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NED B. STONEHOUSE,  
Editor

The J. Gresham Machen Memorial Number

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Managing Editor

## THE PASSING OF J. GRESHAM MACHEN

OUR hearts are deeply wounded but not unto despair. We who remain are not sorrowing as those who have no hope, for our God added grace to grace when he crowned His work of lifelong favor toward His servant with a most joyous testimony of abundant entrance into the heavenly home. A Roman Catholic sister who had served as one of his nurses remarked that he had been "all spirit." But the fact remains that to us he was a dearly beloved Christian brother whose life touched ours for good at a thousand points. Indeed, he was far more than a brother to many of us. He was a father in Israel and we have become orphans. The cry of our grieving hearts in these days has been: "Our father, our father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" But God who was so gracious to him has not forsaken us. Thanks to His blessed Name, we have the assurance that the Lord his God is the living God who remains as the guide and stay of His people.

### A FATHER IN ISRAEL

As Elijah was the spiritual father of Elisha and of other "sons of the prophets," Dr. Machen was the spiritual father of countless Christians in our time. The world over, many of God's little ones listened eagerly to his words, whether spoken or written, for, more than any other in this generation, he clearly expressed and defended and strengthened their Christian faith on the basis of the Word of God. "My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you," Paul wrote to the Galatians, and this bold figure accurately expresses the relationship between Dr. Machen and a great circle of humble believers in the Bible as the Word of God.

And he was notably the spiritual father of a generation of theological students who crowded into his classrooms. How profoundly the thinking and living of young men have been affected by his teaching! Commending his learning with singular gifts as a teacher, his influence upon his students was lasting and in many instances so powerful as to alter radically the course of their lives. He was so much a man of power and energy that his very presence often proved a source of stimulation to thought and action.

Moreover, to many of us he manifested all of the affection that a natural father might possibly bestow upon his sons. Besides his loving care for all of the churches, which found touching expression in the last week of his life, nothing seemed to give him more joy than to encourage and help others. His acts of generosity were legion. How precious to his sons are the letters of advice and encouragement—how did he find time to write them all?—and the memories of the sympathy with which he received us in the midst of his dreadfully busy life! We never addressed him as a father—he was far too democratic to allow that as a possibility—but in the midst of our jolly fellowship we never quite forgot a certain sense of his separateness which today brings spontaneously to our lips the exclamation of Elisha: "Our father, our father."

### THE CHARIOT OF ISRAEL

We have depended so much upon him in the past that it might well appear that we could not go on without him. Dauntless warrior for the Lord, clothed with the full armor of God, he bore the brunt of the battle against the enemies of God's people. Humble children of God have looked to him as their protector and de-

fender. In a time of great apostasy those who have not bowed the knee to Baal have gone forward with greater courage because of his valiant deeds in their behalf.

No proper estimate can be given here of the significance of the life of Dr. Machen for the furtherance of orthodox Christianity and in particular for the progress of the cause for which he had labored so intensely during the last several years of his life. Certainly it is incalculable. His place in the formation and in the councils of Westminster Theological Seminary, The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, and The Presbyterian Church of America was unique. He was generally recognized as "chief among equals" in the church. No one approached him in the influence which he wielded through pen and voice.

It is not surprising therefore that some should suppose that The Presbyterian Church of America was facing a crisis through the passing of one who was so largely responsible for its formation. One religious editor within the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. has already suggested that now there might be a general return to the old organization. Evidently in that eventuality Westminster Seminary and the Independent Board would be expected to dissolve or to undergo radical changes, for Dr. Machen's name has not been associated less intimately with these institutions than with The Presbyterian Church of America.

#### THE QUALITY OF HIS LEADERSHIP

However complimentary to Dr. Machen's life such suggestions may appear on the surface, actually, inasmuch as they involve the destruction of the institutions which meant more to him than life, they represent the greatest possible depreciation of his significance. Moreover, they evidently spring from a grossly mistaken notion of the quality of his leadership—as if he had committed, or had sought to commit, men to himself or to an organization! The goal of all of his striving was to bind men to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

His leadership was that of a statesman rather than that of a politician. He gave his life to set forth by word and deed great principles of action, which he found in the Word and Law of God. He was as much opposed to government by men (as opposed to government by law) in the church as in the nation. Although he was recognized as one of the greatest scholars and clearest thinkers of our time, who fashioned and stimulated the minds of thousands, his leadership was marked even more as a leadership by example than as a leadership by precept. Above all he was a man of action who

applied the dynamic truths of the gospel to the life of the church.

One of the reasons why he could not remain on at Princeton, when that institution was reorganized in 1929, was that it would have been necessary for him to pay the price of keeping silent on the ecclesiastical issues of the day and to accept the peace-at-any-price which that institution has adopted. Throughout his teaching career he insisted that the task of the teacher of theology is not exhausted in setting forth the truths of the Bible—the true teacher, he held, must show by word and deed how these truths must penetrate and shape the life of the church today. Nothing showed his truly Reformed character more clearly than the manner in which he suited his actions to the principle that a church that deserves the name "Reformed" must constantly be undergoing reformation through the impact of the truths of the Word of God.

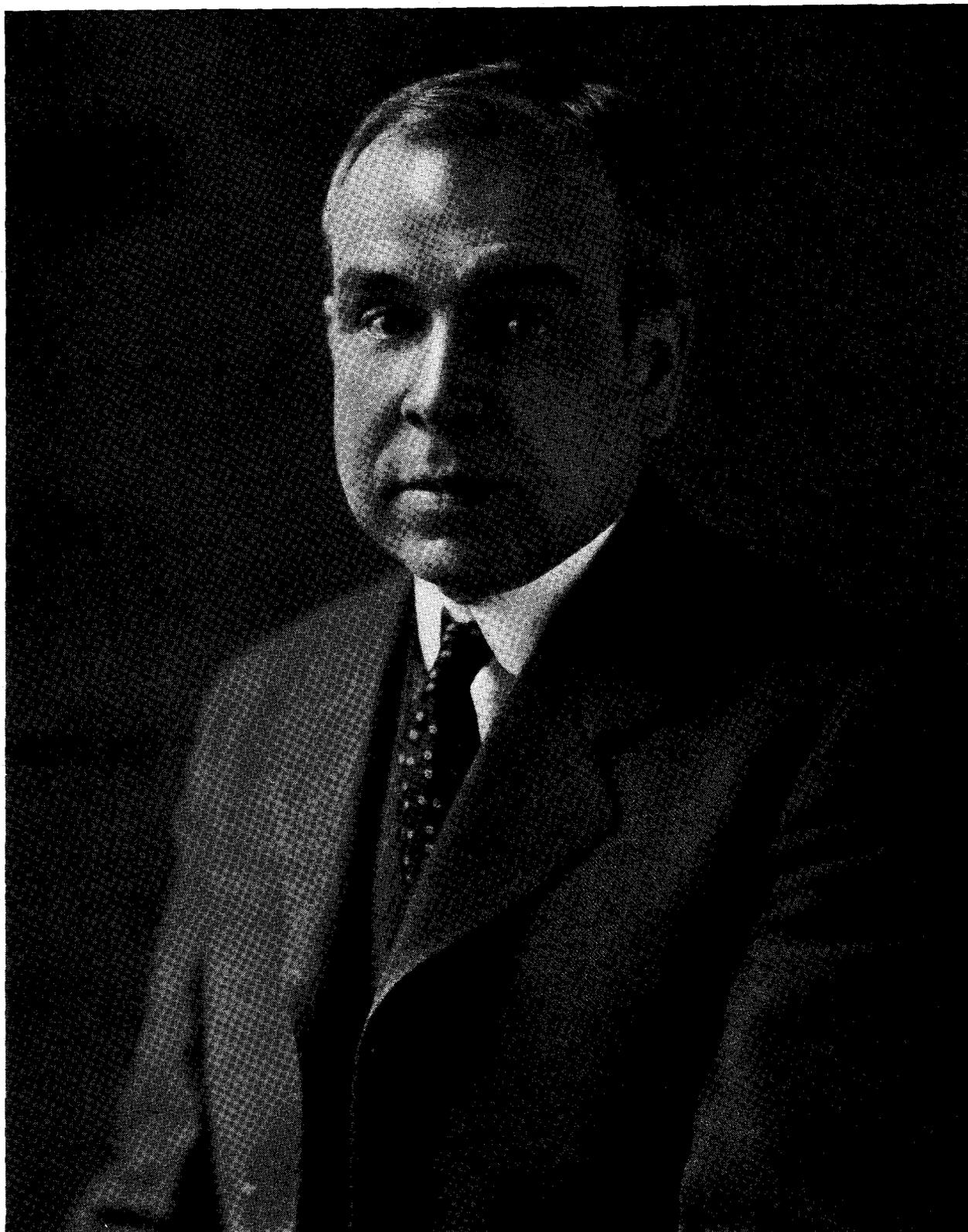
He always insisted, too, that the proclamation of the truth must take place on an honest foundation. At the opening of Westminster on September 25, 1929, he said:

Though Princeton Seminary is dead the noble tradition of Princeton is still alive. Westminster Seminary will endeavor by God's grace to continue that tradition unimpaired; it will endeavor, not on a foundation of equivocation and compromise, but on an honest foundation of devotion to God's Word to maintain the same principles that old Princeton maintained. We believe, first, that the Christian religion, as it is set forth in the Confession of Faith is true; we believe, second, that the Christian religion welcomes and that it is capable of scholarly defense; and we believe, third, that the Christian religion should be proclaimed without fear or favor, and in clear opposition to whatever opposes it, whether within or without the church, as the only way of salvation for lost mankind.

With these ringing words of Christian conviction, this historic statement offers not only an unanswerable *apologia* for the formation of Westminster Seminary but also a justification for the other reformatory acts of his life, including his unique contribution to the formation of The Presbyterian Church of America.

His insistence upon carrying out his speaking engagements in North Dakota when he was in great physical agony and was ill unto death is merely one illustration of his complete disregard of his personal welfare in the face of duty. So although his steadying hand is gone his example of complete devotion to truth and duty remains fresh. And because he has left this heritage of complete fidelity to principle, the work will go on under God in loyalty to the truth for which he gave his life.

The Lord God of J. Gresham Machen is with us yet.



**J. Gresham Machen**  
July 28, 1881 - January 1, 1937

# The Last Battle of Dr. Machen

By the REV. SAMUEL J. ALLEN

**D**R. MACHEN answered my call to help in presenting the cause of The Presbyterian Church of America in Bismarck, North Dakota. The Presbytery of Bismarck of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had painted Dr. Machen as a very unsavory and troublesome person. That, as usual, was their answer to all the charges of unbelief made against them.

From the time he assented to the call, nothing could dissuade him from answering it—neither the smallness of the seceding group, coldness of North Dakota's weather, nor pleas of dear friends and relatives who feared for his health. He was determined to go out to North Dakota and help in the conflict for the faith as it was being waged in that locality.

Accordingly he undertook the arduous trip from Philadelphia, and arrived in Bismarck 11 A. M. Tuesday. I met him emerging from an elevator in the Patterson hotel. After a warm greeting, "Dassie" immediately wanted to know the plans. In an offhand way he told me that he had been sick the night before on the train, but that he was feeling better and ready to do anything that I thought would help the cause. I then told him that, if he were up to it, I would like him to go to Leith, 75 miles away, so that my people could see for themselves "this terrible man, Machen." On that trip to Leith, he kept saying, "You are not seeing 'Dassie' at his best; I'm not like this very often." One could see that he was not feeling well. During this trip his whole conversation showed his devotion to the Reformed Faith. His whole heart and soul were particularly centered on Westminster Seminary and THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN. His ambition for the latter was to see it a real organ of the new denomination, propagating truly reformed doctrine, maintaining its glorious tradition.

When we arrived at Carson where I live, my four little girls clambered about him as if they had known him always. Our dog was vying with the children for a place on his lap. At dinner, "Dassie" could hardly touch a bite, yet he never complained. He commended Mrs. Allen on her biscuits

and said if he were himself he would pack away at least five.

Later we went to Leith. There was only a small crowd but it didn't dampen his ardor for one minute. During the speech he was hampered by a cough that made it appear as though he were troubled with asthma. The room was hot and stuffy and made it even more difficult for him. Nevertheless, he went straight through without one single complaint or excuse.

Almost immediately after his talk he was stricken with pleurisy. He could not walk up the steps by himself. The pain was intense. He was in agony. From Leith to Bismarck (75 miles) he groaned with pain and had a terrible thirst. Sometimes he thought he was going to die. More than once he cried out about his thirst. I offered to stop but he said, "We can't do it. Wait until we get to Bismarck." At one time he cried, "I can't make it, I can't make it"; then he would say, "I can't die now, I have so much work to do." This was the saddest and most grievous trip I ever made. My heart grieved as I heard his groaning and wondered if he would reach Bismarck. At last, after what seemed an age, we arrived in Bismarck about 7.15 P. M. He had to be helped from my car to his room. At first he wouldn't consent to the calling of a doctor, but the pain was so intense that he finally yielded on this point. After calling the doctor at 7.30 P. M. I had to go to the hall where the meeting was to take place and arrange things. At 8.05 P. M. I called him by phone and asked him how he felt. To my surprise and delight he told me that the doctor had bandaged him up and eased the pain, and that he was fit as a fiddle and ready to meet any Auburn Affirmationist that might wish to meet him. About ten minutes later he walked into the auditorium apparently as spry as ever, with a big, broad smile on his face. After he was introduced he gave a fine address which made a strong impression on the people present and destroyed, in their minds at least, all the slander and calumny about his "bitter character." After the address he answered questions for fifteen minutes—but the signers of the Auburn

Affirmation at Bismarck did not attend.

After the meeting he almost collapsed. I brought him to his hotel. He was in agony. But over and over he would say, "Sam, it went across; they didn't know I was sick." And it was true! Only a few whom I had told knew that anything was wrong. He made a wonderful impression on the one hundred and fifty present.

The next morning he was dressed and ready to get his train for the east, but the pain was so intense that the doctor absolutely refused to permit him to do so. He diagnosed his case as pleurisy at first. "Dassie" told me that through that sleepless night of pain he experienced much joy in the fact that God had permitted him to perform his duty.

After arriving at the hospital he sent telegrams to his brother and sister-in-law and to the Rev. Edwin H. Rian, saying that there was no cause for alarm.

In the afternoon I left for Carson, as I had a Bible class at Leith in the evening. I felt little alarm as I knew he was in good hands. I asked the Rev. William Lemke of Bismarck, an evangelical minister, to call and minister to his wants, and told "Dassie" that I had done this. Mr. Lemke, throughout his illness, rendered every service that he could. The Auburn Affirmationist in Bismarck called and told him that if he could do anything he would be glad to do so. This visit disturbed Dr. Machen considerably. He said, when I went back the next day, "Sam, you understand; it is not that I have an unforgiving spirit. I would gladly forgive him if he asked forgiveness, and I do pray that he will see the Christ—but he has another Christ. He cannot help me. He should not come to me in this condition. He should wait until I can discuss things with him. He just doesn't speak the language. Mr. Lemke speaks the language" (meaning the language of a truly born-again person).

That morning, Thursday, I was informed that he had pneumonia. His breath was coming hard. I talked to the doctors and they told me that there must be some way found of getting

"Dassie" to rest. He was sending telegram after telegram and was greatly disturbed by the visit of the Auburn Affirmationist. I determined to stay in Bismarck and do what I could to help him get rest. He needed all his breath and I spent very little time in his room those two days, Thursday and Friday.

Thursday evening I had a precious visit with him. I prayed with him. After prayer he told me of a vision he had. He said that he thought he had already died. "Sam, it was glorious, it was glorious." One could see that he had had a vision of heaven. He had already seen his Lord. He ended by saying, "Sam, isn't the Reformed Faith grand?" This conversation was enough in itself to cause me to dedicate myself anew to propagate the Reformed Faith as God gave grace, wisdom, and strength.

The nurse told me that he was resigned and had repeatedly told her, "Let God's will be done."

New Year's Eve at 11.30 P. M. I called on the nurse who told me that he was doing poorly. In the morning he was very low, but still had a chance. I stayed in the hospital, sometimes outside of his room and sometimes in the room. At rare intervals he would awake. He was fighting for breath. His lungs were fast closing up. One time he was telling Charlie Woodbridge something, and then Paul Woolley. Then the nurse told him that Sam Allen had called. He said, "Fine fellow, Sam. Give him my regards." Then his eyes saw me and he said, "I'm just about conscious, Sam, just about conscious." This was the only time I know that his mind wandered even for a minute. This was about 2.00 P. M. Friday. I never dreamed that he would ever regain consciousness again. To my surprise, when I went to his room at 4.00 P. M. with the Rev. E. E. Matteson and the Rev. C. A. Balcom he was conscious and his mind was clear as crystal, and he said, "Sam, old boy, everything is all right."

I was quite excited at this turn for the better and left the room, not wishing to hurt his chances any. I knew that there was only a very small part of the left lung remaining to breathe through, but I hoped against hope and prayed for a miracle. He was very desirous of seeing his beloved brother, Arthur, and his sister-in-law. He had thought they were coming on the noon train and it was tragic to see his disappointment when they failed to ap-

pear. I do not know why he had the idea that they were coming on the noon train, but he surely thought they were. When his brother and his brother's wife were pulling into Bismarck at 7.45 P. M. this great soul,—this marvellous, cultured, child-like, noble, courageous, Christian leader—breathed his last, and his soul went to be with his Lord.

His last words were put down in a very precise way in a message to John Murray, "I'm so thankful for active obedience of Christ: no hope without it." His nurse took this message.

When I could finally think after seeing one go whom I loved as much as I loved any human, three Scripture passages come to my mind. Philipians 1:23, 24—it was indeed better

for him to be with Christ and it did seem to me that it was absolutely necessary for him to abide in the flock to continue to lift up our hands; II Samuel 3:38—a prince and a great man had fallen in Israel, and II Timothy 4:7—I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

"Dassie" kept telling me that I wasn't seeing him at his best, but I believe that the Lord gave me the privilege of seeing him at his very, very best. I know that his last few days will always inspire me, for they gave me a picture of a truly humble, courteous, Christian gentleman, and of an indomitable spirit controlled by a passionate desire to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

## The Funeral Service of Dr. Machen

**T**HE following is the order of the funeral service of Dr. Machen held in the Spruce Street Baptist Church, Philadelphia, on January 5, 1937, and conducted by the Rev. Professor R. B. Kuiper and the Rev. Edwin H. Rian:

PRELUDE—Marian S. Rian

PROCESSION

OPENING SENTENCES—The Rev. R. B. Kuiper

The Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him.

I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.

HYMN

When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the cross of Christ, my God:  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE—The Rev. Edwin H. Rian

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood: they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth.

My spirit was overwhelmed. I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I

have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with my own heart: and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? And I said, This is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?

Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. Oh satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish the work of our hands upon us: yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

SOLO—Mr. Dwight H. Poundstone

Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,  
It is not night if Thou be near;  
Oh, may no earth-born cloud arise  
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

Abide with me from morn till eve,  
For without Thee I cannot live;  
Abide with me when night is nigh,  
For without Thee I dare not die.

When the soft dews of kindly sleep  
My weary eyelids gently steep,  
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest  
Forever on my Saviour's breast.

PRAYER—The Rev. R. B. Kuiper  
NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE—The  
Rev. R. B. Kuiper

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

And unto one he gave five talents. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. After a long time the lord cometh and reckoneth with him. And he that had received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

But watch thou in all things: endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me: Write: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

And he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star.

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment: and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he

hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him, that God may be all in all.

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen!

## HYMN

There is a green hill far away,  
Without a city wall,  
Where the dear Lord was crucified  
Who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell,  
What pains he had to bear,  
But we believe it was for us  
He hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiven,  
He died to make us good,  
That we might go at last to heaven,  
Saved by his precious blood.

There was no other good enough  
To pay the price of sin,  
He only could unlock the gate  
Of heaven, and let us in.

Oh, dearly, dearly has he loved!  
And we must love him too,  
And trust in his redeeming blood,  
And try his works to do.

BENEDICTION—The Rev. R. B. Kuiper  
RECESSIONAL

POSTLUDE—Marian S. Rian

### The Service at Baltimore

The following brief service was read at the grave in Greenmount Cemetery, Baltimore, by the Rev. Ned B. Stonehouse, Th.D.:

I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take out of this world the soul of our beloved brother, we therefore commit his body to the ground. And we look for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose second coming in glorious majesty to

judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in him shall be changed and made like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Let us pray:

Almighty God, who by the death of thy dear Son Jesus Christ hast destroyed death, by his rest in the tomb

hath sanctified the graves of the saints, and by his glorious resurrection hath brought life and immortality to light; receive, we beseech thee, our unfeigned thanks for that victory over death and the grave which he hath obtained for us and for all who sleep in him; and keep us in everlasting fellowship with all that wait for thee on earth, and with all that are around thee in heaven; in union with him who is the resurrection and the life, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all, evermore. Amen.

## Whose Faith Follow

By the REV. PROFESSOR R. B. KUIPER

A Tribute to Dr. Machen, Delivered January 10, 1937, on  
the Westminster Seminary Hour Over  
Radio Station WIP

SOME time ago I happened to be present when a minister preached what is known as a farewell sermon to his people. He had chosen a most fitting text for the occasion. Jesus and His favored disciples were on a high mountain. He was gloriously transfigured. Heavenly habitants appeared in the persons of Moses and Elijah. A cloud overshadowed the company. Out of the cloud came the voice of God Himself. The disciples, sore afraid, fell on their faces. Jesus bade them arise. "And when they had lifted up their eyes," says the evangelist, "they saw no man save Jesus only." That verse was announced by the minister as his text. And the very first sentence of his sermon was this: "Beloved, I ask you to forget me completely and to remember only the Christ whom I have preached."

That was beautiful, was it not? I surely thought so at the time, and no doubt almost everybody in the audience thought likewise. And yet it does not require much reasoning to discover that that opening sentence was less sensible and a bit more sentimental than it might have been.

After all there is no sound reason why a congregation should not remember both the Christ who was

preached and the man who preached Him. Remembrance of the one does not exclude remembrance of the other. To be sure, the two are not on one level. "We preach not ourselves," said one of the apostles, "but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." But it does not follow that the congregation must forget the servant. To do so were hardly human. Rather should the congregation remember the servant *because* he preached the Lord.

It is a most interesting fact that God Himself commands us to remember those who once spoke His Word to us and have since gone to their reward. We find that command in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the thirteenth chapter, and the seventh verse:

*"Remember them which had the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."*

I ask you to meditate with me on this portion of Scripture as I apply it to one of God's most faithful servants in the gospel of His Son, Dr. J. Gresham Machen. Withal I shall be exalting not Dr. Machen but Jesus Christ.

**S**IGNIFICANTLY our text does not tell us to follow the persons of those who have spoken the Word of God to us, but their faith.

Christians are not followers of men; they follow Him who issued the challenge: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me."

To be sure, the divine Head of the Church is pleased frequently to assign servants of His to positions of leadership, and these human leaders are valuable gifts which should be cherished and honored. To name but a few, He called Moses to lead His ancient people Israel out of Egypt's iron furnace, across the Red Sea, and through the wilderness, to the borders of the promised land; He appointed the apostles as leaders of the New Testament Church in its infancy; and in the sixteenth century He chose to employ such heroic figures as Luther and Calvin to lead forth His loyal disciples out of a woefully corrupted church. I do not hesitate to add that it was He who raised up Machen to lead a small but faithful remnant out of an ecclesiastical organization which had rejected the Word of God and had dethroned the Church's King.

But mark you what that Christian leader whose peer has not arisen, even the chief of the apostles, wrote to the church at Corinth: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." He would have the Corinthian Christians follow him for one reason only, and that reason was that he himself followed Christ.

In last instance, then, Christians are not followers of mere men but of Jesus Christ. They look not to human beings for leadership, not even to the ablest and the greatest, but to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith.

If that is true of Christians in general, it is particularly true of those Christians who justly call themselves Presbyterians. Presbyterianism is averse to every form of hierarchy. It will not brook even the semblance of hierarchy. It most emphatically refuses to recognize any man as head of the Church. It charges every man who lays claim to such headship with "usurpation dishonoring the Lord Jesus Christ."

How excellent a Presbyterian Dr. Machen was on this score. When he assumed the moderatorship of the

First General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church of America, his first words were these: "I shall be Moderator only so long as the sessions of this Assembly last." Full well did he know that he would not be the Church's Moderator after the Assembly had disbanded. And it was just as clear to him that, even while the Assembly was in session, he was in no wise head of the Church.

Those who dislike The Presbyterian Church of America have sometimes styled its members "Machenites." Had Dr. Machen been a vain man, he might have felt complimented. As a matter of fact this appellation grieved him deeply. He regarded it an affront to the members of the Church, since it stamped them the followers of a mere man. More important by far, he deemed it an insult to Jesus Christ, who he was convinced was the actual Founder and the real Head of this infant denomination.

How fortunate that Dr. Machen was not the head of The Presbyterian Church of America. He was taken away. Had he been the Church's head, it might well pass out of existence now, for a church can no more live without a head than can the human body. But, God be praised, the Church's Head is the everlasting Son of God, Jesus Christ. He is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. Therefore His Church abides.

**W**HILE we are not to follow the persons of those who have spoken the Word of God to us, we are enjoined to follow their faith.

Dr. Machen had a great and strong faith. By the grace of God he was a veritable hero of faith, comparable with the heroes and heroines of that illustrious catalogue of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

How are we to follow his faith? I would make two suggestions: *by holding fast the truth which he believed and taught, and by manifesting the same courage as he in the defense and proclamation of that truth.* And these two ways of following his faith are one. They may not be separated. Only if we do both these things are we really following his faith.

**D**R. MACHEN's faith was none other than the historic faith of Christendom. The faith of St. Paul, of Athanasius, of Augustin, of Cal-

vin, of the Hodges and Warfield, was also the faith of Machen.

His faith may be described as intellectual. No, he was not an intellectualist. Far from it. It was not at all his position that acquaintance with the truth is the sum total of faith. He gladly granted that an illiterate grandmother might possess the faith, while a seminary professor might lack it. Nor did he suppose that by mere mental effort one could arrive at faith in Jesus Christ. He knew full well and taught emphatically that the new birth is an indispensable prerequisite of saving faith. But for all that his faith was intellectual. It was more than a mystic feeling of dependence on God. It had factual and doctrinal content. He vigorously opposed the silly notion that God places a premium on ignorance and that mental laziness is a Christian virtue. In the words of a great catechism, he held that true faith is first of all "a sure knowledge, whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in His Word."

The word *supernatural* describes the content of Dr. Machen's faith as accurately and as adequately as any one word can. To name but a few particulars, he believed firmly in the supernatural inspiration of the writers of Holy Writ, in the supernatural birth of the Son of God from the virgin Mary, in His supernatural resurrection from the dead, in His supernatural ascension into heaven and His future supernatural return, in the supernatural salvation of sinners by the blood and the Spirit of Christ.

The most monumental of his many books is on the Virgin Birth. Let no one suppose that he hit upon that subject accidentally or arbitrarily. No, he made this miracle the study of a life-time because it raises the issue of supernaturalism in such utterly unambiguous fashion. In this miracle the supernatural shines forth with supreme splendence. At this point the naturalist and the supernaturalist definitely part company. Here compromise and dissimulation are out of the question. To be or not to be a supernaturalist, that is the question when one faces the Virgin Birth. Dr. Machen was a supernaturalist.

The secular press has often described him as a fundamentalist. He much preferred not to be called by that name. Do you wonder why? But

the reason lies at hand. Dr. Machen was much more than a fundamentalist. All fundamentalists are supernaturalists. But by no means all fundamentalists are *consistent* supernaturalists. Dr. Machen was that. And that is only another way of saying that his faith was the faith of consistent Christianity. In short, he was an adherent of *the Reformed Faith*.

Let me attempt to give you some idea of what is meant by the consistent supernaturalism of the Reformed Faith. To that end I can do no better than recapitulate in the briefest possible way a few of his teachings on the subject of salvation.

Of course, he believed the doctrine of election. So does every fundamentalist accept this doctrine in some form or other. But he believed in *absolute* predestination as taught in Holy Scripture. He did not hold the view that God chose certain men to eternal life because He saw beforehand that they would believe. That teaching places the ground of man's salvation in man. But his view coincided with Paul's: that God "predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." He found the ground of election in the Sovereign God alone. And faith, he held, is not the ground of election but one of its fruits.

Again, he did not teach, as so many preachers do, that by His death on the cross Christ just made salvation possible, and that it is left to the individual sinner to make his own salvation actual. That teaching manifestly makes man his own saviour. No, his conception of the Atonement was far more exalted than that. He believed that Jesus Christ by His death on the cross did infinitely more than open the way to salvation, that He actually saved all those whom the Father had given Him.

Again, he did not believe, as so many preachers seem to, that the unregenerate sinner has the ability to receive Jesus Christ by faith. No, he accepted unreservedly the Scriptural teaching that the natural man is dead in trespasses and sins and that only he who has first been born again, born from above, can accept Christ in faith, that "no man can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

There are Christians in our day who hold to the strange notion that

all that Christ did for the sinner's salvation was to pay the penalty of sin by His atoning death. They overlook the fact that He had to do and actually did do much more than that. Not only did He pay the penalty of sin by His passive obedience, but by His active obedience, His perfect observance of God's law, He also merited eternal life for His own. The salvation which He wrought is not only negative, but positive as well. It is complete. He is the perfect Saviour. Dr. Machen meditated on that when he lay on his death-bed and thanked God for Christ's active obedience.

We conclude that the Reformed Faith holds with unwavering consistency to the Scriptural teaching of supernatural salvation, which is only another name for salvation by grace. It refuses to drop one jot or one tittle of the declaration of God's Word: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

One cannot begin to grasp Dr. Machen's significance unless one realizes that he was a Calvinist, or, as I prefer to put it, that his faith was the Reformed Faith.

He helped found Westminster Theological Seminary in order that it might teach, not mere fundamentalism, but the Reformed Faith. He helped organize The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions in order that under its auspices men might go forth to preach to a lost world the unadulterated gospel of salvation by grace. He helped bring into being The Presbyterian Church of America in order that it might be, not just another fundamentalist denomination, but a truly Reformed Church.

How he labored during the last months of his life to keep The Presbyterian Church of America free from any and every deviation from consistent supernaturalism. How zealously he fought at the Second General Assembly against that serious compromise with naturalism which is known as Arminianism. How earnestly he warned against the obscuring of the doctrine of free salvation by Modern Dispensationalism. There was good reason for his tremendous zeal. He saw clearly that every departure from consistent supernaturalism constitutes a concession to the naturalistic Liberalism of our day.

He knew that, if the church in whose founding he had so large a part and which had the love of his great and warm heart should depart from the Reformed Faith never so little, it would by just so much have begun to return with the dog to his own vomit and with the sow that has been washed to the wallowing in the mire.

It is meaningful that only a day before his death he exclaimed: "*How grand is the Reformed Faith!*"

OUR text bids us follow the faith of those who have spoken the Word of God to us, *considering the end of their conversation*, as the Authorized Version has it, or in the words of the Revised Version, *considering the issue of their life*. Without doubt the author, when writing these words, had in mind the martyr's death which was endured by the earlier leaders of the Palestinian congregations, such men as Stephen, the deacon, James, the son of Zebedee and brother of John, James, the brother of the Lord, and Peter. He would have the Hebrew Christians emulate the strength and steadfastness of their faith as manifested in their martyrdom.

Shall we call Dr. Machen a martyr? I am not at all certain that he considered himself worthy of that name. He did not have a martyr complex. He did not invite martyrdom, nor did he boast of it. He was far too sane to do any such thing. There was nothing of the fanatic about him. And yet, without the slightest hesitation I give him a place among the martyrs of the Christian Church. What abuse has not been heaped upon him! I seriously question whether any religious leader of our day was more maligned than he. To him applies the beatitude: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake."

What heroism of faith he manifested in the defense and proclamation of the Reformed Faith!

He was not afraid of being in the minority. How he liked to preach on the text, "There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few"! What comfort he derived from the story of Gideon and his three hundred! It is interesting that he feared more that The Presbyterian Church of America might be too large than that it would be too small. He knew

all the time that he represented a numerically little, almost negligible, group in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. But he also knew that God and one are a majority.

He did not take the path of least resistance. He never said, as many say in effect: If I proclaim the truth in my own sphere of labor, I am doing my whole duty; I am not responsible for what other ministers preach. He realized that he was his brother's keeper. He had a burden for souls. He felt that he was sinning if he did not protest in the most vigorous way against the betrayal of precious souls by a false gospel. Nor did he take refuge in what some please to call positive, uncontroversial preaching. He remembered the words of Jehovah to His servant Ezekiel about the watchman who fails to warn the people of the approaching foe and at whose hand their blood will therefore be required.

Let no one think that Dr. Machen was not sensitive to abuse. We who knew him well realized that his was a very sensitive soul. And to the end, in spite of much abuse, he never became calloused. Had he been less sensitive, he would have suffered less. But he was willing to endure affliction for Christ's sake. He counted it an honor to suffer for His sake who loved him and gave Himself for him. He endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

He did not shun defeat. It never seems to have occurred to him to avoid battle when, humanly speaking, it was evident beforehand that he would go down in inglorious defeat. He was fully aware of the strength of that mighty ecclesiastical machine which he challenged. But he also knew that might is not right. And his one concern was to be right. Incomparably rather than be wrong and live he would die for the right. Luther's historic ultimatum, "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise; God help me," was also Machen's.

He flew in the face, not only of a powerful ecclesiastical machine, but also of that intangible but well-nigh irresistible force which may be designated the spirit of the age. In the midst of a generation clamoring loudly for church-union he led a secession. And in an age of political despotism and ecclesiastical tyranny and legalism he took up the cudgels

for civil and religious liberty and never laid them down till death.

He was willing to spend and to be spent for the faith. He gladly parted with earthly goods for the sake of God's truth. It might almost be said that he used every ounce of his strength and every moment of his time for the defense of the gospel. He fought the good fight of faith with complete abandon. He did not count his very life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

He endured as seeing Him who is invisible. Therefore he scorned the honor of men and craved only the divine approval. For the same reason present defeat did not discourage

him. He had faith in God, who will see to it that truth crushed to earth shall rise again, and whose Kingdom is for ever.

Am I exalting man? God forbid! Listen! Wrote the chief of the apostles, who labored more abundantly than all others: "By the grace of God I am what I am." I hear Machen say, *Amen!*

Dr. Machen was an apostle of orthodoxy, of strict orthodoxy, of consistent supernaturalism, of the Reformed Faith. And his orthodoxy was very much alive. He utterly detested that dead orthodoxism which professes the truth and yet tolerates falsehood. He did not merely profess the truth; he loved it dearly; he defended it with might and main; he declared it with all his strength; he lived it; he gave his life for it.

His earthly task is finished. We did not so judge. But God, who took him, told us so. He fought a good fight; he finished his course; he kept the faith.

It is for us, the living, to follow his faith. And we can do that no better than by continuing the work which he began, by building on the foundation which he laid, and by the grace of God laid so well. Let us then contend, contend earnestly, as earnestly as he did, for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, the unadulterated gospel. And when we sing—

"Faith of our fathers, living still,  
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword;  
O how our hearts beat high with joy  
Whene'er we hear that glorious  
word!

Faith of our fathers, holy faith,  
We will be true to thee till death"—

may we sing not just with our lips, but from our hearts, and may we seal our song with our lives.

"Now it came to pass after the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give them."

Let us obey that command. Let us possess the land. If we do, we shall be honoring the memory of our esteemed and beloved brother, and, what is incomparably more, we shall be working the work of God, whose he was, whom he served, and unto whom be glory for ever. Amen!

### The General Assembly Sermons of Dr. Machen

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