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**ORUM**

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The Jackson Conference

**Post-War Problems**  
The Christian Solution

**Life Without Father**  
Klaus Harmsen

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No Demand Without Duty

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# The Jackson Calvinistic Conference

## An Editorial

THE first American Regional Calvinistic Conference, carrying forward the testimony and inspiration of the earlier National Conferences held at Paterson, N. J., and Grand Rapids, Mich., has gone down into history. Held in the Southland, where some of the finest Presbyterian traditions and loyalties still prevail, it was not surprising that this Conference should meet with the fine response which it enjoyed. Although the initial suggestion and offer of sponsorship for this conference came from the American Calvinistic Conference Committee, whose membership is found chiefly in the North, the Jackson Conference was from the beginning in the hands of the Presbyterian leaders of that city and the planning and execution of the program as well as all other arrangements were entirely theirs.

Jackson, the capital of the state of Mississippi, belongs to what is commonly called the deep South. It is the natural center to which Presbyterian Church life of that state gravitates. It was a happy arrangement to have the pastors of the three Presbyterian churches of Jackson and the President of the local Presbyterian College constitute the Executive Committee of the Conference. Dr. G. T. Gillespie, President of Belhaven College, Dr. J. Moody McDill, Pastor of the Fondren Presbyterian Church, Dr. R. E. Hough, Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, and Dr. Girard Lowe, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, constituted a most effective team working for the success of the Conference. Many elders and other Presbyterian laymen, as well as the ladies of the local churches and faculty members of Belhaven College, contributed their share of labor and fellowship to make the meetings a real success. Presbyterian laymen underwrote the expenses.

One of the heartening elements in the situation at Jackson is the unity of the leaders and their undivided loyalty to the faith of the Presbyterian fathers. The leadership of Belhaven College and of the Churches was one in promoting the cause which these conferences are designed to serve. Though the intensive treatment of the subject, "The Challenge of Calvinism in Our Day", may not have been a common occurrence among the southern brethren, it was clear from the beginning that they were spiritually one with the speakers who unfolded this subject, whether they came from Decatur, Ga., Philadelphia, Pa., or from the state of Michigan. There was also a fine harmony and a unified impact

in the messages of the speakers, whether their antecedents were those of Scotch-Irish Presbyterianism or of Dutch Reformed Calvinism. And, if a personal testimony of one of the speakers be permitted at this point, it was a most heartening and inspiring experience to note the warm reception which every presentation of the Calvinistic Faith received from those who came to listen.

Novel as these conferences are, it did not apparently take the Jackson and Mississippi friends of the Presbyterian Faith long to discover that all connected with this movement are filled with one desire, one holy passion: to carry forward the torch of the God-centered Faith of the Scriptures for which the term Calvinism is only a synonym. There were no hobbies to ride, no pet projects to be put across, not even denominational interests to be promoted. There was only the lifting up of the glorious banner of the Faith of our Fathers, and that faith as a living power for today, striving to serve this day and generation. There was no apologizing for Calvinism, neither on the part of the promoters nor of the speakers. On how high a spiritual plane the Conference was placed from the start may be seen from these words of introduction which graced the program and served to give all visitors and participants at the Conference the right understanding. "The Calvinistic Conference is a product of the activity of no single church nor of any particular organization; it is a movement, world-wide in scope, for the advancement of study and fellowship among men and women, young and old, who are determined that God shall be God to them in all their thinking, feeling, willing—in the entire compass of their life activities, intellectual, moral, spiritual, throughout their individual, social, religious relations."

Language like that speaks to the mind and heart of every spiritual son of Calvin. In an atmosphere created by this promotion spirit the messages were given their true setting. It was felt that Calvinism has a message for today. It was felt that the spiritual heritage of the Reformed and Presbyterian fathers is not a mere historical relic, to be taken out with pride for public display on certain special occasions, but that it is a living power, a much-needed dynamic, a great divine blue-print for the task of our day and age. The challenge to measure up to our faith—not to bow down to it—seemed to stand out anew. We are only reporting what was stated repeatedly that to many present at the Conference the beauty and the power and the practical grip of the faith embodied in the Westminster and

the Heidelberg Catechisms, which is naught else than the *Soli-Deo-gloria* faith of the Scriptures, acquired a richer meaning.

Some of us felt anew the thrill of being one in the deeper, God-centered Faith which in God's providence it has been the privilege and duty of the Scotch Presbyterians and the Dutch Reformed to embody in their churches, their worship, their creeds, their educational institutions, and their missionary enterprise. Though keenly aware that in many parts of the country the churches originally sired by Calvin, Knox, and the Fathers of Dort have weakened their testimony and in some cases tragically sold their spiritual birthright for a mess of modernist pottage, the fellowship at Jackson was evidence that in wide reaches of these historic churches the Faith of Calvinism is still a living Faith. Denominational fences in no way interfere with the fine fellowship of those who have caught this vision of God-centered thinking and living. In fact, one's own denominational consciousness, whether of a particular Presbyterian or of a Reformed brand, may be greatly enriched and strengthened by such fellowship. Carrying forward this testimony for the advancement of the biblical, God-centered, Calvinistic truth, which constitutes our precious heritage of the past and our only hope for the future, we have a fellowship indeed which transcends denominational walls and blesses every communion which it touches.

Our prayer to God is that this Jackson regional Conference may be but the first of a long series, held in various parts of the country. We fervently hope that a real revival of interest in the Reformed Faith and a new exploitation of its spiritual resources may take place throughout the land, beginning in every community where there is still a living interest in these things. Dr. William C. Robinson, himself a son of the Southern Presbyterian Church, an ardent champion of Calvinism, a member of our National American Calvinistic Conference Committee, and a speaker at the Jackson Conference, pleaded eloquently with his audience on Sunday afternoon for the cultivation in the Southern Presbyterian communion of a new interest in Calvinism. Said he: "Leaders in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. devote special weeks to subjects like church union and the Feral Council. Why not devote a special week to the great subject of our Calvinistic Faith?"

And among the resolutions adopted by the Jackson Conference at its closing meeting were these. "We recommend to all our ministers and laymen a renewal of emphasis on the study of the great Cal-

vinistic literature of both the past and the present, and more systematic and thorough presentation of these great fundamental truths in the pulpit as in all phases of our educational program—in the home, the school, and the church. We suggest that overtures be sent to the Montreat Program Committee and to the Belhaven Summer Conference Program Committee requesting that a series of addresses on Calvinism be included from time to time in their conference programs."

We rejoice to know that the testimony is to be carried forward. We rejoice to hear voices in various parts of the globe responding to the spiritual summons that has lately gone forth through this Calvinistic Conference movement. Last month we quoted the editor of a South African religious weekly urging his people to follow the example of American Calvinists on this score. This month there came to our desk another such South African review rejoicing in this evidence of the revival of the Calvinistic Faith. And only today a voice reached us from the Island of Ceylon, where the remnants of what at one time was a flourishing group of Dutch Reformed Churches are still found. Said the editor of *The Old Paths* (Published in the interests of the Dutch Reformed Church in Ceylon): "Froude, the historian, stated that Calvinism has appeared and will appear again. The Calvinistic Conferences held in Europe and America and more recently in Australia evidence this revival of Calvinism. We in Ceylon have our part to play. The world has too long been dominated by the thought of the Rights of the State and the Rights of Man and ignored the Rights of God to rule supreme in every department of life." And in the same issue, reviewing *The Word of God and the Reformed Faith*, the editor writes: "When we read of these Calvinistic Conferences, how we long for such Conferences in Ceylon. Is our Church barren of leadership in this direction?"

It has been the singular privilege of THE CALVIN FORUM to serve as the channel and mouthpiece for the expression of aspirations and activities of Calvinistic groups throughout the world: in Australia and New Zealand, in India and Ceylon, in South Africa and in the Netherlands, in Scotland and England, among Hungarians in Europe and in our own country, and among various Presbyterian and Reformed groups in the United States. May the cloud as of a man's hand grow and yield an abundant rain of spiritual blessing. May conferences like those in Paterson, in Grand Rapids, and now recently in Jackson be multiplied throughout the land to the glory of God and the increasing submission of His people to His sovereign will. C. B.





# Christian Shibboleths and the Post-War World

W. Stanford Reid  
Montreal, Canada

**W**HILE most people, Christians and non-Christians alike, are conscious of the present titanic struggle engulfing the world, few are really giving much thought to other aspects of the present upheaval. There is a tendency for us to lay all our emphasis upon the battles and the bloodshed. Yet behind the lines the war is having as great or an even greater effect. The whole face of a country is changed by the economic and social forces set in operation by the war. For instance, the writer's own country, Canada, has been changed from an essentially agricultural country to one of the world's leading industrial nations in the short space of some four or five years. In the wake of this development has come an economic and social change which is hard to realize. And many other countries today are seeing the same revolution take place within their own borders.

The consequences of such a radical change in the lives of numerous countries are going to constitute one of the greatest post-war problems. Within the countries themselves there is going to be the great industrial and commercial centralization which has come as a result of the war. Then too, there will be the problems of government controls over the economic life of the nation. In many cases there will have appeared by the end of the war a new capitalist class and also a new proletariat. Some countries which have hardly known the meaning of the capital-labor conflict before will find themselves engulfed in a veritable holocaust of strife. Coupled with this problem there will be the task of rehabilitating some thirty to forty million men and women who are returning from military to civilian life.

As can easily be seen, such a situation is fraught with danger both for the individual nation and for the world as a whole. Because this is realized by some, attention is being turned towards the question of post-war planning. Indeed, one group of publishers has pooled its various works on post-war reconstruction and published last year a composite work called "Prefaces to Peace." In this way it has been hoped that some leadership might be given in the problems of the post-war rehabilitation of the world.

## A Vital Christian Need

But the problem of the world after the war is not merely the property of politicians and their breed. It is very much the interest of all men and all forms of social organization. It is even of importance to the Christian Church and its members. Since Christians are in the world they cannot separate themselves from it with the feeling that they have no interest in its fortune and misadventures. They are faced with the problem of the changing world and the trials and difficulties which its changes force upon them. Consequently the whole problem of post-war reconstruction must be of vital interest to Christians both as individuals and also as members of the Church of Christ. Is the post-war world going to be one in which there will be sufficient for all? Is it going to be a world in which religious liberty is curtailed? Is it going to be one in which the state rules and dominates all sides of life? These are but a few questions which the Christian must ask.

When one turns to the various "blueprints" for the world of the post-war era a feeling of dismay, or at least confusion, arises. There have been evolved probably well over one hundred different plans by which we are told peace, plenty and freedom will be assured to all. There are the Beveridge, the Marsh, the Lever Brothers' plans, Wendell Wilkie's ideas, Hoover's and Gibson's solution of the question of a lasting peace, besides those of Vice-President Wallace, Sumner Welles and others. They all approach the problem from different angles and with different points of view. To the average reader of these plans, therefore, there can hardly result anything but confusion. This is particularly true of the Christian. He has the problem of studying these various plans, perhaps with the idea of voting for or against them, and without guidance he is liable to be sorely misled by well-turned but actually anti-Christian arguments.

For this reason the Christian is in sore need today of some guidance which will direct them to the truly Christian point of view. He needs some real expositions of the situation and of the Scriptures by which he can form some estimate of what should be the Christian position with regard to the post-war problems. If no such guidance is forth-

coming from the church, many of the Christians of this and other countries will be swept into this, that, and the other "ism." What on the surface appears to be a good idea, and all for the best will receive his support, when actually from the Scriptural outlook it is all wrong. Or it may be that the Christian will become disgusted with the whole thing. He will say everything is wrong, so wrong that nothing can be done about. The result will be his withdrawal from the arena altogether, and in this way he will be lost to any truly Christian plan of reconstruction.

### **Mere Conservatism No Solution**

But with all this need for a clear-cut testimony as to the basic Christian principles involved in true world-recovery, it is useless to think that we can return to "the days before it started." Many hope that it will be possible to do so, but it seems hardly likely. There are going to be many new difficulties to face and many new problems to solve. There is going to be the question of peacetime adjustment coupled perhaps with a post-war depression. How are these difficulties to be met? What political party should be supported in such a case? These problems are not going to be settled easily and without much thought.

To take proper action in such circumstances what help or guidance does the Christian have? We must frankly admit he has very little. True he has a number of *clichés* or shibboleths which have been inherited from days when economic and social conditions were different. But *clichés* are of very little use for practical affairs; and what is more, they do not give very much certainty in times of difficulty or major problems. Yet whenever one talks today to a Christian about modern conditions one hears such terms as "the rights of private property," "individual liberty," "state restrictions" and the like. Not because many know what is meant by them, but simply because those are phrases which have been piously repeated for the last five decades, they are regarded as solving all problems. They are the Christian's textbook for economic and social recovery.

Yet is this the proper attitude? Are we to accept the *clichés* of past generations without first examining them? If the Reformers had adopted that attitude where would free enterprise be now? How far would democracy have grown? We must realize that the true Church of Christ is always advancing towards a greater and more thorough understanding of Christian doctrine and its application. It is for this reason that some Reformed churches are now re-examining their teachings concerning the relations of church and state. There is also the danger that we are today simply accepting old and worn-out *clichés* and shibboleths because they are old. At the same time they may be

actually contrary to the true teachings of Scripture. Or it may be that the phrases formerly used can no longer be applied to the present situation. Therefore, there is a danger that the old shibboleths may be simply the refuge of reactionaries, rather than the convictions of thinking Christians.

Further emphasis is given to this view when we realize how closely some of these phrases and shibboleths are linked up to the slogans of particular parties. Certain political groups take upon themselves, at least officially, the work of protecting this or that class, this or that ideal. Their slogans then pass into the common vernacular and as long as the party uses those terms it receives the support of many unthinking Christians. One of the great slogans of the Republican Party in the '90s was "freedom of contract" and another was "freedom of enterprise." But actually they meant freedom of the moneyed classes to mulct labor and control the government for their own benefit. Nevertheless, many Christians fell in with the ideas expressed in these party watch words and today they simply accept them as self-evident Christian principles.

### **Making a Fresh Study of Scripture**

What must be done? We must make a real effort to test these old catch-words by the Scriptures. It is no use our saying that certain theologians in the past have held these views therefore they must be correct. Theologians are not the rule of Christian conduct. That high place is reserved for the Word of God. It is thus a duty of the Christian and of Christian leaders to check with the Scriptures on his views concerning economic and social principles. It means that we must search the Scriptures to find what it means by such things as "private property," "individual freedom" and other expressions of the same kind. It is no use saying that the Scriptures set the seal of God upon the divine right of private property. What does the Bible teach concerning the nature of private property? Is it everything a man can obtain for himself by fair means or foul no matter how he hurts his fellows and society in general? The prophet Amos has a few things to say about such rights; and what he says is none too complimentary. Shibboleths are no use, unless we know their specific content. This content if it is to be acceptable to Christians must be Scriptural.

Another need is a real understanding of present-day conditions. It is of little use our finding Scriptural principles if we do not know that to which they are to be applied. Too many American Christians are today attempting to apply the *clichés* of Jeffersonian democracy to pre-Civil War conditions. That Jeffersonian ideals were not always Christian is quite probable, but that pre-Civil War conditions no longer exist is absolutely certain.

Today we have great business and industrial trusts, many of whom care little what happens as long as they make big profits. Other countries are seeing tremendous changes coming over their whole economic and social life. They can not even attempt to understand their times in the light of pre-World War II conditions. We shall all have to realize that new problems are going to arise at the close of present struggle. Therefore we must understand them and attempt to apply a *truly Scriptural* plan of reconstruction.

This will probably mean a rejecting of much hitherto accepted because it is out-of-date. Whether we like it or not the post-war world is going to be a new world. That it will be a better world is by no means certain, but that it will bring many new problems is quite certain. Thus the Christian Church must attempt to give an appropriate lead, not one which is continually harking back to events and problems of the '30s. A consistent, Scriptural approach to new problems may mean something of a new approach, but of that we should not be afraid. Our forefathers in fighting for liberty and democracy were making a new approach, but they did not shirk the duty, neither should we.

As examples of what has been stated above, let us turn to three specific problems which will face us in the post-war world: freedom, private ownership and the place of the state. In the social and economic life of the post-war world these three matters are going to bulk very large. What views will the Christian Church hold with regard to them? Will they be thoroughly Scriptural and at the same time relevant to the situation? Or will they be perhaps Scriptural but applicable only to conditions prevalent in 1850? While the author of this article has no intention of attempting to solve the problems which will arise, he will endeavor to point out a few factors which may call for some changes in the old approach because of new conditions.

### **What Is Freedom?**

First of all, then, let us look at the problem of "freedom." In the Atlantic charter the "four freedoms" have been stated: freedom from want, from fear, freedom of religion and freedom of speech. To these statements some Christians have taken objection, for they hold that some of these freedoms may change the whole idea of freedom. The traditional view of freedom has been that of the right to do anything which does not harm another. Many Christians hold that that is essentially the meaning of freedom. It is the "freedom" of nineteenth century liberalism. The doctrine of *laissez faire* is held by many today as the only true type of freedom in economic life. Every man must have an equal opportunity, at least formally, to do ex-

actly as he pleases. The government has no right to step in and curtail that freedom in any way. The government has no right to expropriate privately owned public utilities which are giving big dividends to a few share-holders. That is contrary to freedom—of the nineteenth century liberal type.

Whither has that freedom led us? It has led us into all types of trouble and distress. It has led to the growth of mammoth corporations and trusts which squeeze out the little man, underpay the workers and make big profits for the favored few who originally "got in on the ground floor." Then when the lower classes demanded like freedom, it has brought repression and persecution by those who had come to the top of the pile. Look for instance at the situation in American industry, 1890-1914, or in German industry during the same period. Freedom meant freedom simply for those who were in control. In Germany the result was eventually revolution and then dictatorship. The under-dog was bound to assert his freedom which forced those on top to seek a military thug who would keep order. This has always been true. The English Rebellion, 1643-1649, brought forth Cromwell; the French Revolution, 1789-1798, brought forth Napoleon; and the German Revolution, 1918-1919, brought forth Hitler. Complete freedom brings forth chaos and chaos in turn produces despotism.

The Church, therefore, must give to the world a new idea of freedom. Too long it has been willing to follow the ideas of nineteenth century Cains whose motto was "Am I my brother's keeper?" While emphasizing the need for freedom there must also be brought to the fore the second great commandment that we should love our brethren even as ourselves. That is our responsibility. It is God's command, therefore we are not free to disregard our fellows. True freedom can come only when we obey God's law. But at the same time there are many who are not Christians and who have no care for Christian principles. What must be done in their case? In the realm of Common Grace there is only one body which can take action. That is the state. It may be necessary for the state to interfere with some people's freedom in order that the maximum freedom might be given to all. The state will then be carrying out its proper work of adjusting the relations between the various spheres within its purview.

### **What is Private Property?**

But before we can turn to the question of the state there is another which must occupy our attention. It is that of "private property." It has been held generally as a Christian axiom that private property is divinely ordained. While the present author has never seen this view presented convincingly, he will assume that it is true. The ques-



tion then arises, however, as to the nature of private property. The usual interpretation is that private property includes personal effects, real estate, and such things as bank accounts, stocks and bonds. Presuming that a man has not obtained these by fraud or robbery they are to be regarded as his. Over them he has absolute power and control upon which no one can infringe. The idea that the land of a nation belongs to the nation as a whole, or that the workers in factories who actually make the money for dividends have some claim upon the property, is regarded as immoral and un-Christian. Private property must be regarded as inviolate. If you make a loan to some man who offers his home as collateral and he cannot pay, then you have the right to foreclose. You may have a dozen other houses and this may not mean a thing, but the Christian principle of "private property" says it is yours, so you take over and put him out on the street. Private property is that which you lawfully own as a result of your labor and effort, and it is all yours.

While the principle of private property may have been as simple as this at one time, a change has come in many quarters. We have for instance the question of the joint-stock company. One buys a block of stock in the company for which a dividend is regularly granted. One may hold that stock for thirty years during which time it is perhaps divided two or three for one, five times. At the end of the thirty years the dividend is still being drawn at about 5% although on the largely increased stock. The original sum paid out has been paid back three or four times, but the investor still owns the stock, still draws his dividends, and if he wished to sell, could regain not the original sum but one which represented anything up to 1,000% increase. At the same time, in the same factory there have been men and women working, frequently for long hours and insufficient pay. In the sight of a just God does such an investor have any moral right to his block of shares? This is especially true in the case of public utilities. The public has paid for the services, the company has made large profits which have gone to the share-holders. Still the sacred right of "private property" is invoked to protect those who have invested their money and drawn their dividends.

In the face of such a situation, it would seem only right that the Christian shibboleth of "private property" be re-examined in the light of Scripture. Does the Bible really lay such great stress upon the "right of private ownership?" And if it does, what does it mean by "private"? Does it mean everything a man can get or everything a man can use? It is high time that some real attention was paid to this matter in order that the church might have a truly Christian and at the same time truly up-to-date answer to this difficult problem.

## The Function of the State

Involved in both the question of freedom and private property is that of the function of the state. The old liberal view of the state was that its sole duty was to act as a policeman. It had to restrain active transgression and infringement of the rights and freedoms of its citizens. This was interpreted as narrowly as possible. The state was to have nothing to do with industry, commerce, social security, etc., but only to act as arbiter when one individual or one group of individuals illegally or forcibly attempted to interfere with the rights and freedom of another individual or group. The state was to do as little regulating or controlling as possible. This is a view which is held by a majority of Christian people today.

Yet we are told in the Scriptures that the state has been established to restrain the effects of sin. When we remember that there is plenty of social and economic sin which is not committed at the point of the gun, the state's work would seem to be something more than policing our city streets. Today there are multifarious conflicts and differences within the body politic. There is industrial oppression both on the part of capital and labor. There are even conflicts between groups of labor and between groups of capitalists. That is very often due to sin. Should the state have nothing to say about it? There are such things as monopolies, cartels, closed shops *ad infinitum*. Has the state no right to interfere when they attempt to raise prices, restrict production and the like? There are even depressions which result from over-development, "watering" of stock, and other dishonest practices. Has the government no right to interfere to restore economic equilibrium, and to take care of the victims of such a depression? The same type of questions could be asked in many different fields of social and economic activity. But the above have been asked to make us realize that the old attitude towards the state, in fact the attitude held by many today, is liable to be away out of date.

What we need is a properly and thoroughly Scriptural statement of the work of the state which can be applied to our scene in our day. This means that even the views of such an eminent Calvinist as Abraham Kuyper may have to be revised. Economic social life was not as complicated in his day as it is in ours. Therefore we must advance beyond him, although we will use many of the principles which he has laid down.

## Needed— A Progressive Attitude

Doubtless many readers will have come to the conclusion by now that the author of this article is a communist, a fascist, or some other type of "ist." But that is not the case. He has simply en-



deavored to point out the need for a re-examination of our position. While the old formulae *may* be all right, they must at least be applied in a different way. Calvinism, if true to itself, cannot be "conservative"; it must be "progressive." It must go forward endeavoring to give a Christian interpretation to every new situation that may arise. True, it holds to the Scriptures as the final authority, yet it must continually re-examine its position to make sure that it is really adhering to Scriptural principles.

If we fail to check and re-check our position making it applicable to the current situation we are heading for disaster. It has frequently happened in history. Time and time again the church, when it has failed to keep the light of Scripture shining upon its problems and has trusted in shibboleths, has been led into error. Today the same situation prevails. If we simply repeat the social and economic shibboleths of old we shall find that many Christians will be very much befuddled. They will have no truly Christian point of view from which to approach their problems. Consequently they will tend to support anything that comes along, or will resist even the best attempts to straighten out our tangles. But what is more, the church will increasingly lose touch with reality. The result will be as though one talked in Chaucerian English to the youth of 1943. What was the basic trouble with the Russian Orthodox Church before the Revolution of 1917? Was it not simply that it had lost all touch with the people?

It was trying to keep them back in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Consequently it lost all real influence when trouble came and was branded as a peddler of religious opium. This is the danger which faces Christianity in the western world, unless the true Christian church works hard at the task of developing a plan of Christian reconstruction suitable for our day.

If, however, the Church of Christ meets the needs which will face us in the near future, indeed which are facing us now, the situation will be different. There will then be some real principles and guidance which can be laid before Christians. They will be shown the Scriptural view of the situation, and will be given some real indication as to the way in which it should be met. Shibboleths will not be enough. People today, especially modern youth, cannot be satisfied with them. What is needed is a real Christian program which is both Scriptural and modern. If that can be provided then the Church has one of the greatest opportunities of its history.

"If it can be provided"—are words which should not be used. It can be provided, but only by those who have a truly Christian life and world view, i.e., Calvinists. Therefore, those who hold to the Reformed Faith with all their hearts have the God-given obligation in these days to re-examine the shibboleths of the days gone by, in order that they may provide a truly Scriptural and a really modern receipt for the ills of this old sin- and war-torn world.



# Life Without Father

Klaus Harmsen

WHEN sorrow comes like a swift cloud to blot out the face of the sun, it is not one's desire to hang the heart's harp on the willows for the eyes of any wayfarer to see. Yet that harp does hang in the willows, and many and varied are the ways of its strings. As it was with the mourners for Zion, so it is with the soul that knows grief. None but the lonely heart can understand the contending feelings of one who is the last leaf on the family tree. There is no thought of self-pity, no display of sentimentality, no utterance of despair. There are only the deepest thoughts and emotions like the sounds from the willows when the varying winds stroke the sensitive strings. There are recurrent chords and discords, janglings and harmonies with something of pain, and something of regret, and something of consolation.

How sudden the transition is from life with Father to life without him! The latter can be understood only in the light of the former. In that full understanding there lie both sorrow and comfort, but more of the latter. When Clarence Day thought of his father, he wrote a great, and humorous, and serious book as it can be written of many who have ceased to be on this earth. A greater classic still could and should be written about a father who knew the road of pilgrimage and progress as Bunyan's Christian knew it. Like Herman Melville one should cry out for a condor's quill with Mount Vesuvius for an inkwell, like Clarence Day one should have clarity of insight into things human and earthly, and like John Bunyan one should be illumined by the Spirit of grace and truth.

Life without Father means just that, although it means much more. But it does mean that. One would be made of brass not to feel the loss. Is it nothing to be bowed under the weight of the burden, to sit through moments of "stony griefs" and other moments of magnified and gnawing "iffs," and to recall one by one of those things that are no more? I am one to defend the poet laureate, Alfred Tennyson, against the charge of sentimentality. One who has wandered four times at the edge of the valley of the shadow is bound to be prejudiced in the poet's favor. When these four times the farewells have been said, one can understand the poignant grief of the laureate when he sings:

"But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still!"

One can understand the sorrows of the saints who like the Psalmist cry out: "Deep calleth unto deep

at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me." One can grasp the lamentations of Job and his true evaluation: "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle."

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But life without Father also and definitely means life with Father. There lies all the glory. Pleasant are the memories of the years so full and at times so lean. Yet they were always full of those things one buys without money and without price.

Life with Father means life with Mother and the rest of the family. How they come back again, those forms gone so long and lost awhile! We were all pilgrims, and all our yesterdays were rooted in the Netherlands. Father came to America first, and Mother followed with the children. Torn between the anticipation of reunion in the new land and the anguish of separation from the old, she came to make with Father a home for us children. The years healed the selves that were torn, but these selves thought often of the homeland in whose soil there were three little mounds.

From the day Father shaved off his goatee because the Americans baa'd him so much, he looked younger; in fact till the day of his death he never looked old.

Many factors contributed toward making the lean years full. Strangers in a strange land, when they are Christians, long for the fellowship of the saints. I have heard Father say often that on Monday mornings he thirsted for the next Lord's Day. And when he met a saint on the streets, he would often think, "There's another of the glorious company."

Then there was the home life not hurried and disjointed as today. Many an evening was spent reading with tea at nine o'clock and a delightful nap at the coal stove before retiring.

Then there was the love of song. In his early married life Father had sung solos, and for years he belonged to some choral society. As he confessed he sang to himself often even when in misery. That may not be a peculiar gift. It should not be to the child of God who can sing songs in the night. Klaus remembers those Sunday afternoons when in the gloaming we sang those hymns and Psalms which delight the heart.

There was also in Father an all-pervading sense, of humor and cheer which leveled the hills and raised the valleys of the trying years. That humor was rooted in seriousness, in a faith which noth-

ing could shake. It helped him in his personal trials; it strengthened us when sufferings came, and the Reaper sharpened his scythe.

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There came the time, after the family had moved to a larger city to improve our lot, when the oldest son was called home. Then Father and Mother leaned heavily on the eighth chapter of *Romans*, and Father cheered us on to climb the next hills. There came the day when another son, one of the two remaining children, after years of preparation and less than two years in the ministry was summoned from his flock to greener pastures. It was the time of summer when much of the harvest is gathered in. After the tolling of the bell in the church steeple and the last sad procession to God's acre, my Father amazed us by saying, "This has been one of the most wonderful days of my life." That was Father. With a sword in his side he could still sing of the hart that panteth after the water brooks and of the soul's rest in God.

A little more than a year later the floods descended again when Mother rested from her labors which so surely followed her. There were six mounds now, but Father looked beyond them and beyond the white peaks of the everlasting hills and saw the Lord. No one close to him could do anything else.

Thus the greying years tinted with glories flew on. And Father walked alone and not alone, cheering whatever circle he was in with homespun humor and with evidence of faith that seeks a far country.

Were there no imperfections in him? Indeed there were as every child who tries to bring up father knows. We children reach out in vain to bring our fathers into the stream of our desires. But their habits have worn deep grooves, and in those grooves they wear the clothes they wear, and say the things they say, and do the things they do. May our efforts be spared regrets!

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This last Christmas Sunday Father enjoyed church immensely. By request the congregation sang a Dutch psalm, and how he enjoyed that! And the choir sang, "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming." After the service he told us how he loved that song and added, "Ik heb mee gezongen." We did not remind him of what those in the pew might have thought. It was enough that he had sung one of the songs that had cheered his yesterdays in the old country.

Several weeks later death swung wide the gates for him. His passing was sudden, too sudden for us, not too sudden for him.

We are left with memories which ease the pangs. There was nothing dramatic about his going. Sickness unto sudden death seldom has anything of the dramatic in it. But we can imagine him passing over the last hill with a wave of the hand which is both farewell and greeting.

Life with and without Father means life with one's nearest and with friends. How ready these have been to grasp the meaning of *sympathy* as a suffering along with! The last leaf is not the last in the garden of life with so many good trees.

Life with and without Father means life with God. What backgrounds He furnishes to our pilgrimage! Christian parents, and homes, and friends, His Church, and the Kingdom that is eternal. And above and around and beyond all these stands God Himself who bends low when the heart finds voice: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord."

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This it is that sustains us when sunsets do not seem the same, and the bright stars look a little colder, and the sands of the beach run idly through our fingers.

This it is that sustains us.

Place the white plumes on the horses, and give me the trumpet that I may sound. For is it not true of every saint as it was of Valiant-for-truth: "So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."



# The Quest for Security

Henry J. Ryskamp

Calvin College  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

“THE world owes me a living!” The attitude expressed by this statement is justly condemned by men who criticize labor’s overemphasis on security and labor’s recent struggle for advantage in economic relations. It is an attitude, however, that characterizes other groups than that of our laborers. During the thirties especially the psychology of protection spread rapidly and men turned their minds to protective devices and measures of all kinds.

Professional men who had unwisely risked their savings in highly speculative securities, turned to life insurance, and particularly to annuities. Plans for making one’s income secure throughout one’s entire life and that of one’s family for the next generation attracted money that had previously been poured into new enterprises. When the going became too difficult and the future of banking rather uncertain, bankers welcomed and implored the assistance of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Business men also when it seemed that the ship of business was about to founder, grasped for any available life line that might save them from disaster. Farmers called for moratoriums from debt and for protection against falling agricultural prices. Laborers, for the moment forgetting the amount of their income, longed only for some kind of employment and above all for security against unemployment and all the ills that came with it. Economists, caught in the panic and swayed by the psychology of the times, thought and wrote as if the end of an expanding economic world had been reached, and that as a consequence protective government devices must be used to support the economic and social order. All of this contributed to a feeling of helplessness, of insecurity and of hesitation.

Was there no longer a future for our economy or for that of the rest of the world? Were there no new frontiers to explore? We must have known during the thirties, as we know beyond the shadow of a doubt now, that the trouble did not lie in the niggardliness of nature. Nature gives little unless men work for it. But nature has responded most remarkably to our efforts. Germany’s production during the “terrible thirties” was greater than we believed her natural resources would permit. Our productive achievements in the last three years, if they have not yet confounded our enemies, have certainly surprised us. In spite of the almost incomprehensible quantities of war supplies already produced, our stockpiles of raw materials are today

encouragingly large. Our available mineral supplies are great enough to permit a continuance of amazing production of peace time goods once the war ends. Our factory capacity has been greatly increased during the war, our labor force is the largest ever and ready to work on consumers’ goods. The desire for these goods, if not counteracted by other desires or fears, is certainly present. The need for large quantities of goods in other parts of the world will be greater than ever before in human history.

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Why our fears, therefore? If there are no new geographic frontiers to explore, or new geographic areas to exploit, science is opening new frontiers for us right at home. There are new opportunities in agriculture which, when they have been realized, will make possible the support of a larger population than men ever thought the world could hold. Our inventors have explored new frontiers in communication that only await the post-war period to be revealed. Besides these there are amazing new frontiers in the use of raw materials, and startling new frontiers in the field of rapid transportation, on land, on the sea, and in the air. The future, after the war, can be a thrilling one if we will but learn how to approach it.

If, after this war, men look only for security, as business men have for decades behind the protecting walls of a high tariff, or in legislation against the competition of goods from other states in the union; if those who had already gained monopoly power before the war seek again to entrench themselves in their earlier positions, with perhaps the bulk of the factories now owned by the government as their booty; if labor seeks only the security of a high wage and union domination of the wage contract, and not the adventure of hard work with honest reward earned in the sweat of the brow; if those who have the billions in savings accounts, which even now are idle and not invested in bonds, dare only, as the person with one talent in the parable of the talents, to hoard this money and not to use it; if farmers seek only to cash in on the strength they can exert as one strong bloc in congress; if after the war we do little else than to look out for ourselves, and to protect ourselves from each other, the future will be as mad and destructive as the present.

The mandate, “Replenish the earth, and subdue it,” has today a richness of meaning and of reward



such as men could hardly have realized before. To grasp its meaning they will have to realize their organic relation to, and dependence upon, each other, and their utter dependence upon their God. Only on the basis of such understanding can they make sufficient use of their individual abilities and of their basic institutions as to make the future one of adventure and of abundance for all.

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In time of war, and especially in the case of war against totalitarian powers, the state necessarily becomes the agency through which our individual and collective efforts are directed against the foe. In time of peace the state must protect the individual against the evil designs and malpractices of his neighbor, and prevent the progressive exploitation and use of the earth's resources by all from being frustrated by the selfish action of the few. It must provide the framework of just relations within which men can carry on their endeavors. And it must make secure arrangements whereby

the fruits of these endeavors will go to all who are willing to engage in them.

To expect from the state a security which one has not earned or is not willing to earn for oneself is to misunderstand its function. For men generally to expect security from the state without having worked to achieve it themselves is to expect the impossible. For some to expect it without active participation at the expense of others is injustice. Indeed, to expect to live in security either at the expense of the state or on the selfish use of possessions, whether earned or unearned, is to live in a fool's paradise. Not only the adventure but all achievement will soon depart from it.

The command to develop all our resources comes to us today with new force, not just as individuals but also as nations. To seek to save our individual and national lives will mean only that we shall lose them. Accepting the mandate will mean more than the fulfillment of our obligations, it will mean restoring the thrill of real adventure and achievement to life.

## Open Letter On Amillennialism

Albertus Pieters

Mr. R. J. Reid,  
11 Henderson St.,  
Passaic, New Jersey.

Dear brother Reid:—

ON THE 9th of September I wrote to you, thanking you for a copy of your "REMARKS ON AMILLENNIALISM," which you kindly sent me, and promising to write again after having studied it. This letter is in accordance with that promise.

In general, I like your discussion very much. It seems to me fairer and in better spirit than much that I have read.

It is largely a criticism of the views and arguments of Mr. Philip Mauro, and from that point of view I shall make no reply to it, but leave Mr. Mauro to defend his own case. Often I disagree with his ideas and his interpretation of scripture, although I am with him on the main issue. From p. 87 of your pamphlet on to the end I am in agreement with you.

You seem to think that since Mr. Mauro was once a dispensationalist, he should at least be milder now in his opposition, and less certain of himself; but that is not the way of converts from one system to another. They always react violently against their former convictions. Consider St. Paul and Luther.

Conversions from one side of the millennial controversy to the other are taking place all the time. St. Augustine had the same experience as Mr. Mauro. So did the great Scotch theologian, Patrick Fairbairn. In his early ministry he lectured on the Prophetic Future of the Jews, quite along the premillennial line, but when he wrote his great works on prophecy he was in the opposite camp. I had the pleasure, some years ago, of editing both his discussions in one book, entitled: "Fairbairn vs. Fairbairn." Premillenarians have written how well satisfied they were with the first lecture, considering it unanswerable, and others are sure that the position of the second lecture is impregnable.

I will now take up certain points in your discussion, numbering my paragraphs, so as to facilitate your referring to them, in case you wish to write. I shall name a number of learned works freely, since they are accessible to you. If you do not have them at hand in your own library, you will find them in the libraries of New Brunswick Theological Seminary and Princeton Theological Seminary, not far away. These libraries are open to students, and the librarians will assist you in finding the references.

I. *The Views of Daniel Whitby.*

On your first page, it seems to me that your statement of Whitby's views is in error. You say that postmillennialism, as defined by him, holds that the

coming of Christ takes place in any spiritual or providential circumstance, or at an individual's death. Such views constitute a denial of the real personal Second Advent of our Lord as professed by the church universal. No doubt there are some people who teach in this way, but I think Whitby did not. I have just re-examined his "Treatise on the True View of the Millennium," with this point in mind, and it seems to me he fully accepts and teaches the reality of the Second Advent. If you can refer me to any passage in which are found the view you attribute to him, please do so.

Whether Whitby taught thus or not, this is not postmillennialism, and the great postmillennial theologians of our country, like Charles Hodge, did not so teach. No one can be either a postmillenarian or a premillenarian who does not believe in the reality of the Second Advent, for one party locates the return *before* and the other *after* such a period. If there be no return, both systems fall away. Such a man might conceivably be an amillenarian, but as a matter of fact we amillenarians for the most part also hold fast the church doctrine of the Second Advent.

## II. Pope Damasus.

I was much interested in what you say about Pope Damasus, for in all my reading on the millennial question I had never run across his name before. I have looked him up and find brief references to him in the Catholic Encyclopaedia and in Hefele's *History of the Councils*, but I find no mention of any anti-chiliasm activity of his. I shall be very thankful if you will let me know from what historical authorities your remarks about him are taken. I am sure, however, that you exaggerate his influence in the defeat of millennialism in the early church. Harnack says (*History of Dogma*, Vol. II, p. 299) that chiliasm was almost completely ousted in the East in the course of the third century, which is 100 years before the time of Damasus. So far as the West is concerned, Dr. Schaff says of it and Montanism: "The Roman Church seems never to have sympathized with either." (*History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II, p. 618.)

If the system was ousted in the East in the third century, and if the West never sympathized with it, how can it be that the defeat of chiliasm owes so much to Pope Damasus (who became Pope in 366) as you say?

## III. The Prevalence of Millennialism in the Early Church.

You quote, on p. 63-67, various statements by men whom you consider reliable, to the effect that the early church generally held the millenarian doctrine, saying that "Amillenarianism was the modernism of the fourth century," etc.

I am not surprised at these statements. They are found in almost any book on your side of the dis-

cussion, and this has long been so. Whitby complained of such baseless assertions a hundred and fifty years ago, and refuted them well, as has been done frequently since, but the refutation makes no impression. They are copied faithfully by one premillenarian from another, without personal investigation.

Yet these statements are quite incorrect.

Wishing to know for myself how much truth there was in such claims, I made a careful investigation, five years ago, of the teachings of the first group of Church Fathers, the so-called "Apostolic Fathers," ending with the year 150 A.D. The Results were published in THE CALVIN FORUM for August and September, 1938, and may be found, I think, in the libraries mentioned.

My summing up was as follows:

"Here ends our study of the Apostolic Fathers, reaching the conclusion that in the literature of this period references to the Second Advent of Christ are exceptional, and those to the millennium very rare. We have here examined the writings of nine distinct authors, and have found only two of them voicing such an expectation. The separate documents, still extant, are fifteen, with chiliasm traceable in only one of them. There may, of course, have been at that time much chiliasm of which no trace remains. No one can say anything about that one way or another; but so far as the available evidence goes, there is no ground for the assertion that millennialism was prevalent in the early church during the sub-apostolic period, ending with the year 150 A.D. Not only was there very little of it, so far as the literature indicates, but what little there was can be traced very definitely to non-Christian Jewish apocalyptic sources."

Let this be my reply to the quotation from Chillingworth, which you give on p. 66. That simply is not true.

To support what I said above about the early chiliasm being taken, not from the Holy Scriptures but from non-Christian Jewish apocalyptic sources, consider the following well known quotation from Papias, who may be called the fountain head of it.

Irenaeus, *Adv. Her.* Book V., Chapter 33.

"The elders who saw John, the disciple of the Lord, related that they had heard from him how the Lord used to teach in regard to these times and say: 'The days will come in which vines shall grow, each having 10,000 branches, and in each branch 10,000 twigs, and in each twig 10,000 shoots, and in each shoot 10,000 clusters, and on every one of the clusters 10,000 grapes, and every grape, when pressed, will give twenty metretes (225 gallons) of wine, etc., etc. . . . And these things are borne witness to in writing by Papias.'"

Now these ideas are taken directly, not from any scriptural source, but from the apocalyptic books:

the Apocalypse of Baruch and the Book of Enoch. You will find them in J. E. H. Thomson: "Books Which Influenced Our Lord and His Apostles," p. 220, and R. H. Charles: "Book of Enoch," p. 76.

I have not yet found time to make a similar careful study of the literature of the second period, from 150 A.D. to about 250 A.D., but I know that millennialism is much more prominent during that period. At this time wrote Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian, who were true chiliasts, although at that time also the scholars locate Caius, who opposed it. At that time arose the millennialist Montanist movement, but this was rejected by the church at large. Tertullian was a Montanist.

The prominence of chiliasm in these writings, however, by no means proves that it was then the universal faith of Christians. Justin Martyr's testimony to the contrary is decisive at this point.

You quote him on p. 65, and it is correct, so far as it goes. The same quotation is thus translated in the Ante Nicene Fathers, Vol. I, p. 239:

"But I, and others, who are right-minded Christians on all points, are assured that there will be a resurrection of the dead and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be re-built, adorned and enlarged, as the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah and others declare."

This is substantially as you have it. Thus your quotation from Justin is correct, but it is not complete, and because of its incompleteness it gives a false impression. Justin said also, in the same discussion:

"I signified to you that many who belong to the pure and pious faith, and are true Christians, think otherwise."

Here Justin tells us definitely that his millennial convictions were not shared by all true Christians of "the pure and pious faith."

This admission by Justin is a thorn in the side of the millenarians. Some, like you, omit it altogether; some, like Dr. Gaebelien, in "The Hope of the Ages," p. 123, garble it inexcusably; still others, like Joseph Mede, boldly amend the text by inserting a "not," making it read "many who are not of the pure and pious faith," etc.; but all this is intolerable from the stand-point of honest scholarship. It must be a bad case that requires a man to falsify the evidence.

Justin seems to distinguish between two classes of good Christians, those who agreed with him and those who did not. The latter he calls, in your translation, "orthodox." We shall have to excuse that in Justin. We all feel that those who agree with us are a bit more orthodox than those who disagree; but this does not dim his admission that those who disagreed were "of the pure and pious faith." This definitely disposes of the idea that millennialism was then the universal faith of Christians. Whether it was ever the general faith, in the sense of being held by a majority, Justin does not say and we do not know. Probably he did not know, either.

The next period is from 250 A.D. to 325 A.D., and here the opposition is strong. Here we have the great theologians Origen and Dionysius the Great, both of Alexandria, who opposed and denounced chiliasm. By all means read the interesting account by the latter, of his discussion with the followers of Nepos, in the Ante Nicene Fathers, Vol. VI, p. 81. It makes it quite clear that millennialism was then held, in Egypt, by only a small group. It is clear, also, that it then produced the same lamentable results that it does today, for Dionysius says: "It caused such division that schisms and apostasies took place in whole churches." This made it his business, as a theological professor, to oppose it, just as the same experience has driven me into the field against it here in Michigan.

So far as I have been able to study the subject, the following summary from the great church historian Neander (a converted Jew) is correct:

"What we have just said, however, must not be so understood as if chiliasm had ever formed a part of the general creed of the church. Our sources of information from different parts of the church in those early times are too scanty to enable us to say anything on this point with certainty and positiveness. Wherever we meet with chiliasm, in Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Methodius and Lactantius, it was diffused from one country and from a single fountain head." (Church History, Vol. I, p. 65.)

#### IV. *The Effect of Constantine's Accession on the Prevalence of Millennialism.*

On p. 71 you quote from Dr. Haldeman the following statement:

"Every historian is agreed that the union of Church and State, the patronage of the Church by the world—was the turning-point in the history of the Millennial doctrine."

I do not know what historians Dr. Haldeman had in mind, but against his "Every historian" I need only refer you again to the remark of Harnack, quoted under II in this letter, that chiliasm was almost completely ousted in the East in the third century, which was before Constantine came into power. Your remark about amillennialism being the modernism of the *fourth* century falls to the ground also in view of this fact. Ditto with your quotation from a Roman Catholic authority (p. 64) to the effect that relief from persecution and the increasing worldliness of the church after the accession of Constantine were responsible for the collapse of millennialism. That collapse was brought about by the opposition of Origen and Dionysius, during the martyr period. Whether the effect of worldliness is really to turn men from millennialism I do not know. Its greatest growth in our own country has been during the last 100 years, which is also the period of greatest wealth and worldliness.

## V. *The Views of Eusebius.*

I am amazed to read, on p. 65:

"Eusebius, an anti-millenarian, in his Church History says that most ecclesiastics of his day were millenarians."

This appears to be taken from Dr. Haldeman, but I am afraid it shows that the good doctor was rather weak on patristics. At any rate, I have never found any such statement in Eusebius. If you can tell me where it is to be found, please do so, and I will look it up.

What I do find in him is this; in his discussion of Papias:

"It was due to him that so many of the Church Fathers after him adopted a like opinion (about the millennium) urging in their own support the antiquity of the man; as for instance Irenaeus and any one else that may have proclaimed similar views."

This is the nearest I can find to such a statement as Dr. Haldeman makes, but to say "many" is a long way from saying "most." It is true that there are now many millenarian ministers in our country, but you know yourself how false it would be to say that most of them are.

## VI. *The Validity of the Premillenarian Appeal to the Early Church.*

You make a good deal of the appeal to the faith of the early church, as most millenarian writers do, but I am convinced that this appeal has no validity, because

1) There is no evidence, as already shown, that this was ever the faith of a majority of Christian believers.

(2) The millennial ideas of that time were so far from those now held by you and others that it

is not fair to quote in your support whatever millennial sentiment did exist in the early church.

I grant that on one point what they taught and what you teach coincide, namely, that the earthly millennium will be *after* the Second Advent; but this agreement must be weighed along with the following disagreements:

a. The very carnal notions of the millennium then held, as shown in the passage already quoted from Papias. No millenarian now expects anything like that.

b. The expectation that the Jews will return to Palestine and will play a prominent part in the millennial age is entirely absent from early chiliasm.

c. Ditto with the denial that the Christian Church is a continuation of Israel and heir to the promises God made to that people. Such denial is a cornerstone of present day dispensationalism, but would have been repudiated by Justin and his associates as Judaizing heresy.

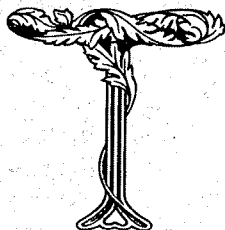
d. Ditto with the entire "Postponement" and "Parenthesis" theory.

e. Ditto with the strange proposition that the Church Age was hidden from the view of the prophets. All of the early literature, including the writings of the millennial leaders, is vocal with the contrary conviction.

f. Ditto, finally, with the idea that the sacrifices will some day be restored.

Thus the sum total of disagreement far outweighs the agreement, and is so great that the less said the better about getting support for present day dispensational millennialism from the faith of the early church. What you present is no better than a caricature of what Justin and Irenaeus believed.

With your permission I shall finish this letter in the following issue.





# From Our Correspondents

## THE JACKSON REGIONAL CALVINISTIC CONFERENCE

**I**MPELLED by a full-hearted spirit to the glory of God, and defined by the theme "The Challenge of Calvinism In Our Day", the first regional Calvinistic Conference in this country, sponsored by Belhaven College and the Presbyterian Churches of Jackson, Mississippi, stimulated an attentive and responsive audience of approximately 300 laymen and ministers attending parts or all of its sessions with a clear and unwavering call to the application of the fundamental principles of the Calvinistic conception of the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practise, in all problems of the daily walk of Christian life, throughout a program of sermons, addresses, and discussions during February 20 and 21.

The leading speakers of the Conference were the Reverend Doctors Clarence Bouma, Jacob T. Hoogstra, Edward Rian, and William Childs Robinson, who ably defined, defended, and applied the Calvinistic premises in popular terms with contagious conviction, stressing the relationship of Calvinism, as an expression of Biblical truth for the individual believer, in the home, church, and society, under the particular heads of Biblical Interpretation, Christian Ethics, Oecumenicity, Evangelism, Missions, and Education.

As a prelude of the Conference program, the guest speakers preached from the pulpits of the Jackson Presbyterian Churches on Sunday morning, February 20.

The afternoon program of February 20 opened with the Reverend J. Moody McDill, pastor of the Fondren Presbyterian Church of Jackson, and chairman of the executive committee of the Conference, presiding. The Reverend G. T. Gillespie, D.D., president of Belhaven College and a member of the executive committee in charge of arrangements, conducted the devotional.

The Reverend Jacob T. Hoogstra, Th.D., President of the First National Calvinistic Conference and pastor in the Christian Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan, briefly outlined the development of the National Calvinistic Conference, and brought greetings from the National group. Professor William Childs Robinson, Commissioner of the Edinburgh Calvinistic Congress at which he represented the Presbyterian Church, U. S., and professor in Columbia Theological Seminary at Decatur, Georgia, briefly outlined the development of the international Calvinistic Congress and brought greetings from the international body. These greetings were accepted by a standing vote of appreciation.

The major address of the afternoon on "Calvinism and The Bible" was brought by the Reverend Edward Rian, D.D., President of the Board of Trustees of Westminster Theological Seminary and Pastor of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Emphasizing the relationship between the Calvinistic doctrine of the Sovereignty of God and faith in the Bible as God's infallible Word, Dr. Rian pointed out the undermining of these principles that has taken place through Modernism and such approaches to theology as that of the system of Karl Barth, of Buchman, or of Mary Baker Eddy, and called attention to the Scriptural principles of the interpretation of Scripture.

The Reverend Girard Lowe, D.D., pastor of the Jackson First Presbyterian Church and member of the executive committee in charge of finances, presided at the evening meeting, a union service of the local Presbyterian churches meeting with the Conference members. The Reverend Clarence Bouma, Th.D.,

President of the Second National Calvinistic Conference, Editor of THE CALVIN FORUM, and professor in Calvin Seminary of the Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, preached upon the subject, "One Holy Passion." Dr. Bouma pointed out that man is filled with a passion to give himself completely to someone, and that totalitarianism has utilized this fact. To counter the evil, renewed emphasis must be made to bring men to submit themselves fully to the Sovereign God in one holy passion.

The morning and afternoon sessions of the Conference on Monday, February 21, were held in the Chapel at Belhaven College, Dr. G. T. Gillespie presiding.

The Reverend John B. Dickson, pastor of the Greenwood Presbyterian Church, Greenwood, Mississippi, conducted the opening devotional of the second day from Psalm 145.

Each of the morning addresses was followed by a short period of discussion. Dr. Clarence Bouma, speaking upon the subject, "Calvinism and Christian Ethics", distinguished the ethical principles of Calvinism on the basis of God's Sovereignty from the shifting grounds of morality presented by other ethical standards, and related the Calvinistic ethics to practical problems of the present day. Dr. William C. Robinson then presented the oecumenical views of Calvinism in an address on "Calvinism and World Church Fellowship," in which he defined the relationship of the multiformity of the Church to its spiritual unity, and elaborated upon the grounds for separation, conformity, cooperation, and union among the denominations of the visible Church.

The afternoon program gave more emphasis to discussion, the speakers limiting themselves to short introductory talks upon the subjects assigned. Dr. Edward Rian, the first speaker, leading the discussion on "Calvinism and Evangelism," stressed the importance of the whole counsel of God in the evangelistic message, and indicated the applicability of such Calvinistic doctrines as election and predestination to the evangelistic appeal, showing that the frequency of omission of these themes in recent years had permitted Arminian emphases to creep into the evangelistic message. Dr. Jacob T. Hoogstra next led the discussion on "Calvinism and Missions", pointing out what Calvinism had done in the field of Missions, and suggesting what Calvinism could do and what it would do.

The Conference adjourned to the Central Presbyterian Church of Jackson for the remainder of the program, at which the Reverend R. E. Hough, D.D., the pastor and member of the executive committee in charge of publicity, presided. The Ministerial Association of Jackson were special guests at a dinner in the Church, where Dr. Clarence Bouma spoke upon the subject, "The Outlook for Protestantism in Europe", pointing out that the strongest and noblest elements of Calvinism had been refined in the furnace of affliction, and predicting the accomplishment of the defeat of totalitarianism through these elements submissive to the will of God. The dinner closed with united prayer for the suffering brethren in Europe.

Dr. William Childs Robinson ably presented the final address of the Conference, speaking on "Calvinism and Education." Pointing out the dangerous tendencies in educational philosophy that is prevailingly man-centered rather than God-centered today, Dr. Robinson indicated how these theories of education were already clearly evidencing their failure and were chargeable with responsibility in the present world debacle; he then issued a clarion call to the Church to return to a God-centered emphasis on more Bible training from earliest childhood throughout life.

Dr. J. Moody McDill presided over the concluding business of the Conference, summarizing the background of the present Conference, reading communications and expressions of interest which had been sent to the Conference by many well-wishers throughout the country, and briefly summarizing the relationship of the Conference to the theme, and of the theme to the further advance of Calvinism. The report of the Committee on Resolutions, composed of Dr. G. T. Gillespie, the Reverend Adrian Kolean, pastor of the Raymond Presbyterian Church, Mississippi, and Mr. Leon Hendricks, Elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Jackson, was unanimously adopted and is as follows:

"As members of the Regional Calvinistic Conference held at Jackson, Mississippi, February 20 and 21, 1944, we hereby record:

- "1. Our appreciation of the splendid program and the fellowship which we have enjoyed for these two days.
- "2. We extend sincere thanks to the American Calvinistic Conference Committee for their cooperation in promoting this regional meeting, and our hope that other meetings of this type may be promoted throughout the United States and as opportunity offers in other nations.
- "3. We extend our thanks to the distinguished leaders who at great personal sacrifice have attended this conference and have presented to us so clearly and eloquently the great basic principles of Calvinism and of our Christian heritage, viz., to Rev. Clarence Bouma, Th.D., Rev. Jacob T. Hoogstra, Th.D., Rev. Edwin H. Rian, D.D., and Rev. William Childs Robinson, D.D.
- "4. We tender our hearty thanks to the sponsoring churches, their pastors, officers, and congregations, and to Belhaven College, for their sponsorship of this conference, and for the gracious hospitality extended.
- "5. We record our conviction which has been confirmed and deepened by the heart-searching, soul-stirring addresses to which we have listened at this conference, that Calvinism has a distinctive and indispensable service to render to American Protestantism and to the whole Christian world in this critical hour, and that these world conditions constitute a challenge to the churches of the Presbyterian and Reformed Faith which they cannot, dare not, ignore.
- "6. We recommend to all of our ministers and laymen a renewal of emphasis on the study of the great Calvinistic literature of both the past and the present, and more systematic and thorough presentation of these great fundamental truths in the pulpit as in all phases of our educational program—in the home, the school, and the church.
- "7. We suggest that overtures be sent to the Montreat Program Committee and to the Belhaven Summer Conference Program Committee requesting that a series of addresses on Calvinism be included from time to time in their conference programs."

J. MOODY McDILL.

## WOOSTER STUDENT PLANNING CONFERENCE

Louisville, Ky.  
January 29, 1944.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

"THE World is not spelled W-o-o-s-t-e-r". With that warning approximately 400 young people and scores of student-leaders left the Campus of the College of Wooster, Ohio, on January 3 after having spent six days there attending the Conference-with-the-long-name. Whatever may come out of this conference I should at once mention what was actually experienced there. This was a real experience of Christian Community. The name of the Conference was *Student Planning Conference on the World Mission of the Church*. Mixing there on the lovely Wooster Campus (which made a Calvin graduate of '40 enthusiastically about new buildings) with Negroes, both American and African, Chinese, Japanese, Nisei (second generation Japanese, born in America, and just as American as many of the Michigan Dutch) could not but impress one with the fact that in Christ there is a one-ness which cannot be achieved through any other relationship. Not only were different races represented, but 40 States, 8 Canadian Provinces, and 20 other countries. To me it was interesting to meet a young Canadian who had taught school in a Dutch dis-

trict and expressed her appreciation for the family worship she had found there.

Perhaps typical of the entire conference is the fact that though there were a large number of denominations represented I at no time was able to determine just how many. In this experience of Christian planning denominations were transcended, though not effaced. Throughout there was a wholesome feeling of ecumenicity, without attempting a wholesale liquidation of denominations. Wooster seemed to point out that there is still a lot that can be achieved along lines of co-operation.

It is chiefly this experience of Christian Community which the young students who attended the conference found so impressive which they will chiefly be trying to re-create. The absence of delegates from the strictly Evangelical bodies and schools was to me a matter of regret. I believe that they might have added something, and there was much which they might have taken in. I must frankly admit that I found a realness of Christ among many students which would amaze some of us. Nor was this lacking among the speakers. Dr. Raymond Drukker of the Annville Institute in Kentucky made a deep impression upon the audience by pointing out the need for an approach to *all of life*, made alive and valid through a truly Divine Son of God and our personal relation to Him as Saviour and Lord.

The Conference method of approach to "All of Life" was worked out by dividing the delegates into small groups. The first seminar consisted of groups gathering according to major geographical areas, such as India, Russia, Occupied Asia, Europe, etc. In these seminars which met twice there were both nationals who could "speak with authority", and authorities who could speak from learning and experience. I, of course, attended the Europe seminar, and to give but one example of the leadership gathered at Wooster we had in that room Dr. Tracy Strong who heads the YMCA war-prisoners work, and has been in Europe several times during the war, and also Dr. Robert Mackie, General Secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation, who has been both in Sweden and Switzerland. "Europe, as such, will not need missionaries of the traditional type, especially not in those countries where there are established Protestant churches. They will, however, need a number of trained persons acquainted with the customs and languages to *serve*, with utmost humility in the face of so much suffering, in the task of rebuilding and reestablishing shattered work." Uncertainty about official action makes planning for relief a difficult matter.

Two periods were devoted by all groups to the second seminar which dealt with North America. Dr. Arthur Mosher's statement that we should think of Missions in functional, rather than geographical terms, was brought out strongly in connection with the work at home. In *all* American communities we are challenged with the fact that youth, labor, students, migrants, minorities, etc. must experience the transforming power of the Gospel of Christ.

This task, however, cannot be accomplished by the church workers alone! This, of course, is not news, but the way in which this was stressed in the Vocations seminars was new. From the very beginning when plans were made for this conference, it was felt that one reason why the church had not long ago occupied certain areas for Christ was because not enough was done by the so-called layman. The "layman" was invited to Wooster, only to be told that he should not be a layman! His life, fully surrendered to Christ, should and can be of service to glorify God, whatever his vocation. And so young people met as Christians in a desire to make their profession worth-while for God. Here are some of the groupings: Engineering and Research, Medicine, Business, Farming, Peacetime Military Service, Law, Politics and Diplomacy.

To one with a Calvinistic concept of the Sovereignty of God in all spheres of life this emphasis sounded familiar and he could only rejoice that it was being expressed by young Ameri-

cans, at the same time praying that it might be undergirded with a true understanding of the Word, a Sovereign God, the Father of Jesus Christ, the Person and Work of this Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

On Sunday morning Dr. John A. Mackay fully made up for whatever lack of spiritual emphasis some may have detected in certain statements when he preached inspiringly from Jeremiah 1:11, 18. Just as Jeremiah saw in the budding almond tree and the seething pot signs of God's awareness, we, too, are witnessing one of God's great historical springtimes of grace and judgment. That there is judgment is obvious to all Christians, but it is necessary that in the judgment we rejoice in the grace of God which is making for a re-awakened interest in the Bible, and in the Church of Christ. Speaking for Evangelical Realism he stressed that it stands above fundamentalism or modernism. In crises men always turn back to God's Eternal Word which alone can give satisfying answers to problems of purpose and destiny. People today are also discovering that there is nothing greater than the service of the Church. Now that the Comintern has been abolished there is nothing that calls for the unity for which the Church of Christ calls. Not the soul of culture can save civilization, but the body of Christ, which exists to do the will of God. The duty of the Church is to proclaim the Word and do the Deed. And then, referring to the fact that he had recently lectured on Calvinism to students at the Jewish Seminary in New York, Dr. Mackay pointed out how this approach is well pictured in John Calvin's crest which has *the heart in the hand*. Our heart is returned to God through the hand, symbol and instrument of action, reminding the world of the will of God. That is our ultimate message.

To one sitting in that audience with that symbol on his Calvin ring Wooster meant seeing greater and greater challenges in the vision that was already his. As Christianity becomes more and more like that the world will become more and more like Wooster. These emphases on Christian community, world-mindedness, Christian vocations, and a renewed turning to God's Work are to be stressed now in the work of the organizations which sponsored Wooster: Commission on University Work of the Council of Church Boards of Education, YWCA and YMCA, Student Christian Movement of Canada, and Student Volunteer Movement. There is no reason why these should not be extended throughout the entire Church of Christ.

Louisville, Ky.

RAY W. TEEUWISSEN.

## PRESIDENT MACKAY AT WESTERN SEMINARY

**T**HIS year's series of Winter Lectures at Western Seminary, Holland, Mich., were held January 12-15, 1944. President John Mackay of Princeton was the lecturer. The resurging interest in the theology of John Calvin is one of the hopeful omens of modern times. Not that modern scholars have an idolatrous veneration for the past. The present attitude is aptly expressed in Dr. Mackay's opening address: "John Calvin and Modern Protestantism".

Dr. John Mackay, president of Princeton Theological Seminary, introduced his gripping address by indicating what Calvinism has meant for the world at large and for America in particular. Witnesses from non-Calvinistic circles were summoned to prove that Calvinism put iron in the blood of Protestantism. As far as the United States is concerned, Calvinism was the most potent factor in the American Revolution. Princeton College gave nine men to the drafters of the Constitution, almost as many as all the other colleges combined. Even today Calvinism is heard through those who stand in the Reformed tradition. President Mackay lauded Karl Barth. This Swiss theologian put iron in the soul of the confessional churches of Germany. He turned the thoughts of men back to the great source of revelation and inspiration. The other modern exponent of the virility of Calvinism is Prof. R. Niebuhr of Union Seminary of New York. He comes to us in the German Re-

formed tradition on sin and grace. He is the "best contemporary interpreter of Charles Hodge".<sup>1)</sup>

John Mackay enumerated the following challenges which John Calvin flings at our generation. First of all, the only source of religious authority is the Word of God. Religious authority does not reside in either the church or in tradition. The blending of this conviction with native ability made John Calvin the greatest exegete of the Bible. He did not prove the claims of the Bible by means of rationalistic proofs or inductive processes. He insisted upon the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit. This is exactly what modern Protestantism has to learn. No merely analytical approach will ever lead us to the "kernel message" of the Bible.<sup>2)</sup>

The second challenge comes to us not in that Calvin brought anything new, but in the changed structure of his theological system. The new was not in the message but in the structural lines. The "Sovereignty of God" became the very center of all of John Calvin's thinking.

In discoursing upon this second challenge, Dr. Mackay became both humorous and at times severely denunciatory. He warned us against two dangers. He rightly told us that John Calvin denounced over-speculation in theology. John Calvin was concerned about God's Will for him now and here. Taking his cue from this warning he assailed humorously those who think they know all the mysteries of Apocalyptic literature, and who, at the same time, forget that they must live the Christian life now. It is possible to know the book of *Revelation* and not to be a Christian.

The second danger is to be interested in doctrine for the sake of doctrine. Doctrine becomes an end in itself. If you have the ideas nothing else matters. At this point the speaker became eloquently bitter against those who were guilty of the heresy of putting the ideas about God in the place of God Himself. It is one thing, he contended, to have an idea of God and another thing to be in touch with the living God. Those who have only the ideas of God are in danger of being self-righteous and censorious. Those who have found the living God will walk in humility before Him.

This diatribe was powerful and eloquent. It stirred the audience. But—whom did Pres. J. Mackay have in mind? No one can claim that the sin of serving an idea of God instead of the living God attaches itself necessarily to any group of people, orthodox or liberal. Even a Neo-Protestant can be guilty of that. No one can assert that self-righteousness is the vice of a certain group or tendency, and then, perhaps, in a self-righteous manner denounce that group or tendency. John Calvin knew his God as the living God, and because he did, he never rested until he expressed this knowledge in the most precise way. John Calvin also knew, all things being equal, the truer our knowledge of God the closer we dwell with Him. Would it not have been more useful to inspire our age with the achievements of the Westminster Assembly: masterpieces of love, knowledge, precision of doctrine, and consecration of purpose?

The third challenge is *piety*. He very convincingly pointed out that there was a place for the heart as well as for clear thinking and ethical conviction in Reformed tradition. Many areas in the Presbyterian Church have been lost to extremists because of the coldness of the heart.

Ethical behavior is another challenge modern Protestantism must accept. We are confronted with the problem of church discipline. The modern church is not as reputable as some of our secular clubs. Calvin believed that a member must live a life consistent with the principles of the Christian community.

1) One does regret to interrupt the flow of thought at this juncture to call attention to the fact that the beautiful address given was a defense of Neo-Protestantism. At several occasions R. Niebuhr was praised to the skies. J. Mackay did speak of a limitation of the Neo-Protestants, but not of any basic errors. Not even a hint to guide us in this question: Would John Calvin recognize R. Niebuhr and K. Barth as his loyal and as his true sons?

2) In this connection we may express a wish. We hope that Pres. J. Mackay may set forth more fully his conception of the Bible, the Word of God, The Testimony of the Holy Spirit, Modern and Critical Scholarship, and the interrelation of all these concepts.



Pres. Mackay recognizes this as a supreme problem, and expects his audience to face it honestly and bravely. The modern church needs church discipline.

The final challenge, one very close to the heart of Pres. Mackay, is the love for the church universal. John Calvin never admitted that he was a sectarian. The Reformed Church was the heir of all that was best in primitive Christianity. Calvin sought for the reunion of all the Churches, particularly the Protestant. Time and again in several of his lectures, Pres. Mackay repeated the words of Calvin: "I'll cross seven seas" for unity.<sup>3)</sup>

John Calvin would have no unity at the expense of truth. He would not have been interested in a watery interdenominationalism. True unity in the Christ and for the Christ! The closing thought was expressed that some day Christendom may see eye to eye on the basic truths of Christianity.

The other lectures on "The Church and World Order", "Protestantism and Inter-American Relations" were instructive and powerful. We could not attend the lecture on "Personal Religion".

JACOB T. HOOGSTRA.

<sup>3)</sup> These words of John Calvin to Archbishop Cranmer are taken from the context: "I wish indeed it could be brought about that men of learning and authority from different churches might meet somewhere and, after thoroughly discussing the different articles of faith, should, by a unanimous decision, hand down to posterity some certain rule of faith . . . As to myself, I should not, if need be, object to cross ten seas for such a purpose". (Editorial, *The Calvin Forum*, June-July, 1943.)

### "THE GOOD NEIGHBOR ALIBI"

WITH the ever widening mental horizons of our day, this age is quite well convinced that it can approximate the goal of one world. There is a widespread conviction that nothing should hinder this consummation. Christianity is also hailed as a great contributing factor. In many circles of church people it is well-nigh criminal to suggest that Christianity is the world's greatest divisive force. To assert that it thrusts into the world a more decisive cleavage than Allies versus Axis, must be arch-heresy in the light of much talk about Christianity's supposed rôle in the post-war world.

But now comes the Roman Catholic charge of Protestant interference with the "good neighbor" policy in South America. This complaint is rather ironic today, with such a noise flying about as to the world-uniting character of Christianity. One great branch of that movement rises up to accuse the other of interference. It's a good argument at a time when "good neighbor" relations are so delicate and so highly prized in this country. But it is a strange lever to use to evict Protestant missions out of South America. It is a secular and international argument and not religious, although the founder of all Christianity said that His Kingdom was not of this world.

However, this Roman Catholic grievance against the Protestants is an alibi. It is not founded on facts. It is merely a blind for Roman intolerance. This alibi has been neatly scorched by a South American. He is George P. Howard, who presents the South American view.

Mr. Howard asserts that the United States is going to be the battlefield of religious liberty, and South America will be an interested onlooker. He further addressed the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, which met during January in Chicago, with the question whether even today the frank opinions on religious liberty expressed by the leading minds of South America could be published in this country.

The tall, warm-hearted gentleman is the Evangelist to the cultured classes in Latin America under appointment of a North American Committee. He came to the Foreign Missions Conference with a sheaf of stirring testimonies gathered from all over the Southern Continent. They were signed by great statesmen, educators and churchmen. Each testimony was the result of interviews or correspondence on the subject of the alleged Protestant interference with the "good neighbor policy." Mr. Howard came in from a three-months' trip in which he

covered twenty thousand miles, and visited every South American capital, and leading University. He had the good fortune of being able to capitalize on his own intimate acquaintance with the peoples of every nation on the continent, and brings back a report incredibly favorable to Protestantism. He expresses amazement as to the Protestant indifference to a great mission field in a land of untapped resources, an undecimated population, and a great, warm-hearted people; with the future of its greatness still before it.

Everywhere Mr. Howard asked, "What of the Protestants? Has their work and mission been constructive? What is religious liberty as understood in your country? Does it include the right of free propaganda?" The reply? A ringing and unanimous "Yes". Again he asked, "Have Protestant missions antagonized your people in any way? Are you afraid of the clash of Roman and Protestant forces in the civic and political repercussions it might have?" "Emphatically not," they answered.

Howard's testimonies are from three ex-presidents in Chile. Educators and a great authoress in Argentina. And in that country a layman editor of Roman Catholic persuasion asserted that freedom of religion meant the autonomy of the science and the right of free propaganda. In Brazil one leading editor was grieved at this conflict since the partisans are of common origin inasmuch as they both rest upon the Bible. A leading Brazilian lawyer said in effect, the fundamental difference between Rome and Protestantism is that one is totalitarian in its nature and a meddler in politics, while the second makes kings and priests of all believers, is evangelical and democratic, and South America needs democracy. Another Brazilian and Catholic who has served as his nation's ambassador is sorry for the open truth that though Jesus averred, "My Kingdom is not of this world", the Pope must say, "My kingdom is of this world".

These leaders were eager to make their statements. They are signed statements, many of them longer and much more outspoken than Mr. Howard sought or dared to hope. Many of the same people had served on "good neighbor" missions to this country at the invitation of our President. One of the educators, a University President, said he was frightened by the tremendous power exerted by the Roman Catholic Church in Washington, D. C.

Without exception the South Americans scoffed at the notion that Protestants hindered "good neighbor" feelings. They are, all of them, sure that this is a figment of North American imaginations fired by the supposed insult that Catholic South America needs to be converted by Protestants. As they see us "down under", we—not they—are in danger of the shackling of religious liberty in the land. And because the issue of this freedom rises up in the United States, intolerance, and closed door to free propaganda is forced upon the Latin Americans, and according to Mr. Howard, they resent it. This attempted intolerance is the real menace to "good neighbor" relations.

R. O. DE GROOT.

Chicago, Ill.

### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICALS

THE 1944 convention of the National Association of Evangelicals will be held in Columbus, Ohio, April 12 to 17. The Deshler-Wallick Hotel will be its headquarters.

Most of the general sessions will be held in Memorial Hall. Two great mass meetings on Sunday, the 16th, are expected to fill to capacity the City Auditorium which seats 6,000. Among the nationally known leaders scheduled to address the convention at various times are: Dr. Hyman Appelman, Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse, Dr. Richard Ellsworth Day, Dr. Bob Shuler, Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., Dr. H. J. Ockenga, Bishop Leslie R. Mars-ton, Dr. T. Roland Phillips, Mr. Howard Ferrin, Mr. Charles E. Gremmels, Dr. Walter Kallenbach, Rev. Harold Warren, and many others.



Preceding the convention there will be a meeting for all executives interested in Sunday School curriculum on Tuesday, April 11th, to consider the advisability of preparing a new series of uniform lesson topics. A meeting of Gospel broadcasters from all sections of the country will gather on Wednesday, the 12th. In each case these sessions will open at 10:00 A. M. and continue throughout the day.

The opening service of the convention proper will be the evening of prayer on the 12th, under the leadership of Dr. E. M. Wadsworth of the Great Commission Prayer League. After the opening business of the convention is completed on the morning of the 13th, the rest of the day will be devoted to a conference on evangelism. On the 14th and 15th the convention will break up into Work-Study groups. The many subjects of general interest include Evangelism in all its phases, Home and Foreign Missions, Rescue Missions, Education in all its phases, Radio, Separation of Church and State, Industrial Chaplaincies, Basis of Durable Peace, and other subjects. Also on April 15th there will be business sessions for the consideration of changes in the constitution and the adoption of reports. On Sunday morning the delegates will attend the various church services throughout the city, and in many instances assist in these services. The churches of Columbus are giving full cooperation to the mass meetings of the afternoon and evening.

On the 17th, the final day of the convention, there will be further committee reports, the election of officers, final adoption of changes in the constitution, and the selection of the 1945 convention city. At 6:30 P. M. there will be a banquet at which the address of the incoming president, the installation of officers, and the final season of prayer will be the principal features.—*News Release.*

## NEWS AND COMMENTS

### Bible Readers.

It takes 84½ hours to read the Bible from cover to cover. How do we know that? Anybody ever try it? Yes and no. Here are the facts. The American Foundation for the Blind, Inc., has just completed putting the entire Bible on records, so that the blind may hear the Bible read to them. It is the Talking Book. It took 129 records for the Old, and 40 for the New Testament. These records are to be played on a special slowly revolving phonograph. Since it takes 30 minutes to play one record it would take 84½ hours to hear the whole Bible read.

One would think that in the recording a number of clergymen would have been used. But not so. Although they should be experts in reading the Bible, the Foundation had to employ a few ministers, diction experts, radio people, and stage people. Requirements for Bible reading were: a pleasing voice, expression, and an even reading-pace.

Surely, the Word of God should be read at all times by those who labor in the Word, in a manner worthy of so wondrous a revelation. As it is the Bible is often read in homes and in Churches as a Notary Public reads that which ends in s'helpmeGod.

### Universities Cost Money.

Trinity University in Texas is not large. It is a combination or merger of the University of San Antonio and Trinity University of Waxahachie, now known as Trinity University. Located in San Antonio, it has 27 regular teachers and 266 students working for a degree. It is controlled through a Board of Trustees, by the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. Recently the Synod of Texas approved a ten-year expansion program. Amount needed . . . \$6,500,000.

Universities cost money, a lot of money. And . . . since under New Deal policies large incomes have faded away, money for Universities must come from the common man

and his nickels, dimes, and quarters. The University of San Antonio was a long time in growing. So was its absorbed Trinity-sister institution.

Let's hope that Calvin College and Seminary, owned and operated by the Christian Reformed Church, will also grow, expand, and plan to become a Calvin University. It ought to be done, it can be done, and . . . we believe . . . it will be done. As in Waxahachie and San Antonio, the roots are present and functioning properly.

### A Dry Night Club.

In Des Moines, Iowa, Capital of Wacs-in-training, the Y.W.C.A. is trying to meet the juvenile delinquency problem by opening its building one evening a week to youth in their teen-age. Name: "The Bombardier" or Dry Night Club. An orchestra is provided for dancing. There are games for all. Also a snack bar. Three other centers are being opened for the same purpose. Attendance at the Y runs to some 600 at a time, at times.

It appears that throughout the nation the ever-growing juvenile delinquency problem is being met by Recreation Centers. However, careful observation leads one to believe that although these centers may provide some sort of entertainment, they are no cure of the problem in any way at all. The present-day youth-problem is a HOME-problem;—the problem of parents who believe in freedom of expression on the part of children.

### Some Call It Music.

Mr. Art Satherley in his search for what he calls 'folk music' in the early part of 1942 came upon a Dallas, Texas, troubadour. This cowboy singer, formerly a painter and decorator, sang some thirty-five lyrics for Mr. Satherley. Twelve of these ditties Satherley recorded for the Columbia Recording Company. The best one was supposed to be a thing entitled "Rosanita". For the sake of contrast the other side of the record was impressed with "Pistol-Packin' Mama". Subsequently, the Recording Company made and sold the records to lovers of hill-billy songs. By the end of 1943 one million six hundred thousand records of "Pistol-Packin' Mama" were sold. Unfilled orders total five hundred thousand. Jukebox operators will pay almost any price to get a copy.

Thus a large section of the United States has recorded its music-preference! Pistol-Packin' Mama!!!! They call it 'music'. What enormity!

### Dearborn Needs No Prayer.

The Mayor of Dearborn, Michigan, suggested to the City Council that the meetings be opened with prayer. This would be in line with usage in Congress and State Legislature. But the Council voted the idea down—four to three. This does not speak well for Dearborn City-Fathers.

### Long Pastorates.

The First Church of Christ (Congregational) of New London, Conn., was founded in 1642. During the 302 years of its existence, the Church has been served by 14 Pastors. Longest pastorate was that of Abel McEwen: 1806-1860.

### To Pay or Not to Pay.

During the bitter years of depression the Arkansas Baptist State Convention was not able to pay its debt. Two-thirds of it was canceled. However, after the years of financial canker-worm came years of money and financial prosperity. Came also the question: does the cancelation of debt release us morally from further payments? No, said all but four of the 973 Arkansas Baptist Churches. Hence the old debt will be paid.

There has been considerable misunderstanding about this Arkansas matter. The general opinion seems to be that after the Convention decided to pay the debt, many churches arose

in vigorous protest against this action. But, the facts are that only four Churches voted against payments. The question to be decided by the Convention is not now: Shall we pay, but rather, How shall we pay—what funds shall we use?

### Christian Movies.

The Missouri Lutheran Synod is an aggressive body of Lutherans. They have made excellent use of the printing press, they are making abundant use of the Radio, and now they have invaded the not so sacred precincts of Filmdom. This began with the film, "The Call of the Ages", in 1930 and was continued with "The Call of the Cross" in 1938. In 1941 "The Power of God" was released having been produced at a cost of \$50,000. Some eighty prints of the film are in constant use today. The picture is a true-to-life story occurring in thousands of communities throughout America. "In vivid manner is revealed how the Word of God spoken at the right time in the right way by Christians can meet and help solve the problems of our complex modern life", announces the Evangelical Lutheran Synod through its Visual Education Service. Says Paul G. Kiehl in the *Protestant Voice*, "It will do no good to decry Hollywood's lack of religious films. The Church must get into the production and distribution of the kind of film it wants and needs for its own use".

A salute to the Missouri Synod for its awareness of today's needs. Of course, there are many who disagree with this Synod as to the appropriateness of a Church producing films for its youth program. But it certainly is true that negative criticism removes forbidden fruits one by one, without supplying wholesome fruits. Moreover, Satan must be fought in every age, with the implements of that age. Radio is one of these implements. Pictures, too? Let's think it over.

### More Power to Walter Maier.

The International system carrying Dr. Walter A. Maier's Radio sermons has again been increased. Forty-two Australian stations have been added to it. Any church engaged in broadcasting will do well to analyze the 'success' of the Lutheran Hour. Imitating Dr. Maier is futile. But imitating the Christ who speaks the language of the people, to the people, concerning the supreme need of the people, might prove profitable.

### Only One Hundred Dollars.

The University of Chicago has published a dictionary. It is *The Dictionary of American English*, in four volumes. Editors are Sir William Craigie and James R. Hulbert. Price? A mere bagatelle: \$100.00. What's that between a student of shoddy-ocracy and the University of Chicago?

### The King Holds Bible-Copyright.

The King James Version of the Bible is copyrighted. The copyright is vested in the King. Printing rights have been held first by the King's Printer, then also by the press of Oxford and Cambridge and Collins of Scotland. The rights have now been extended to the United Church of Canada's Ryerson Press. Soon Bibles will issue from the Dominion of Canada to Great Britain.

That Bible versions are copyrighted has its good points. It insures a measure of control. Indiscriminate printing may easily lead to inaccurately printed copies of the Word of God. Vesting the copyright in the King (not this king or that, but the King) perpetuates the copyright. Symbolic of this matter is the King's receiving a Bible at the coronation ceremonies.

### "Time" and Changing Times in Religious Russia.

TIME considers itself the Weekly Newsmagazine. It is that. But it is more. Its news has a definite slant. And this slant partakes of the nature of interpretation. Readers delight in this slant but sometimes react in exactly the opposite way.

Time recently (XLII:26) reported on the changes which have come about in the status of the Orthodox Church. Examples: the Church is permitted to open a Seminary and train its priests. The Society for the Militant Godless is disbanded. The Bible is printed in Russia. Antireligious journals folded up because of "lack of paper." The Church is fully established having its own institutional head. TIME then adds an answer to the question, Has the Russian Orthodox Church come back to Russia to stay? in this fashion: "... political policies change, governments come and go, but man's need for religion is eternal..." Quite so; Gamaliel, the Jewish doctor of law, with more acumen than Karl Marx and his tribe said at one time: "... Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men it will be overthrown, but if it is of God you will not be able to overthrow them..."

### In Spite of Dungeon, Fire and Sword.

A Wartime Confession of Faith—What we believe, and what we not believe is the title of a statement issued by the Reformed Church of the Netherlands to its entire membership. In it the Church administers a stinging rebuke to the Nazi lords and their theories on Race, State, etc.

"The State can not be an absolute authority over the citizen... We reject as antichristian the doctrine that all things must be subordinated to the welfare of the nation and when the doctrine is taught that the interests of the State determine what is right and what is wrong then we hold this to be the destruction of righteousness and the sanctioning of all iniquity, and therefore the complete subversal of God's will when he gave us the possibility of living in a racial-national community.

"Moreover, we do not believe that the sovereignty of our rightful Lord extends only over our souls, so that some other domination (be it State, Nation, or Leader) could claim unlimited dominion over our bodies."

Speaking about race the Church says: "We do not believe that the voice of race is the voice of our God." Furthermore it is denied that "anyone in the world, whoever it may be, has the right to set limits to the freedom of the preaching of the Gospel or to the freedom of obedience to it."

Racial hatred is called "one of the most stubborn and deadly forms of rebellion... against God."

Because God is at the helm, neither Satan nor Nazis can prevail against the church. What is more, the attacks of Satan and his hosts often produce what they determined to destroy.

J. G. VAN DYKE.



# Of Books and Reading

## WITH A DUTCH ACCENT

WITH A DUTCH ACCENT. By David Cornel De Jong. New York, 1944. Harper and Brothers. Price: \$2.75.

DAVE DE JONG has done it again. He has written another interesting book. He has shown unmistakably that he is an artist. And he has revealed once more that the sack of bitterness is not removed. The third fact casts a shadow on the second.

Dave's books are interesting because we as the Dutch are interested in him and his product. This does not deny the inherent literary quality of his writings. But the people and things he portrays are so near to us that we feel an extra pull his way.

Although this experiment in autobiography is interesting, it does not come up to *Old Haven* or even *Day of the Trumpet*. We know there is a glory in the commonplace, but an uninspired recitation of the trivial is hardly that. The record is not at all trivial by any means, but there is enough of the insignificant to break the wing-bones of any Pegasus.

The theme is an old but excellent one: a boy and his family rooted in the old world and transplanted to the new. The stories of immigrants have found favor, and with international relations what they are, this book can ride the crest.

Dave often handles his subject well. He knows the Netherlands, and many of his descriptions are powerful. The sea, the dikes, the gulls, the ditches, the varied human characters come alive, and you are as sorry to leave them as some of the immigrants were.

The author can write beautiful lines, and one wishes he had been the poet more often in this book. "It was dusk then and the winds made terrible speech among the old arches and gables and the North Sea moaned behind the dike, while the frogs continued their ceaseless symphony." Again: "It was a fine sunny day in June. The sheep, now rid of all their lambs, were getting plump again, the dike had taken off its May cloak of oxalis and buttercups, and in the blue-green polders on the sea side of the dike, the lavender gillias and blue strand asters had started blooming."

The jacket, which is a reproduction from a water color by the author's own hand, shows that he has looked upon beauty and found it good.

There is, however, a bitterness in all Dave's books which I have read, a quality that mars the artistry. At times one gets the impression that the author is eager to tell somebody or a group of somebodies or nobodies that he is really going places in spite of them.

He seems to have a persecution complex. He is hounded by bad actors in the old world and the new. (We hope he is hounded by the Hound of Heaven too.) It all sounds like the story of an abnormal boy in a subnormal society. They are always picking on him. His grandfather tortures him; teachers make him sit with imbeciles; the children in America revile him; a professor abuses him; and preachers amuse him.

Undoubtedly the author was a sensitive boy. His reactions can be partially explained but not entirely justified. It may be that occasionally he forgot the sensitiveness of others. That becomes evident when throughout the book he sings the song of flaming red hate.

He hates Pake David, his maternal grandfather. That old man has not one redeeming quality in his relation to the author. Strangely enough Pake is kind to the other grandchildren. One is inclined to quote: "The fault, dear Brutus," etc.

What it really comes down to is that he hates the Christians. Pake David is a Christian and a Calvinist. Whenever anyone does Dave a wrong, the culprit invariably turns out to be a Christian. As one turns the pages, one can't help saying, "I could have guessed it. He or she was a believer." Who mock him, who fail to see his talents, who rent the family a house like a shack, who gossip? Why, the Christians. There comes to one's mind an inverted maxim: "The lion to the Christians."

Listen to his sarcasm: "Every so often I'm still reminded that if I hadn't become so willful, or so flighty, or so American, I might today be an ardent Dutch divine, an incomparable exegete, a great saver of souls in Borneo." Again: "I kept reaching for the stars, those solemn Calvinistic stars, which I feared might remain forever unreachable." He is really "mad" here: "From then on, steadily, unflinchingly, almost unconsciously, I started to hate those self-righteous Grand Rapids Dutch." When I read that drivel, there come to me the words of an old song:

"You made me what I am today;  
I hope you're satisfied."

The author has only a sardonic gratitude for someone who on Christmas day "no doubt mistakingly left a pound of mixed nuts at our door." He has nothing but praise for a drunk who was kind. "That he should have grown up to die an alcoholic, simply reflects on the inherent nobility of his character, though perhaps very obliquely. So many of the others have become such damnably respectable, pious, sedate creatures, that I choose to see a certain significance in his fate." Saint Barleycorn in Westminster Abbey!

What is the matter with Dave? Why do these puerilities obtrude on his artistry? Taking him at his own word he had an insufferable grandfather and parents narrow and unwise enough to send him to church four times each Sunday. Moreover, he was surrounded by a cloud of tantalizing Christians. Perhaps in a certain way all this contributed to a relative kind of good, not quite so absolute as in the life of Joseph. The author has his publishers who seem to like the twist of such writing.

It may be there is a clue. When Dave writes about how badly he steered a canal boat at one time, he makes the observation, "Even today, when ordered to go right, I turn instinctively to the left, even though I'm sure I wouldn't do so if left to my own wits."

What Dave needs also is a greater sense of humor concerning himself. His characterization of Rem is great and humorous. If he could only see himself in that way, there would be better understanding and less bile.

I, too, was an immigrant boy. I, too, was called "Dutchy" for a while, but it wasn't serious. I never had a grandfather who was unbearable, nor parents who were narrow and unwise. (One doubts whether Dave did.) On the contrary their lives were altogether lovely like an unfinished song and symphony great with the prophetic. God bless their sacrifices and their dreams come true in earth and heaven!

Are we denying reality to the author's basic material? No! In any community any person with his eye on the object can find enough dark material to fill a book. But if he turns not only to the left, but to the left and right and up and down, he will find for song, and canvas, and page great themes that challenge the mind and lift the heart. Bitterness has its place, but the bee goes on extracting his nectar. Little man should do no less and much more.

BASTIAN KRUTHOF.



## NETHERLANDS CULTURE

THE NETHERLANDS. Chapters by Albarde, Barnouw, and others. Edited by Bartholomew Landheer. The University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1943. Price: \$5.00.

THIS interesting book of almost five hundred pages contains an introduction on the Land and the People, a review of seventy pages of Dutch history by four different scholars, and then surveys of Political and Constitutional Development, Economic and Social Development, Cultural Aspects, Netherland Overseas Territories, and Second World War and After respectively by three, four, six, seven and two scholars, followed by a bibliography and an Index. The book is the result of the painstaking labor of many contributors, and there is necessarily some duplication, though cleverly managed. A volume of this type also suffers of an overdose of objectivity and is pregnant with names and dates without offering the information that the reader expects in a book of this size. But it has the virtue of arousing one's curiosity, and so it will help both the student and the scholar to find other books which are more meaty.

All scholars but two seem to be of Dutch descent. One of these two is an Indonesian. Among the others we were happy to notice Amry J. Vanden Bosch, who has two articles on the Netherlands Foreign Policy and the Dutch in the Far East, which are readable and fair.

The book is very worth-while, but it shows remarkably how liberalistic scholars hand out compliments to Calvinists, e. g., Dr. Kuyper in his fight for equality for the Free University is branded as 'wilful', and in the chapter on Dutch Literature Bilderdijk and Da Costa are not even mentioned. And there are numerous other instances of how Dutch scholars with a liberalistic bias color and distort the facts. This volume makes us sigh for Calvinistic research.

H. J. V. A.

## DUTCH THOUGHT

THE CONTRIBUTION OF HOLLAND TO THE SCIENCES. A symposium edited by A. J. Barnouw and B. Landheer. With an introduction by P. Debye, and thirteen illustrations. Quercido, New York, 1943. Price: \$3.50.

THIS volume is a symposium by twenty scholars of Dutch descent on the progress which the Netherlands have made in the last century in the different sciences. Each chapter contains from fifteen to twenty pages, and the content is naturally condensed. The most interesting chapters for Calvinists are the ones on Theology, Philosophy, Sociology, Historiography, History of Art, and Architecture. But the Dutch have excelled in many other lines, and especially in the natural sciences, and so all chapters contain interesting material on what the Dutch scholars have contributed in various lines. Naturally the articles are of an encyclopedic nature, but they furnish an introduction and there is a bibliography in the back of the volume to show the reader how to collect more information.

The chapter on Theology is disappointing for Calvinists, for though Dr. Kuyper, and Scholte and Van Raalte are mentioned,

the names of such scholars as Bavinck and Geesink are not to be found. The chapter on Philosophy omits the names of Bilderdijk, Da Costa, and Groen van Prinsterer for the development of a Calvinistic philosophy, and of the recent philosophers mentions Huizinga only, leaving Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd completely out. Bilderdijk and Da Costa, however, occur in the chapter on Political Economy, and Groen's work is discussed in the chapter on Historiography. Besides, there are pictures of Chr. Huygens and Antony van Leeuwenhoek. So the Calvinists get their share, but it is rather meager.

H. J. V. A.

## KEEP UP YOUR READING A Book a Month.

ONE of the surprising things about Calvin's *Institutes* is how little it is known except by name among those who are Reformed or Presbyterian. This ought not to be so. The *Institutes* is the greatest work that came out of the Protestant Reformation. It is one of the outstanding systematic treatises of the great verities of the Christian Faith that was ever written. Whoever knows the *Institutes* has enjoyed a real theological education, whether he has gone beyond the eighth grade or not in class room study.

Someone spoke of this great work as one of the most lauded but least read of the great religious books. There may be some truth in that. Too much truth, I fear. What a great day it would be if we could concentrate our reading again on some of the really solid books dealing with the eternal verities of the Word of God. Calvin's *Institutes* would be first among these.

Of course, this is no novel; neither is it a book to finish over night—nor in a week, for that matter. It is a book to be studied. Some parts are a bit prolix. People wrote that way in Calvin's day. But even the reading of these parts is very rewarding. The two volumes of this book in English cover each more than 800 pages. But let this not frighten anyone who believes in nurturing his soul on solid food. We recommend every Calvinist have a good edition of the *Institutes* on his own book shelf. And every Calvinistic church library ought to have the best edition available likewise.

We recommend the edition published by the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education at Philadelphia. It is the seventh American edition, originally translated into English by John Allen. This edition has a fine Introduction from the pen of the well-known Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield dealing with the literary history of the *Institutes*. Here is our recommendation of a most worth-while book, not of the month, nor of the year, but of every month and every year throughout the centuries.

Title: INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, by John Calvin.

Publisher: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, Philadelphia.

Price: \$7.50 (2 volumes: 838 and 812 pages).

C.B.

