

**July 15, 1955**

**Vol. 24, No. 7**

# *The Presbyterian*

# **G U A R D I A N**

*God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and, although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.*

**Westminster Confession XI.5**

**J. Gresham Machen**  
Editor 1936 - 1937

**Published Monthly**  
\$2.50 per year

# THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN

JULY 15, 1955

## *The Work of the Church*

A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION has been raised by recent developments in the Bible Presbyterian Church. That question concerns the proper work of the organized church.

The Bible Presbyterian Church was organized in 1937 by the Rev. Carl McIntire and others who withdrew from the (later named) Orthodox Presbyterian Church over such issues as premillennialism and Christian liberty. There was in existence then the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. McIntire gained control of this agency and has since dominated it. It has remained independent, however, of official Bible Presbyterian control. Also in the spring of 1937 McIntire and others established Faith Seminary. This has likewise been independent of Bible Presbyterian control, though constituting a part of that movement.

Since then other agencies have been organized, or have served the Bible Presbyterian movement. One of the chief of these has been the *Christian Beacon*, a weekly publication which McIntire has used to further his endeavors. Others have been the American Council of Christian Churches, and the International Council. There has also been Shelton College in northern New Jersey, and Highland College in Pasadena. All of these agencies have been associated with the so-called "Twentieth Century Reformation," the unofficial name McIntire has given his whole program.

For the Bible Presbyterian Church's part, there was established early a Committee for National Missions, an official agency of the church, to promote its extension in this country. There were also certain other official committees concerned with different areas of the church's work.

In recent years, and months, there has been growing dissatisfaction in Bible Presbyterian circles with some of the independent agencies. This dissatisfaction has been featured by a demand for a larger voice on the part of the church in activities it was supposed to support.

At the Spring convention of the American Coun-

cil, delegates from the Bible Presbyterian Church sought to have the Council's constitution changed so that the church would elect its representatives to the executive committee of the Council, and thus have a specific responsibility in determining Council policy. But the Bible Presbyterian delegates were the only ones who supported this position, and they were later denounced by McIntire in the *Beacon*.

Another development that was in part also related to this, was the division in Highland college this past spring, when the president, a number of professors and a majority of the students left the college.

The opposition to the McIntire leadership came to a head at the meeting of the Bible Presbyterian Synod, a few weeks ago, when the Synod voted to start an official church paper, to set up under certain conditions an official church college, and to enlarge its committee on Christian Education and employ a full time secretary. These actions were opposed by McIntire and others, and in turn McIntire has now repudiated the whole idea of church controlled boards, agencies and committees, and has gone so far as to set up an Independent Board for Presbyterian Home Missions, in direct competition with his church's own Committee for National Missions.

Also at the Synod meeting the McIntire group set up a "Committee for True Presbyterianism," whose purpose is to bring information to members of the Bible Presbyterian Church. This Committee promptly issued volume 1 number 1 of a paper called *The Free Press*, containing six articles all written by Dr. Allan MacRae, president of Faith Seminary. The argument of this paper was throughout that church-controlled boards and agencies are wrong, are unscriptural and unconstitutional, and that the Bible Presbyterian Church in proceeding along the line of increasing the number of church controlled agencies had undergone an overwhelming change. MacRae says, "A course has begun which, if continued, must inevitably mean a complete change in the nature of our church."

*(Continued on next page)*

# The Christ of The Scriptures

By C. VAN TIL

**B**ECAUSE OF ITS *general interest, we are glad to bring to our readers the address which Professor Van Til, Chairman of the Faculty of Westminster Seminary, delivered to the graduating class of the Seminary at the Commencement in May.*

**Y**OU ARE ABOUT TO GO FORTH TO preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. At the same time you will preach Jesus and the resurrection. In this you are following in the footsteps of Paul the Apostle. And following his admonition, you aim to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

You are anxious to begin your work. You are full of zeal and enthusiasm to build up the church in the most holy faith and to bring the Saviour to a dying world. What else can we as a faculty do at this moment, but wish you godspeed on this your way, which is surely the way of the Lord?

Indeed, there is nothing more we can do. Yet permit us to say once more, briefly and solemnly, what you already have heard from us many times.

## Your Message

You are going to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. You wish to know nothing else among men. You are going to proclaim Jesus and the resurrection. But where did you learn about this Jesus Christ? Who is this Christ? Why are you so anxious to tell men about him? Your reply may well be in the words of Paul: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

You will tell men that they are sinners *according to the Scriptures*. You will tell them that they bear God's image, that they have the stamp of their origin engraved in their very constitution, that the heavens declare the glory of their Maker and that the whole universe is God's handiwork. But you will add that in Adam men have re-

belled against God and that they daily add to their sins; therefore they cannot be saved from this their sin by their own good works, or by any form of suffering or punishment that they might endure, but only through the death of Christ upon the cross.

Then you will bring the good glad tidings that Christ Jesus died upon the cross that sinners might be saved from this their folly and their sin. In the words of Ezekiel, you will say for the Lord: "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God, and not that he should return from his ways and live . . . As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O House of Israel?" Or in the words of Isaiah, "Come unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Or again, in the words of Peter, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

## The First Response

What will be the response to this your preaching? The first response will perhaps be favorable to you and to your message. Both in the church and in the community you will be welcomed. People will like your enthusiasm, your manifest devotion to the work. They will think well of your labors—do not we all need Christ, they will say. We have learned much from science, but science does not cover the whole of life. There is the realm of morality about which science has nothing to say. In fact, it looks as though science might get us into trouble unless we get our morality adjusted. Have not some of our political leaders acknowledged that the main problem of our survival is not material but moral?

And does not morality have something to do with religion? Have not some of our great scientists told us that there is mystery in reality over which science has no control? And have not

some of the greatest of our philosophers spoken of the Jews as a race with religious genius, "with a feeling for the law as proceeding from a holy God?" Surely we all need authority in the field of religion. And no doubt Jesus was the greatest religious authority that ever lived.

Hence why should not this young preacher preach to us of Jesus and him crucified for our sins? Has not modern psychology taught that deep in our subconsciousness there are instincts and drives which we cannot control through our reason? Why should we not seek supernatural aid for the solution of the personality conflicts and tensions common in our day?

As for the resurrection, do we not all rejoice at Easter season in the return to life of a nature that seemed dead? Is not this a symbol of what may take place in the realm of personality also? Of course the law of decay reigns in the realm of bodily existence. But is there not the realm of the spirit, and is not Jesus the symbol of those who with him rise from the dead into newness of life?

So we rejoice that this young man is preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified, and the resurrection. We rejoice that he calls us image bearers of God. Most of all we rejoice that he offers us a remedy for our personality conflicts and failures in the victory through Jesus Christ the son of God and son of man. Through and in him the forces of divinity are let loose within us and within the world so that all will be well in the end—if not fully in this life then at least in some far off divine event.

If now you meditate on this first reaction to your preaching of Christ and him crucified, of Jesus and the resurrection, you realize that there has been a basic misunderstanding of your message. Men have not understood what you meant by the Scriptures. Hence they have not understood what you meant by the Christ of the Scriptures.

They have not taken Scripture to be the actual, direct, clear revelation from God to men. They have taken it to be a body of religious literature, written by men who themselves had no more than a feeling as to what lies beyond the world of time and space. And they have done this because, with modern thought in general, they do not take

God to be the Creator and controller of the world. For all their interest in the "supernatural," in the feeling for the "wholly other," and with all their respect for the minister as an expert in dealing with the unknown, they keep thinking that after all he too has no information about what may take place after men pass from this world's scene. So "Jesus" is to them, and they think to the preacher also, nothing more than a high and noble ideal, a pattern after which men may well mould their lives, since they feel that somehow it is better to live moral than immoral lives.

### Discouragement

Note well, I am not saying that there will not be those who from the beginning will understand what you mean and will rejoice in what you preach because it is the truth about God and man. But I am thinking now of the reaction you are likely to get in much of the church and in all of the community, except for those who through the regenerating grace of God have seen themselves to be saved by the atoning blood of Christ, who know themselves to be the children of the resurrection and to have been justified and adopted into the family of the redeemed of God.

So discouragement is likely to come when you begin to realize that there has been this deep misunderstanding. Perhaps you will feel that the fault has been in part if not largely with yourself. You plan to make more plain, more simple and more inescapable the picture of Christ according to the Scripture. You seek to make more explicit why it is that you take Scripture to be what it claims to be in the original, the very Word of God. You show men how Christ himself took himself and his work to be that which it was pictured as being according to the Scripture.

Jesus himself took this Scripture, this Old Testament, to be the direct and clear revelation of God about man in his relation to his Maker. And you show how the Christ of Scripture himself spoke through Scripture, explaining to his people who he is and what is the nature of his work for their redemption. How could we know who Christ is and what we ourselves are, what it means that we are the creatures of God made in his image, and what it means that we are sinners, unless God himself tells us these things? Are we to know all this from experience? In the nature of the case that is im-

possible. It is the great physician who must diagnose our sickness. We ourselves will not admit that sin is sin against the holy God in the sense in which Scripture teaches. How could we know this as long as we take for granted that we cannot really know anything of God at all? If God is for us by definition that which is "wholly other," wholly unknown and unknowable, then sin is not sin against God. Sin is meaningless if it is something in relation to a God of whom one can know nothing at all.

So then you may tend to become discouraged and disheartened. You find that in all the words you use men tend to put different meanings. You seem to have lost communication with men.

The situation appears like that at the tower of Babel. You speak of God as the creator of men; they understand you to mean God as a higher aspect of the universe out of reach of human knowledge. You speak of the mind of man being darkened because of the fall so that as a sinner man cannot see things as they are apart from the grace of God. They understand you to mean something like that which Plato meant when he spoke of men being, as it were, because of their finitude, in a cave seeing only a glimmer of light. You say that because of sin men's wills are obdurate and opposed to God, and that their disposition, except for the grace of God, is to hate God and their fellowman. They understand you to mean that man has leftovers of his animal ancestry remaining as he emerges from the past. You say, in short, that man is dead in trespasses and sins and that except Jesus bear for them the punish-

ment due them for their guilt they will be eternally lost, cast into outer darkness. They take this to be a symbol of the fact that the human individual and the race collectively must realize more deeply than is ordinarily done that it takes a great struggle for a man to become what he ought to become according to the ideals of the greatest of the race,—especially to become what that greatest of all, Jesus, has told us we ought to become. To become well-integrated personalities, and to have a really orderly society, more attention must be given than has ever been given before to the renovation of the internal motifs of human personality. In short, they have understood your preaching about God not wishing the death of the sinner, and about Christ weeping over Jerusalem and desiring that her children might be gathered together as a hen gathereth her chicks, to mean, that God and Christ, and particularly the Christ of the Cross and the Resurrection, will do all they can to help you realize the potentialities toward divinity that are latent in every man.

### Your Renewed Attempt

In view of this misunderstanding you seek more earnestly to preach the Christ of the Scriptures. You delineate him even more sharply than you did before. You stress the fact that when the Scriptures say that God has no delight in the death of the wicked, this does not mean God will not punish sinners who do not repent. You recall instead the words, "these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous

(See "Van Til" p. 107)

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## Judaism Today

By EDWARD J. YOUNG

**W**HAT DO THE JEWS BELIEVE? What are the Orthodox Jews? What is the Zionist movement? These and many other questions are answered in a recent issue of *Life* (June 13, 1955). The article in which these questions are discussed is one in a series of several on the great religions of the world. This particular article is accompanied by a number of excellent pictures and illustrations, and any one who wishes to learn about Judaism

will do well to read it.

On the whole we think that *Life* has done a good job. We must confess that we were somewhat taken aback when we read that "Probably late in the Sixth Century B.C., both the Mishna and the Gemara were finally committed to paper. The result is known as the Talmud." (p. 98). We hope that this is merely a typographical error, and that the writer meant A.D. instead of B.C. Also, this statement

member him in your prayers, that he may have a speedy and complete recovery."

The letter also reports that a Japanese, Mamoru Tamaki, has been accepted at Westminster Seminary for the fall, and that the mission is trying to help raise funds for his transportation to America. Gifts for this purpose may be sent to the Committee on Foreign Missions, 728 Schaff Building, Philadelphia 2, Pa., clearly designated.

## John H. Feicke

**R**ULING ELDER JOHN H. FEICKE, of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Yale, S. D., died suddenly on Monday, May 23. He was 64 years of age. He had attended the regular evening service of the church the previous day. He had been in failing health since the first of the year, due to a heart condition, but had appeared strong and well during the days before his death.

Mr. Feicke and his wife began attending the Yale church in 1943. In the fall of that year they became confessing members. Mr. Feicke was later elected a trustee, and has served the church as ruling elder for about ten years. His pastor, the Rev. Melvin Nonhof, says of him, "He was faithful in his attendance at worship services. (I dare say he missed only about five services in the 12 years he attended the church.) He showed a very earnest spirit and was much concerned about the unsaved, particularly his neighbors and friends. He had a zeal for souls."

Funeral services were held in Yale church, with a very large company of neighbors and friends in attendance. Burial was in the Iroquois, S. D. cemetery.

Besides his widow, he leaves a nephew, Elmer Anderson, who was raised from infancy in his home after the mother's death.

## Church Notes

**T**HIRTEEN YOUNG PEOPLE from Calvary Church of Volga, S. D., attended Elim Bible Camp at Niobrara, Nebraska, June 27-July 4. Pastor Bruce Coie acted as Dean of the camp, and Mrs. Appel and Mrs. H. Albright were cooks. Three more quilts have been sent from this church to Korea Theo-

logical Seminary.

The Women's Missionary Society of Calvary Church, Wildwood, N. J., held a Mother-Daughter supper on May 24, with about 60 persons present. Mrs. Leslie Dunn of Westfield, was guest speaker. Her topic was "The Christian Home." Regular services are being held at the Boardwalk Chapel every evening of the week.

Covenant Church of the Oranges has voted to purchase a lot in East Orange, at the corner of Springdale and Glenwood avenues.

The Rev. Henry Tavares of Carson, N. D., is now conducting a service every other Sunday evening in a German Reformed Church in Heil, near Leith. Already being pastor of three churches, Mr. Tavares now has four services and a Bible class on each Sabbath. Men of the Lark church have agreed to break and sow forty acres of land for a neighbor, the proceeds of which are to be devoted to the Lord's work.

The Rev. Dwight H. Pondstone marked the beginning of his 17th year as pastor of Beverly Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles, the latter part of June. Eighteen communicant members were recently received into the church. Twelve of these are worshipping in Whittier, at the missionary chapel sponsored by the Presbytery there and conducted by the Rev. Robert Nicholas. Improvements to Beverly Church include the installation of new pews and an organ. Thirty members of the congregation plan to attend the Family Conference at Big Bear Lake, July 18-25. Rev. Charles Schaufele will be guest speaker at the conference.

At a special meeting of the Oostburg Christian School Association it was decided to purchase the home across from the school property, as a residence for teachers.

## Van Til

*(Continued from p. 102)*

into eternal life."

And how shall a man be righteous and thus enter into eternal life? Only he that hath part in the Christ—"He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

Perhaps also you will preach on the words of Jesus, that no one can come unto him except the Father draw him. You will point out that all men because of sin deserve eternal punishment, that none are able of themselves even to believe in Christ and repent of their sins; but that it is by sovereign grace alone that they must be enabled to do what of themselves they cannot do.

## Second Response

Then, so far as there is understanding of your meaning, there will be opposition to the message that you bring. To be sure, men have sufficient ingenuity to turn the very gospel of sovereign grace into its opposite so that to them it means that somehow all unrighteousness of men will be forgiven and all men taken into the presence of God. They will justify to themselves such a view by saying that surely nothing that is done in this world can be of such importance as to determine that men shall be eternally separated from God. In particular do they argue that no sin in this world, in which all is dark and no one can really see what is right and wrong, can be so great that it deserves to be punished for all eternity. In short the whole point will be that God's righteousness is placed below his love. God is said ultimately to love the world and all men in it despite what they do; he may chastise them as a father chastises his child, but he will by that means only bring into effect his purpose of grace for them.

So when you preach the sovereign grace of God in all its simplicity, when you preach the Christ of the Scriptures in sharp distinction from all such man-made gospels, then there will be indifference, hard looks, empty pews, less salary, a final liquidation from the place to which you had been called. And all this will be in the name of high morality and religion. All religion will be tolerated and extolled except the religion of the free grace of God through the Christ of the Scriptures, and preached on the authority of the Scriptures.

## Final Response

Perhaps you will then become despondent and will seek to escape into some other profession. "When the Son of man shall come, will he find faith on the earth?" Will he find true faith among all this display of false faith? Will there be among those who bow each Sabbath day before the blank and the void any who still bow before