

The Presbyterian Outlook



Continuing The Presbyterian Tribune

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U. S. G. A.—Birmingham

Early Assembly Actions

William M. Elliott, Jr., 54-year-old Dallas pastor, is elected Moderator of the Birmingham Assembly. . . . Retiring Moderator, W. Taliaferro Thompson, calls on Assembly, "to know Christ and make him known." . . . E. C. Scott re-elected Stated Clerk for two years until retirement. . . . Centennial program is approved—but not as effort to "celebrate the tragic event of the past that brought our church into existence." . . . Montreat College asks \$50,000. . . . Report on training layworkers get unanimous approval, involving challenge funds for participating colleges. . . . Homes and Hospitals, after extended discussion get unanimous approval, with Board of Church Extension to administer program. . . . Christianity and Health study approved without objection. . . . Advancing docket brings World Missions and Bills and Overtures reports by Saturday night. . . . Need for 210 more missionaries is stressed. . . . Committee authorized to study Board and agency salaries. . . . Clarifying statement is made interpreting some aspects of infant baptism.

The Presbyterian Outlook

OLD IN SERVICE

CONTINUING THE PRESBYTERIAN TRIBUNE

NEW IN SPIRIT

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1 North Sixth St., Richmond 19, Virginia

Presbyterian Ministers Support Konionia Farm

Three Presbyterian ministers joined twenty others in Georgia recently in a strong statement supporting Konionia Farm near Americus, Ga. This activity has been under severe attack recently and subject to local pressures because of community objections to its inter-racial characteristics. The statement of the group follows:

"In regard to recent publications concerning Konionia Farm, Inc., near Americus, Ga., we, the undersigned, in light of our present understanding, express our belief that:

"1. Konionia Farm is a Christian community.

"2. Acts of violence have come from persons outside the Konionia group.

"3. No connection exists between Konionia Farm and the Communist party.

"We pray that God's truth and Christ's redeeming love may be revealed in this present crisis in Sumter County."

The Presbyterian ministers who signed were W. Glenn Dorris, First church, Gainesville, Ga.; Robert B. McNeill, First church, Columbus, Ga.; William W. Rogers, minister to students, Athens, Ga.

USA G. A.—Omaha

Radio & TV

During the Presbyterian, USA, General Assembly meeting in Omaha, May 15-22, many radio and television programs have been scheduled. Network programs are as follows:

May 17 (Friday), *Crossroads*, TV 8:30-9:00 p.m., EDT, the story of Richard Smith, former coal mining missionary, "Half-Mile Down."

May 27 (Monday), *Highlights of the G. A.*, NBC, 10:45 p.m., EDT, Eugene C. Blake-Janette Harrington conversation.

May 19 (Sunday), *Columbia Church of the Air*, 10:30 p.m., EDT, David W. Proffitt, retiring Moderator; Hastings College choir.

May 19, *Lamp Unto My Feet*, 10:00 a.m., EDT, CBS, Wm. R. Stackhouse, missionary to Africa.

Let There Be Light, will feature four Presbyterian stories over 300 stations:

Week of May 13, "The Harvest Plain," from the life of Sheldon Jackson;

Week of May 20, "Bats in the Belfry," Christian education in a community's life;

Week of May 27, "To Tell the Truth," National Missions Sand Hills missionary, Ralph Chamberlain;

Week of June 3, "The Least Coin," the current program of church women around the world.

Dallas Pastor Is Named As Assembly's Moderator

In one of the closest elections on record, the Birmingham Assembly named William M. Elliott, Jr., Dallas, Texas, pastor, as its Moderator over Stuart R. Oglesby, Atlanta, Ga., pastor. The vote was 247-232.

These were the only two nominees.

Dr. Elliott was nominated by Harry M. Moffett, Gastonia, N. C., who described the nominee's training and experience: Park College, Louisville Seminary, Edinburgh, a year's teaching back at Louisville; pastorates in Knoxville, Atlanta and Dallas; preacher; church administrator; developer of lay leadership; servant of the church; great pastor.

It was pointed out by Dr. Moffett, who is a member of the Board of World Missions, that Dr. Elliott is completing his term as chairman of the same board; that he is being sent to Korea soon for an important conference on policies and that to have him go as the Assembly's Moderator would greatly enhance his position.

The Highland Park Church in Dallas, where the 54-year-old Moderator serves, is now the largest in the Assembly, with more than 4,000 members and annual

gifts to benevolences nearing the \$500,000 mark.

S. Wilkes Dendy of Dalton, Ga., seconded the Elliott nomination, describing him as an 8-V man: Vocal (he preaches wonderfully); Versatile (he has written four books of which I have read not a one); Valuable (note increased giving of H-P church and service on Board of World Missions); Vitality and Verve (outgoing personality and genuine friendliness); he is a-Vailable; and he is the Very man of the Moderatorship.

Oglesby Nomination

Dr. Oglesby was nominated by Harry A. Fifield, First church, Atlanta, and President Paul McCain of Arkansas College. Dr. Oglesby was described as a "veteran servant and a great leader." His work in Arkansas, North Carolina and Georgia was described as also was his membership on the old Executive Committee of Home Missions, Stewardship Committee, Committee on the Minister and His Work, Hymnbook Committee, and Board of Women's Work.

For some years he was also chairman of the Social and Moral Welfare Committee (predecessor of the Council on Christian Relations) and was a leader in the annual struggle at the Assembly in continuing this work.

Dr. Oglesby has been pastor of Central church, Atlanta, for more than 25 years. While other downtown congregations have moved out or declined, Central has moved forward (it now has 1600 members). At its famous free Baby Clinic 7,500 patients were treated last year.

Dr. Fifield also said this would probably be the last opportunity of the Assembly to name Dr. Oglesby Moderator in view of his approaching retirement. He will be 69 this year.

President McCain said that going from Georgia to Arkansas he had seen the effects of Dr. Oglesby's ministry across the church.

It was pointed out that no alumnus of Arkansas College has been elected Moderator of the Assembly.

Made Unanimous

When the result of the election was announced Dr. Oglesby moved that the election be made unanimous and this



MODERATOR ELLIOTT
An 8-V man

To Know Him and to Make Him Known

Matthew 16:13-18

WHEN Simon Peter declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." From this statement I should like to draw a watchword for us as members of Christ's church. If the Church is not a building, nor an organization; but a body of rock-like men and women who can affirm with Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," then our primary duty now, and always is *to know him and to make him known.*

I. We must know him.

The Easter season through which we have just passed has turned our thoughts to One, who more than nineteen centuries ago was born in a stable, cradled in a manger, walked this earth as a man, and was crucified, dead, and buried; yet he "was decisively proved by his resurrection to be the Son of God," the living Son of the living God. John writes that he was in the beginning with God, and that he was God, that all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made; Paul puts it just as emphatically, "All things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

It is because of who he is and what he does for us that we must know him. I should like to stress five things he does for us, which only he can do, and which must be done for our sanity and life.

A. It is only through knowing him that we can know God.

How else could we know whether or not there is anything behind the power manifesting itself in the universe shown, as science has forced the atom to give up its secrets, to be potentially so benign or so terrible?

Is this power all there is in our universe? Must man struggle alone and afraid against a cosmos filled only with mindless and heartless energy, which knows him not, and which cares nothing whatever for him; which is wholly indifferent to his hopes and fears, his purposes and efforts! Men of science, profoundly disturbed by this Frankenstein which they have created, can give no answer. Whether or not there is intelli-

DR. THOMPSON delivered this sermon at the opening of the Birmingham Assembly. He retired last year after teaching for 36 years at Union Seminary in Virginia. Along with his visits across the church during the past year he has also taught at the General Assembly's Training School.

By W. TALIAFERRO THOMPSON

gence back of it they cannot be sure; that it has character, they dare not say! When asked, "Is it interested in man?" they must be silent! Science has no word about ultimate reality. Can we ever know? Know we must! Can we be certain unless the universe speaks? "No man hath seen God at any time!" How could the finite behold the Infinite? Then we must be hopeless forever! Not so! The universe speaks! Christ is God's Word to us. In him eternity broke into time, the Infinite clothed himself with our finiteness. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us": "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him." He "is the image of the invisible God."

We should never know, except as Jesus speaks that there is anything in our universe except this terrifying power. Jesus tells us that there is a God who made it and controls it, and has designed it for the good of man; that he loves us, and would have us call him Father; that he is like his Son whom we see as he lives among men. How wonderful it is to know that in this universe, yet above it, is One who is interested in people, who loves them with an everlasting love and is every ready to help them; a God who died for them.

B. It is only through knowing him that we can know man.

Long ago one asked, "What is man?" Ever since we have been repeating that question, "What is man, what should, and can he be?" As we look back at the War, and the incredible barbarities of those in charge of concentration camps and lethal chambers; as we soberly study, in its aftermath, the dishonorable conduct of men in high places who made extravagant profits, while our youth were suffering and dying on far seas and in alien lands; as we consider the selfishness of the rank and file of us during the days when things were scarce; as we see, despite the threat of this strange cold war, which keeps us all on edge, the mad endeavor of each group to get for itself the most it can without regard for the country as a whole; as we observe the ghastly inequalities and injustices throughout our own land and across the world, which give communism its chance, the savage seems so close to the surface that we wonder if man is really anything more! Is the culture of which we boast only bright Christmas-like wrappings which we have tied about beasts?

Just a thin, fragile covering, which will tear easily and let the animal through! Is this all man is, or is to become?

Staggered by the hopelessness of our question, we turn to Christ and see in him what men were meant to be, and can be. Men once made in the image of God were intended to be like Christ, full of grace and truth. The truth, as we have seen, has been obscured by pride and selfishness, and the grace has been overlaid by hate. But man's destiny, which he will achieve through Christ, is to follow truth and surrender to love.

C. It is only through knowing him that we can know the possibility and reality of salvation.

Throughout his checkered history man has been acutely aware of his sin. His cry has gone up from an anguished heart, "How shall a man be just before God?" Century by century the smoke of his sacrifices has darkened the heavens as he sought to propitiate the God against whom he had rebelled, and whose law he had violated.

Today, perhaps, in our advanced and sophisticated land, there is little sense of sin as our fathers knew it. But men feel a deep sense of discord and frustration within themselves and in their relationships with others. They are tense, anxious, afraid. Tormented by a feeling of uncertainty and lack they haunt the offices of psychiatrists, and even turn in their desperation to quacks of every sort in their hope of finding peace of mind. Dr. Lee Steiner's startling book, *Where Do People Take Their Troubles?* written several years ago, but just as descriptive of people today, is an amazing revelation of the pathetic need of people to find happiness, courage, a sense of adequacy and at-homeness in this over-awing universe. They do not know what is the source of their uneasiness; they do not realize that they have broken their essential relationship with the God who made them for himself. They know only that something is terribly wrong with them—beyond any power of theirs to right.

Toward the close of a conference of social workers, a young woman rose and said, "After we have secured a minimum wage, and reduced the hours we have to work, there remain the souls of men."

Many are paid too little, and many work too long at monotonous, or dangerous, or distasteful tasks. But higher wages and shorter hours and unwearied bodies are in themselves no guarantee of fullness, or satisfaction in life. Men are souls; sin-sick souls, who need forgiveness and cleansing; lost souls, who need

guidance; estranged and lonely souls, who need restoration to the family of God. To meet such profound and everlasting needs Christ came into our world. His complete adequacy as men turn to him is set forth in these simple, yet sublime words: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins"; "the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost"; "to as many as received him to them gave he the power to become the sons of God." In him and only in him can these deep needs of men be fully met. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

D. It is only through knowing him that we can discover the meaning of life.

A soldier on his way back from overseas said to a friend, "I don't know what life is for, and I don't know what I am for." For the world to be without meaning, or for one to be ignorant of its meaning makes a satisfying life impossible. That is why men snatch at almost any explanation, even Communism, rather than be left with none. When Dostoevski's "cursed, everlasting questions"—whence came I, whither am I going, what am I for?—stand at the door of their minds demanding an answer; if they have none, they are apt to give themselves immoderately to business or pleasure to drown out this torturing voice, or to grit their teeth and carry on in a mood of quiet desperation.

The late Archbishop William Temple stated that, "Christianity enables us to make sense of our world." And, I might add, of our own lives. What is the world for? It was created that it might become the Kingdom of God, a place where the rule of God is established in men's hearts and over their lives; in which all people obey the two great laws, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." These laws we cannot escape, they are wrought into the very structure of the life of the individual and of society. Leslie Weatherhead, thinking of them said that after forty years in the ministry he had learned that life works only one way. The meaning of life is found as we understand and obey them, and teach others to yield to them. Through surrender to them we find both our freedom and our peace.

E. It is only through knowing him that we have hope for this life and for that which is to come.

It is difficult to hope today. How woe-fully disappointed the winning of the War and the years that we have known since then have left us; how disturbed, how fear-filled! At times we feel it would be almost a relief if the war which so constantly threatens us would start and we could get it over with, and begin

afresh. One student of world affairs has said that a black curtain of pessimism is settling down upon our globe. Another, who started to collect the titles of newspaper and magazine articles describing the sickness of mankind, became so depressed as they piled up on his desk that he had to quit or be lost in despair.

How can we hope now! During England's blackest days, when every word that came told of some new disaster, one man found deliverance from this darkness, so he tells us, by repeating to himself just before he turned on his radio, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!" In him and him alone there is hope for our world. One morning the looseleaf notebook, which I used to guide my praying, brought before me for the day's intercession a map which included all the countries of the Near East where fear, and jealousy, and hate reign. How could I pray in hope for them? Only, and I felt this strongly in the very moment of my doubt, as they might one day see, through his grace, the cross revealing that in it God in his infinite love had broken down all barriers between men and races, and between them and him. Then I was sure again that the time would come when they and all men would believe in him; when the kingdoms of this world, the fragments into which we have broken mankind, would become the one great Kingdom of our God and his Christ.

For us to achieve, and maintain hope for the life beyond this life we need do no more than recall the glorious season through which we have just passed, which the world would never have known except for him; and keep in mind that every Sunday speaks to us of his resurrection and of his words, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "In my Father's house are many mansions."

If the claims of Christ are true, if he is the Son of the living God: if only through him we can know what God and man are like; if only through him we can find the way of salvation, and be sure that life has meaning; if only through him we can hope—then Christ must be *everything* to us. He is all, or he is *nothing*! He is the sure foundation of the church, or the church has no foundation! He is the Redeemer of ruined men, or men are without redemption. There is no place in Christianity for a half-way faith, or a half-hearted devotion. He is *everything*! How true is the insight of Phillips Brooks, to which the heart of man has responded by making it the favorite of all of our Christmas carols:

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie,

* * *

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

As he is *everything*, the Son of the Living God; then the primary effort of those who call themselves Christians

must be to know him. This must come first. Through Bible study, worship, fellowship with those who love him, service, upright living we must seek to know him—the facts of his life and teaching and their meaning for us and for the world.

This will be a costly business; but if he is *everything*, we must become serious, must be gripped by something of the spirit of Paul who as Christ really became everything for him, was ready to suffer the loss of all things that he might know him. The exchange was overwhelmingly in his favor. But the great Apostle sought more than just knowledge about Christ, an intellectual appreciation of his life and work. He longed with all that was in him for acquaintance with Christ, and he was not content until he could say, "I know whom I have believed," know him personally, as I know Silas and Barnabas—Timothy and Titus, only in a richer way. This is what Christ offers and desires. "Henceforth," he says, "I call you not servants, but friends." The essence of Christianity is a living relationship with Christ as a Savior and Friend; to know him in such a way that he will be as real to us as wife, or husband, or sweetheart, or best friend. We must seek the fellowship with him which a young Englishman achieved who, when asked, "How do you know Christ is risen?" replied "I spent half an hour with him this morning."

Some of us know now that only a living relationship with our Lord can be sufficient for days like these. One of the most brilliant clergymen and writers in England is Dr. D. R. Davies of Surrey. There is reality in every line he writes for it comes out of a life that puts fiction to shame. When he was a lad of thirteen years old he worked in the coal mines. Soon he became active in trade unionism and politics and gained note as a speaker. As he was still interested in the church, at the urging of his friends he became a minister. But, as he confesses, his gospel was only a social gospel, so that shortly he was spending more time on the political platform than with his church.

In his honesty he left the ministry and after a struggle became successful in journalism and politics. Money was his, and power. Great crowds came to hear him speak. But down in his heart there was a sense of futility. In search of something real he abandoned his half-way religion, gave up church-attendance and prayer and committed himself to communism. In it, after strange and revealing experiences, he found only emptiness. Everything went wrong for him. His marriage turned to bitterness. He broke with the party. With purpose and faith and hope gone, one windy night, near the little village in South Wales which had been his boyhood home, he walked out into the sea expecting to find in death

the end of his mental anguish and bewilderment.

As he tells it:

"There was no last-minute struggle to survive, no last-minute thoughts; just an inexpressible weariness. I have no knowledge of what happened then. But hours later I found myself on a rock, washed up by the tide. It took me a long time to realize that I was alive." Not only was he alive; but in that experience he had met Christ and come to know him. Here is the story in his words, "From the fetid, poisoned, suffocating atmosphere of Marxism, I was ushered into the warm, bracing, and healing sunshine of Christian faith—a faith of self-commitment, not to a different system or ideology, but to a living Person."

A half-way faith had not been enough for him and he had lost it. It was only as he came to know Christ in a vital relationship that Christ was enough, and life meaningful and joyous.

So it is and will be for us. If he does not become real to us, *he* will not be enough, and *nothing* will be enough. The first purpose of those who are members of his church must be to know him.

II. We must also make him known.

This obligation cannot be evaded. If we know him, if he is really *all* to us, how can we help trying to make him known! When Paul realizes that Christ is both God and Savior, his all-in-all, he cries out spontaneously, "I am debtor" to every man who does not know him. I must pass on this priceless gift of God, which I have received, and which is for them also; for them, perhaps only through me.

"The only thing of which I am sure these days," said a thoughtful man, "is that I am not sure of anything. I want something real, something that will show this mad world how to get a grip on something solid." "How about God?" asked a friend, "He is real to some of us."

"Well," came the reply, "if he is, why don't all of you begin to make him real to the rest of us? If anyone has help, this is the time of all times to give it." The responsibility on us who know him is *now* tremendous, inescapable!

We shall have to make him known each in his own way. More of us are going to have to talk about him to others. In that remarkable book, *Towards the Conversion of England*, there is a strong plea for the breaking down of the traditional British reserve, which has produced a church of "silent saints." Prebendary Wilson Carlile declares, "I have got the biggest job I ever tackled in my life; I am trying to open the mouths of the people in the pews."

He is not expecting his members to be philosophers, or theologians; to be able to build up a flawless argument for Christianity, but to speak naturally about Christ and what he has meant to them

to those with whom life brings them into normal association. Is not this our duty? If through him there has come to us any guidance, any comfort, any strength, any peace, any hope; if to us he has been indeed Savior and Friend, how can we keep silent about it! We don't have to argue. We simply have to tell humbly what he has done for us.

An attorney, speaking to the graduating class at Union Seminary several years ago, said, "What Christ needs is not lawyers; but witnesses." Then he made clear the fact that the testimony of a witness is of value only as it is firsthand. He must testify not to what someone else has told him, nor to what he thinks, or imagines to be so; but only to what he has seen and heard. In the court of life it is only as we know him that our testimony has any value. It is the simple statement of our own experience that carries conviction.

Some of us are going to have to talk about him to our friends as we meet them in business, or in our social life, as difficult as that may be. All of us will have to make him known by lives that are more like his. In the end it is our lives that will make our words convincing. It is the way we live that will affect some who will never give us the chance to speak, or before whom in our cowardice we are dumb. It is by life—*our lives*—that they will judge him; his character, his power, his relevance to the needs of our age, will believe that he is really the Son of the living God.

If there is nothing different about the way we live, no breath of the Eternal about us, how can we persuade others to desire him! They cannot know our thoughts, the motives that lie deep in our hearts; but our actions from which they must draw their conclusions about our real beliefs are daily before them. So often our conduct invalidates what we say. The lament goes up in England that so many of the church people fail to display to those outside "a supernatural quality of moral power and brotherly kindness." How is it with us? To how many of us would a man whom the church had not touched say, as one said to a true Christian, "I would give anything to possess a faith like yours. I have always thought that there was something about it in the Bible, but I have never seen before anyone who had the nerve to live it. You certainly have

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given my thinking a jolt."

If we know him it is our duty to jolt people in just that way.

We must have the nerve to live our faith in our *homes*, where we shall love with a love that casts out pride and selfishness, fear and jealousy and the desire to keep up with our neighbors as they build bigger houses and add gadget to gadget.

We must have the nerve to live it in *society*, as in business, in politics, and in social fellowship each will constantly ask himself, with determined purpose to obey, "What would he have me do? What does it mean in this situation to love my neighbor as myself?" His will we shall put first; before profits, before party, before pleasure, before popularity—the will of Christ! The whole thrust of our lives will be to influence the community in which we live to adopt Christian standards, and to follow the Christian way of life.

No one of us by himself can do this unless he has the crusading courage and the sacrificial spirit of Paul. But elders and ministers and people in a local church each giving his best, each drawing strength from the worshipping, brotherly, devoted group, all depending on the Holy Spirit, convince a community that they know him, and that he, the Son of the living God, is infinitely worth knowing.

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