submitted to the Association, was read. It was learned that the Seminary has been served with condemnation proceedings by the State of Pennsylvania, which intends to take over a portion of the campus at the rear of the seminary property, for a highway which is to be constructed through the area. The Executive Secretary reported that certain preliminary steps have been taken to revive the project of building an apartment house on the campus, to house married students. Further plans on this subject are to be presented at the fall meeting of the Board.

The 1956-7 Academic Year will begin on September 26, with the matriculation of students and the formal opening exercises.

## Charles Hodge At Seminary

By LESLIE W. SLOAT

IN OUR PREVIOUS ARTICLE it was suggested that there was an early intimacy between Charles Hodge and the first seminary professor, Archibald Alexander. They had encountered each other shortly after Charles came to Princeton with his mother in 1812. Charles watched the installation of Dr. Alexander as the first professor of the Seminary, and was deeply appreciative of the sermons and lectures Dr. Alexander delivered in the university chapel while Charles was a student there.

In a letter to his mother under date of September 21, 1816, Charles writes: "I had the pleasure of spending nearly an hour this morning with Dr. Alexander; he did not say much about the seminary, but told me he did not think I should find the studies oppressive, as I might avoid the disagreeable task of transcribing their historical compends either by getting someone to do it for me, or by obtaining them from some of the preceding classes; and that the students might have a day or a week at any time to ride about should they find the duties too burdensome." The good Doctor did not want prospective students over-

whelmed by the thought of their arduous labors.

In October of the same year Charles went as a companion with Dr. Alexander on a tour through the state of Virginia, where the professor visited scenes of his youth, education and early ministry. It was a memorable trip for the nineteen year old Charles, and he often recounted in later years the charm he experienced in being present as Dr. Alexander renewed acquaintance with people and places familiar from previous years. Alexander was frequently asked to preach, often on the spur of the moment, and two of his sermons made a lasting impression on Charles. Of one of these, concerning the judgment, Charles writes: "Again, when he preached on the judgment of the quick and the dead by the Son of Man, he so keenly apprehended the event as real, and so graphically described it, that at the crisis, when the trumpet sounded, and the great white throne began to descend, the entire congregation, by one impulse, rose and bent to the windows, that they might see Him and take their places among the multitudes thronging to meet Him." This was preaching . . .

The whole trip was made on horseback or by stage, and frequently the two companions would get started at three in the morning, and not reach their destination until the dark of the evening. But apparently it did not harm the relatively frail youth, for he felt better near the end of the trip than when he started.

The seminary year began on November 9, 1816, and Charles was one of 26 students enrolled. The seminary building was not yet completed. Charles resided at the home of Mrs. Bache for this year, and this arrangement did nothing to dim the romance between himself and Sarah Bache. Seminary classes were conducted either in the college building—Nassau Hall—or in the homes of the two professors.

What was the teaching like in this new Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church? And what were the professors like, as professors? Dr. Alexander was the primary teacher in the fields of theology. He had always been interested in theology, had gathered a small library of the masters of Latin theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He had also secured a number of writings of eminent Dutch theologians whom he regarded "as having pushed theological investigation to its greatest length, and compacted its conclusions into the most symmetrical method." He preferred reading his theology in Latin rather than English, because the terminology was more precise, and because the effort of reading the Latin kept his attention from wandering.

Alexander felt it necessary to give first attention to the critical interpretation of the original Scriptures. He was competent in Greek, but the study of Hebrew was not yet too developed. In the fields of criticism and interpretation he finally worked out a system of instruction which he delivered in the form of lectures, repeated from year to year. He also studied and taught in the field of Biblical archeology. He tried to keep in touch with current developments in theology and philosophy both in America and on the continent. He held that "theology was best taught by a wise union of the text book with the free lecture. Finding no work in English which entirely met his demands, he placed in the hands of his pupils the Institutions of Francis Tur-

rettin. . . . He often dissented from the learned Genevan, and always endeavored to cultivate in his students the spirit and habits of original investigation. He very laboriously engaged in making such brief aids, in the way of syllabus and compendium," as would be helpful to the student. He developed extensive series of questions on the subject of theology. He assigned topics for thesis papers, and these were publicly read and commented on by both professors and students. He also devoted time to those who opposed the positions of Reformed theology. "What might be considered by some an inordinate length of time was devoted to the cardinal differences, such as the controversy with Deists, Arians, Socinians, Pelagians, Arminians, Papists and Universalists; all being made to revolve around the Calvinistic system, which, upon sincere conviction, he had adopted." Under this man Charles Hodge studied theology.

The other professor, Dr. Samuel Miller, dealt with the field of practical theology and church government, and ecclesiastical history. Here Hodge learned of the development of the church, and of such problems as those relating to Presbyterian government against episcopacy, the papacy, congregationalism and the like. Charles apparently soaked up the learning that was offered, and proved himself a good student.

In 1817 the Seminary building was completed and occupied. Charles left the home of Mrs. Bache (there were some hard feelings on her part over this change) and took up residence in the new building named, appropriately, Alexander Hall. Concerning the new arrangement he wrote his mother: "Being immediately over the kitchen we were afraid we would be incommoded by the noise, but in this we have been agreeably disappointed. We have the southwest corner of the building. The room is light and cheerful, far pleasanter than any in the college. The sun at this season (November) rises immediately in our windows, and as we are obliged to rise at half past six for the winter, we will often have the pleasure of hailing the first beams of the morning. We breakfast at 8, dine at 1 and sup at 6. Our fare as yet has been much better than we expected and everything perfectly

neat. Politeness, too, springing I hope from brotherly affection, is as manifest as even you could wish. Indeed, Mama, we live as one family, and that not of anchorites or monks, but of brothers united in pursuits, in feeling, and in intent. Johns (a fellow student with whom Charles formed a life-long friendship) now says he would not live out on any consideration, and the same feeling of satisfaction and pleasure appears to pervade us all. . ." There was of course no electricity. Study was with the help of candlelight.

Charles' own devotional life developed and deepened during his seminary course. Near the close of his first year there he had written home: "And now, my dear Mama, as this is perhaps the last letter I shall be able to write this session, I wish respectfully and affectionately to say that I have for some time thought it a duty that we should have in our family the usual religious services at the table and in the evening, if perfectly agreeable to us all. This subject has given me much pain in exciting a struggle between a sinful diffidence, almost, and a sense of duty. I only want you to know I am willing to do whatever you wish."

As the three years of his Seminary training drew toward a close in the spring of 1819, Charles naturally came to think more and more of what he would do after he finished. One of his classmates, Samuel Davis, made plans to travel as a missionary over the states, and wanted Charles to go with him. He mentioned the idea to Dr. Alexander, who indicated he thought it would be good if Charles' health permitted. However Charles apparently did not give such a program serious thought. To some extent the church's General Assembly tried to take care of the seminary graduates, and Charles wondered whether the Assembly might think it expedient for him to undertake a mission through the Southern or Western states. In fact he did not feel it necessary to make a decision until the Assembly should give advice.

But in all of this he felt somewhat committed to accepting whatever Dr. Alexander might decide for him. Early in the year he had written his mother, "Under Him whose I am by particular obligations, I feel at the disposal of you and Dr. Alexander; and should you agree in marking out the same

course, I trust I should tread it with cheerful feet."

They agreed. On May 6, 1819 Charles happened to have some business which led him to visit the eminent professor. After the business was concluded, Dr. Alexander suddenly looked at Charles and bluntly asked, "How would you like to be a professor in the Seminary?" The young man was overwhelmed with surprise and confusion. He had apparently never dreamed of such a thing, though it had been evident for some time that an additional teacher was needed to relieve the burdens being carried by the two professors. Dr. Alexander told him simply to think about it, and to wait and see what the Assembly might determine. And with true fatherly interest he added, "My plan for you at present, is simply that you spend the next winter in Philadelphia learning to read the Hebrew language with points with some competent instructor."

The graduation was held September 28, 1819. Seven young men received the certificate of having passed through the entire Seminary course. They were George S. Boardman, Remembrance Chamberlain, Samuel S. Davis, John Goldsmith, Charles Hodge, William Nevins, and Aaron D. Lane.

It may be of interest to note here that a little over a year before this Charles' brother Hugh had graduated with highest honors from the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania. In order to gain additional experience and as a sort of internship, Hugh sailed on a merchant ship for Calcutta, India. He returned in 1820 and opened an office in central Philadelphia. His work received notice, and he was called to lecture on surgery in a young medical institute. Circumstances however, chiefly poor eyesight, compelled him to change from anatomy and surgery, and he was presently elected to the chair of obstetrics at the University of Pennsylvania, which position he occupied with distinction for the rest of his life.

We may note also that during these years the attachment of Charles to Sarah Bache was deepening. Charles' biographer quotes from some letters exchanged between them in 1817 and 1818. Charles laments that their correspondence has been irregular, but even more that when it has existed

it has lacked religious content. Evidently Sarah had raised questions that Charles found it hard to answer. Perhaps she had found it difficult to live in obedience to God's commands. Charles reminds her, "that faith itself is the very first duty God requires us to perform, without which it is impossible to please Him in anything. All attempts, therefore, which men so frequently make to obey before they believe, is proceeding in a way directly the reverse of what God has prescribed."

In another letter to her he refers to some points made by Dr. Alexander in one of the classes, to help her in her difficulties. "In speaking of the justice of God in the punishment of sin, he observed that it was the foundation of the whole plan of redemption; for had there not been some absolute necessity, arising from the nature of God, that sin should be punished, how can we suppose that He would make the infinite sacrifice of His Son, rather than permit it to pass with impunity. . ."

In August of 1820 she wrote him, "I love to feel myself bound to you by indissoluble ties that not even the grave can change — to feel that after being cherished and guided by you through time I shall, through your instrumentality, stand by you purified before the throne of our Heavenly Father when time shall be no more. . ." Nearly two years would pass yet before their marriage.

## Marsden

(Continued from page 86)

### RELIGIONISM

The first, religionism, used to go simply by the title of unbelief. And then it became agnosticism, and now it has become Christianity. And the latter two used to be subsumed under the Biblical title, "the leaven of the Pharisees," and Pharisaism may be defined for our purposes as the doctrine that the chief end of the church is to propagate itself.

Let us look a little more closely at the manifestations of these doctrines and I think we shall see that we must be set in defense of the gospel against them. The first major battle which must be fought is the battle against religionism. Its theory is that religion is good, and that all religions are a manifestation of the true religion, and

a difference of approach to God. The manifestations of religionism in our day are legion and we can mention a few.

Some time ago I was driving along in a strange area, behind a bus. And on the back of the bus there was a sign which many of you have seen, I am sure, "Go to the church or synagogue of your choice." And right over that was another advertisement, "Eat ice cream every day. It is good for you." Religion, and ice cream. Religion is good for you, no matter where you buy it and ice cream is good for you, no matter where you buy it. Oh, to be sure, some religion may be better for you than others, just as some ice cream may be better than others. But they are all good for you, so have some. It will do you good. That is the doctrine of religionism.

I am told that there is a room in the United Nations building in New York City that is the meditation room. It is supposed to be symbolic of all religion, supposed to inspire reverence by a clever arrangement of lights and furniture. And I am told that the room is about as close to being without form and void as anything can be and still be a room. And yet I suppose that if we were to go there, we should almost instinctively tip-toe in with our hats off because anything that has had that much planning and that much arrangement must contain some sort of god.

It is only comparatively recently that a prayer room has been furnished in the Capitol of the United States, for obviously if the legislators are going to pray they have to have the right surroundings to inspire prayer. And it is only recently that the words, "Under God" were put in the pledge of allegiance for the United States, and that was supposed to be a great victory for religion; and only recently *In God we trust* has been ordered to be placed upon the money of the United States. Now these things are not bad in themselves. They may as a matter of fact be good, but they are a sign of the religionism in our day. And the lie that Satan has promoted in all places that religion is good, is a lie as great as any that he has ever propagated. For false religion is an abomination before God. And those who join in it and unite themselves to it are condemned of God in the strongest terms.

### EXTERNALISM

The second manifestation of the power of the devil in our day, against which we must be set for the defense of the gospel, is externalism. When the Scribes and the Pharisees called attention to the temple, and when they called attention to themselves as the direct descendants of Abraham, they were engaging in externalism and thus were manifesting one of the chief characteristics of Pharisaism. We can see its extension a very great deal in the last 25 years. Dr. Loetscher, whom I mentioned a moment ago, in that same book admits that during our time administrative centralization and theological decentralization have taken place. And a great deal of the energy of many of the churches, and certainly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. has been taken up with the making of rules to tighten the hold of the denomination upon the individual churches, and of the churches upon their people, and to weaken the message that is to be preached. The Presbyterian Church, for instance, has secured for itself a title to all the property which is owned by the several congregations. And as one recent author has put it, a chain of hard cash binds the individual church to the denomination. The same author tells us that the general assemblies of that church have become gigantic salesmen's conventions, in which a successful promotion of the external product has become the chief end, and from which the individual salesman having been talked to and having been sold anew goes home to sell his product and to build the church.

Well, you remember that we've said that the chief end of man is to build the church, according to the Pharisees. The curse of externalism has certainly come into every denomination. And which minister of the gospel has not been tempted to measure his success by the size of his congregation or by the size of his salary. Or which minister has not been tempted to measure his success comparing it with his fellow minister's along those lines. I trust this externalism has not gained ground in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

I shall never forget how in the early days of the church whole families made almost unbelievable sacrifices to be in the Orthodox Presbyterian

Church. I remember how I was called to become secretary of the missions committees in 1938, in July of that year. And the first month as I signed the warrants for the checks that went out I discovered that we had enough money on hand to pay all the missionaries in full. It was obvious the church had made a very wise choice! And the second month we had enough on hand to pay the missionaries 50 per cent of their salaries. And the most that any missionary was supposed to get was a hundred dollars a month. And so the most that anyone actually got paid was \$50 a month. Well, that was the second month. And then the third month of September, when it came time to sign warrants for the checks, I discovered that when we divided what we had on hand, we had enough to pay each missionary *thirty-one per cent* of his salary. And the most that any one was supposed to get paid was a hundred dollars a month and the most any one received was thirty-one dollars.

So I decided I would set out and see if I could find some money or see if I could find some way by which the work could be curtailed. And I remember being entertained very graciously in the home of a cultured older couple. He had been a successful minister in the Presbyterian Church. A day or so before I arrived he had received his check for thirty-one dollars for his month's salary. And as I was received so graciously, the hostess proceeded to set the table as she had been accustomed for a long while on the average rate of about ten cents per day per person. And we had potatoes for breakfast. And we had potatoes for lunch and we had potatoes for dinner. Each in a different form, more or less, but potatoes just the same. And they thought nothing of the externals for they were happy in being a part of a church that was set for the defense of the gospel.

Then I moved on to another family. And that was a family with a number of children. And someone had donated to them a bushel of apples, and we had apples for breakfast, and we had apples for lunch, and we had apples for dinner. And the externals of the church meant little to them, for they were in a church that was set for the defense of the gospel. And they were happy.

Then I suppose we might speak of

externalism in connection with the modern celebration of religious holidays. A case in point is our tremendous preoccupation with things like Christmas and Easter and Good Friday and now I suppose we'll have Pentecost. It is rather interesting that the second meeting of the Presbytery of Philadelphia was held on Friday, the 27th of December, 1706, for the examination of a man to be ordained to the ministry. I wonder how many Presbyterian Churches could manage to get a Presbytery together two days after Christmas when all the ministers were worn out with their celebration. It is rather interesting also that in the little book, *The Day Lincoln Was Shot*, the author who is a Roman Catholic makes a point of it that it seemed to some of the Roman Catholics improper that President Lincoln should be attending the theater on the Friday before Easter. But you know, I don't find the slightest bit of evidence that Mr. Lincoln thought it the least bit odd that he should have a theater party and invite General Grant to be the guest of honor (General Grant of course didn't go) on that day. I wonder whether a modern president would dare to attend the theater on such a day, or whether the externalism which is so characteristic of our age has gone so far as that it would judge a man in such a matter.

Then I suppose also that a case in point might be the use of the word "church" in our day. It is rather significant that the minutes of our first presbytery (the second sitting of which occurred in December of that year) contains the statement that an ordination was to be held "in the public meeting house." The use of the word "church" to mean a building is comparatively new, and I believe that one of the symbols of externalism in our day is the fact that we oftentimes in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church are told that people won't attend our churches because we don't have a "church."

Winston Churchill in his first volume of his *History of the English Speaking Peoples*, with characteristic British humor, says, that if a native of Roman Britain were to wake up today, he would find in every village temples and priests of the new creed, and the facilities for Christian worship would appear to him to be far in excess of the number of devotees. I wonder if

that isn't often true in this country too.

And then certainly the externalism comes to the fore in the glorification of men and the tying of movements to men. I remember so well the General Assembly of 1933 which met in Columbus, Ohio, where it was freely said that at that time there was to be a contest between Robert E. Speer and J. Gresham Machen. And you were to vote for the one that you thought was better of the two, presumably. I remember hearing an erstwhile friend of Dr. Machen tell him to his face that if it were a question between himself and Dr. Speer this man would have to choose Dr. Speer because he was convinced he was the greater man.

I'll never forget the scene in that General Assembly. A minority report on the matter of foreign missions had been presented. I as the junior member of a two man minority had been given five minutes of the Assembly's precious time to defend the report. It was during the depression. The Assembly could meet only for about five days, and of course you couldn't expect to give more than a total of fifteen minutes to the unfortunate subject of whether Biblical foreign missions should be carried on or not. I finished my little speech and as I walked down the aisle the spotlight flooded the platform and the Moderator announced the next speaker in something of these terms—"As has been said of one of old, in him was the life, and the life was the light of men, so it can be said of our beloved Robert E. Speer. . . ."

There is a rather interesting sidelight upon that. One of the players in that little drama was Dr. Harrison Ray Anderson, now pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago. Writing in *Presbyterian Life* for April 14 of this year, in review of a recent book, a biography of Robert E. Speer by Reginald Wheeler, he says—and I'm quoting Dr. Anderson—"His (that is, Dr. Speer's) is the only picture on my study desk save Christ's. It is easy for me to think of the two in close association. When I ask myself facing a decision, what would Dr. Speer do or say, it seems to me, what Jesus says or does. If this be hero worship make the most of it . . . I was a member of the 1933 Assembly in Columbus and remember how the Assembly weighed the charges against

Dr. Speer and then rose in appreciation for him." That, my friends, that is hero worship. And much more. But it is certainly an evidence of the externalism which has gripped so much of the Christian church and which threatens every church under heaven.

#### FORMALISM

And the third area of battle is the battle against formalism. Now formalism is simply maintaining the form, regardless of what the substance may be. And there is nothing new about this, for it is as old as sin itself. The Pharisees of Jesus' day scrupulously brought tithes of the least of their substance and substituted that religion for obedience to God. It has always been easier to *do* than to *be*. And externalism and formalism have always been the plague of orthodoxy. Emil Oberholzer in a book which has the amusing title, *Delinquent Saints*, quotes a seventeenth century writer who says of the puritans "All their religion consists in observing Sunday by not working or going into taverns on that day." And formalism is certainly not confined to modern Christianity. Some of you remember the serio-comic scene in the novel *Marjorie Morningstar*, where the Passover is being celebrated—being celebrated by people who hadn't the slightest notion there was anything objectively true about it but who thought that it was a good thing to bind the family together and to keep the traditions. And that is formalism.

There are many evidences of it in our day. The mere celebration of the beginnings of Presbyterianism in this country, which will be held in the Presbyterian Church and are being held all over the country are an evidence of it. Great rallies are being held and are being announced. To be sure the organization of Philadelphia Presbytery in March, 1706 was a direct ancestor of the Presbyterian General Assembly which will be held in this city beginning tomorrow. In form they are the same organization but in substance they are totally different organizations. We said a little while ago that if it had not been for the decision of the Council of Nicaea in favor of Athanasius, the church would have been a totally different church after that date than before it, even though it might have kept the same name and many of the same

words and forms. It would still have been a totally different church.

And I submit to you that while in form the church is the same, in substance the little presbytery in 1706 and its spiritual ancestry is totally different than the organization which will meet down town this week. Creeds are no longer used to define truth but to conceal it. And everyone in the Presbyterian Church has freely agreed that creeds can be interpreted to mean almost anything.

Another evidence of formalism is the use of "shibboleths." There are all sorts of shibboleths which are likely to gain ground, particularly in orthodox churches. I could mention dozens of them, and I shan't take your time tonight. But you know something of what they are. Orthodoxy is defined by whether you accept this or that or the other shibboleth. In the Presbyterian Church it was, will you support the boards and agencies of the church? If you will, you are orthodox. Among some of our Fundamentalist brethren it is, will you refrain from smoking and other worldly amusements? And if you do, you are orthodox.

But formalism in our day is also manifested in the preparation for the ministry. Prior to 1929 if a man had been graduated from a respectable seminary, with a high academic standing, he could be admitted into the pulpit of almost any Presbyterian and Reformed church with little difficulty. But gradually the ministry has been formalized and the first and foremost element to be measured in the reception of a minister is, where did you go to Seminary? I am not in any sense detracting from the importance of the decision as to where a man should go to seminary, for the decision to go to this or that seminary is one of the most important decisions that a man makes in his life. But I submit to you that the first question with which the presbyteries should concern themselves is, does the man know the gospel? Is he on fire with a desire to preach it? And is he competent to preach it? And when those things have been determined then the subordinate shibboleths or something of the sort might fit themselves into their right place. Churches have oftentimes become clubs or labor unions which must protect their members against the intrusions of outsiders. There are just so many bricks to be laid and if

you have too many bricklayers you depress the market. Such an attitude toward the ministry, unfortunately, is the attitude even in some good churches. But it is formalism, Pharisaism, just the same.

All these things are evidences of Pharisaism and the Pharisees are those who were most roundly condemned by the Lord Jesus Christ. Their sins were not considered to be trifles. Their sins were the sins which compelled Christ to condemn them in the most dreadful terms.

And so the battle must be fought against religionism, against externalism, and against formalism if we are to be really set for the defense of the gospel.

#### Assured Success in the Defense of the Gospel

Now in the last place, rather briefly, let us look at the assured success in the defense of the gospel. Can we be assured that we'll be a success? Can it be that some crisis may actually bring failure? More than once our futures have turned on balances so delicate and precarious that even the slightest addition to our burdens must have been fatal. But will success come?

May I suggest briefly four ways. First of all, it will come by our keeping our mind on the perpetual character of the war. This is not the age for ease in Zion. This is not the age of the church triumphant. This is the age of the church militant. The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. has lived since 1936 as if it were the church triumphant. Loetscher freely admits that the church since 1936 has enjoyed the longest period of theological peace since the reunion of 1869. There has been no room in that church for thoughtful discussion of theological issues, for they might rock the ecclesiastical boat which is sailing so smoothly and so triumphantly.

Let it be constantly kept in mind that there is no preaching of the gospel unless there is a continuous and relevant setting forth of the gospel against the errors of the day. And that sort of controversy, my friends, will not hurt the gospel cause. As in the world, life is a constant struggle against the cause of death, so there can be no maintenance of life in the church without constant struggle against the causes of death in the church. And death in the church is caused by the power of sin and Satan

triumphing. More often it is forgotten, as Charles Hodge reminds us, in the index volume of the Princeton Theological Review—"Liberty is maintained only by unsleeping vigilance against aggressions of power; virtue is of necessity constant antagonism to vice and truth to error."

Winston Churchill, who certainly should know, reminds us that you cannot preserve a bastion without destroying the enemy without, which is but another way of saying that you can't maintain the *status quo* in a church, but you must always be attacking the enemy lines.

In the second place you must remember that the battles must constantly be fought *at the very point of contact*. Just about the finest piece of writing I have ever seen is that of Martin Luther at this point. I'm quoting: "If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not *confessing* Christ however boldly I may be *professing* Him. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battle fields besides is merely flight and disgrace, if he flinches at that point." The most subtle temptation that comes to the people of God is to continue to give the appearance of fighting battles, but not to be fighting them at the point where the enemy is attacking. That is the failure of a great deal of evangelism in our day. The evangelist talks of sin, but not the sins of the individuals he is addressing nor the church in which he is preaching.

And then the battle implies suffering for Christ. Remember that when the apostle wrote this—set for the defense of the gospel—he was in prison. He tells us that the actions of his enemies in imprisoning him have fallen out to the furtherance of the gospel. Do we actually believe that will happen? Do we actually believe that if we suffer for Christ's sake it will be for the good of the gospel?

An almost perfect illustration is available in our day. Certainly the persecution which came upon Dr. Machen and his associates in 1936 was a grievous experience. It was an experience that almost crushed the sensitive saint. But when 18 years later

an all-out attempt was made by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to swallow up the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.—that is the Southern Presbyterian Church—it is very likely that the exposé of the persecution which had been visited upon Machen was the thing which actually defeated that union. To be sure there were very many elements in the Southern Presbyterian Church responsible for defeating union with the Northern church, a union which would have been a tragedy for our Bible-believing brethren in the South. But I believe that the one element that tipped the scales was the effective use that the leaders in the Southern Presbyterian Church among the conservatives in that church made of the treatment which was afforded Dr. Machen and his associates in 1936. The experience of persecution at that moment was not joyful, but that it worked out nearly a generation later for the furtherance of the gospel in this country can hardly be denied. And we can be assured that that sort of persecution, when it is persecution of the cause of righteousness will always produce effects which will strengthen the gospel in later days. The old truth that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church may sometimes be difficult to see at a particular point, but it is a truth just the same and is that truth which the apostle enunciated when he says that his imprisonment had turned out to the furtherance of the gospel. It is sinful either to desire or to seek martyrdom, but if it comes to maintain the cause of the truth of God, it will surely work out to the furtherance of the gospel.

And all this adds up to simply saying that success is assured if our message and our ministry as a church is relevant. And this is simply another way of saying that we shall succeed if we really preach the gospel. There is no preaching of the gospel that isn't relevant. I can't say with too much emphasis that the mouthing of pious words is not preaching the gospel unless those words are relevant to the lives of the people to whom the gospel is addressed. The gospel is a message of God to sinners and is the message of God to sinners whom He earnestly calls upon to repent and be saved from their sins. If it is not the message of God to sinners, if it isn't relevant in the lives of the sinners to

whom it is preached, it isn't the preaching of the gospel.

My friends, 1706 and 1936 are but monuments on the perpetual battlefield of the war in which the church must constantly be engaged. If a church forsakes that battle it may build great cathedrals, it may attract vast multitudes to religious meetings, it may dictate the policies of governments, it may rule the world, but it will not be a church of Christ. It will be a synagogue of Satan, an instrument in the hands of the god of this world who blindeth the eyes of those who will not see the truth.

And my friends, our church will remain a church just so long as it is doing battle with the full armor of God and with the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. Our church will remain a church just so long as it is a church which is set for the defense of the gospel. Then it will be a church in spite of its smallness, in spite of its failures, in spite of the weaknesses and sins of its ministers, of its elders, of its members. Then it will be a church in spite of any persecution, in spite of the sneers and the jeers of its enemies, in other words it will be a church in spite of all the powers of hell. It will be a church that succeeds as God counts success.

Fear not, O little flock, the foe  
Who madly seeks your overthrow;  
Dread not his wrath and power.  
What though your courage sometimes  
faints,  
His seeming triumph o'er God's saints  
Lasts but a little hour.

Be of good cheer; your cause belongs  
To Him who can avenge your wrongs,  
Leave it to Him, our Lord.  
Though hidden yet from all our eyes,  
He sees the Gideon who shall rise  
To save us and his Word.

As true as God's own word is true,  
Nor earth nor hell with all their crew  
Against us shall prevail.  
A jest, and byword are they grown,  
God is with us, we are His own;  
Our victory cannot fail.

Amen, Lord Jesus, grant our prayer!  
Great Captain, now Thine arm make  
bare,  
Fight for us once again!  
So shall thy saints and martyrs raise  
A mighty chorus to thy praise,  
World without end, Amen.

## Fikkert Ordained, Installed

**A**N ADJOURNED MEETING of the Presbytery of Philadelphia was scheduled for Tuesday evening, June 19, at Community Church of Center Square, Pa., for the purpose of ordaining Mr. Henry Fikkert, and of installing him as pastor of Community Church. During the past year Mr. Fikkert has served as a teacher in the Camden County Christian Day School. He is a graduate of Westminster Seminary, is married and has one son, Stephen. Community Church has been without a pastor for several years, and has been under the direction of the session, with Mr. Thomas Kay doing pastoral work, and several men including Mr. Kay alternating in conducting worship services. The Rev. Arthur W. Kuschke has been Moderator of the session.

## Two French Creek Conferences Planned

**T**WO FRENCH CREEK Bible Conferences are scheduled for the summer. The first will be held the week of August 20-27, and will be a junior conference, designed for young people who expect to be in grades 6-9 in school this fall. The theme of this Conference is *Jesus Christ, the Same yesterday, today and forever*. Courses will be taught by the Rev. Elmer Dortzbach and the Rev. Leslie A. Dunn. The Rev. Edmund P. Clowney will address the group on two evenings of the week, and on the other evenings there will be either a campfire or a missionary speaker. The Rev. Lewis J. Grotenhuis is Director of this Conference.

The Senior Conference will be held August 27—September 3. Courses will be taught by the Rev. Messrs. Robert S. Marsden, John P. Clelland, and Henry Fikkert. Dr. Lawrence N. Man-

ross will bring the addresses in the evening. The Rev. Robert L. Atwell is director of this Conference.

The total registration fee for each Conference is \$16. Registration should be made before August 1.

The camp is located in French Creek State Park 14 miles southeast of Reading, Penna.

## Bible Conference at National City

**T**HE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES of National City and Santee, California, enjoyed a Bible Conference May 11-12. The Pine Valley Conference Ground was rented for the two-day gathering. The Rev. Dwight Poundstone was guest speaker, and Chaplain Lynne Wade brought the concluding message on Saturday. The program included devotional services, study classes and discussion groups. One hundred persons enrolled for the conference.

## Presbyterial of New Jersey

**T**HE SPRING MEETING of the Women's Presbyterial of the Presbytery of New Jersey was held at Faith Church, Pittsgrove, New Jersey. About 53 delegates were present.

Mrs. LeRoy Oliver presided at the sessions. At the business meeting new officers were elected. The new President is Mrs. Hopwood Mullen of Wildwood; Vice-President is Mrs. Carl Reitsma of West Collingswood; Secretary is Mrs. Robert Garrison of Bridgeton; Treasurer is Mrs. Charles Mullen of Crescent Park; and Secretary-Treasurer is Mrs. Edna Hartsell of Vineland.

The morning discussion topic was "Prayer," with Mrs. Vera Jerrell and Mrs. Carl Reitsma speaking on the Obligation and the Privilege of Prayer. This was followed by a discussion period.

The Rev. Robley J. Johnston, General Secretary of the Committee on Christian Education gave the afternoon address, on the subject: "Christian Education—Opportunity Unlimited."

The offering of \$61.00 was divided between the Christian Education Committee and the Revolving Building Fund of the Home Missions Committee.

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