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*Synods and Councils are to handle,  
or conclude nothing, but that which is  
ecclesiastical: and are not to intermeddle  
with civil affairs which concern the  
commonwealth, unless by way of  
humble petition in cases extraordinary;  
or, by way of advice, for satisfaction of  
conscience, if they be thereunto required  
by the civil magistrate.*

Westminster Confession XXXI.4

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## Galbraith in Korea

**T**HE Rev. John P. Galbraith, general secretary of the missions committees of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, reached Japan on Friday, April 18. Passengers were not able to land until the next day, when Mr. Galbraith was met by Mr. Hunt, Mr. McIlwaine, and Mr. and Mrs. Uomoto.

The few days delay in arrival time made it impossible for Mr. Galbraith to go to Korea in time for the opening exercises of Korea Seminary, so he chose to remain in Japan until about May 3. This gave him opportunity to visit the missionaries and their fields of work, and to visit other places in the country. Among them he spent some time at the seminary of the Reformed Church in Japan. He was also scheduled to visit the Japan offices of the American Home Bible League.

In a letter mailed after he arrived in Japan, Mr. Galbraith tells of some of his travel experiences and of his first hours in that country. We quote a few excerpts from this letter:—

"We left the pier at 2.50 p.m. (Wednesday, April 2), with a tugboat taking us out into the channel . . . The ship is loaded on deck as well as in the holds. There are about ten army cranes on deck and another ten or more trucks . . . There are 12 passengers on board, only three of whom are men. I think there is also one baby. One couple are missionaries of the Disciples of Christ, going out for their first term, one woman is, I think, a YWCA worker, and the rest are Army wives.

"We are not taking the great circle route . . . That route is about 600 miles shorter than the one we are taking, but because storms on that route are almost constant at this season of year, and in a storm we can make only about eight knots, the captain figures we will actually get there more quickly this way.

(Monday, April 7) "We had our service yesterday. There were only seven of us altogether, so it was disappointing from that angle. I preached on the Triumphal Entry. I think that we will be able to get a little more interest in the Easter service for next week. Chambers, the fellow going out as a missionary to Japan, will preach. He is of the Disciples of Christ, popu-

larly called Campbellites. They have no doctrinal confession for their church, so it is hard to say what all they believe. They are baptistic, though. I have had some discussion with them on the matter of baptism, and find that they are not acquainted with the arguments for infant baptism and sprinkling . . .

(Thursday, April 10) "This morning I was having a theological discussion with a Miss McArthur, who I thought was a YWCA worker. It turns out that she teaches at the School of Social Studies at Columbia University. It is amazing, no matter how often you come into contact with it, that people do not see the implications of their philosophy. She thought she was opposed to pragmatism (the idea that you can determine what course to follow in faith and life on the basis of past experiences of yourself and of the human race) but she is a pragmatist herself. I think she is beginning to see that. Basically what I pointed out was that as soon as you get away from the objective revelation of the Bible as your guide, you must of necessity turn to pragmatism . . .

"Last night I played chess until 10 p.m. with the Chief Engineer.

(Monday, April 14) "We had our service yesterday at 9.30. Chambers, the Disciples of Christ missionary,

preached on the meaning of the resurrection . . . In the course of it he said that the ten commandments have nothing to do with us today, although they do present principles which it is good for us to follow. I am going to tackle him on that today. If there is no law, then there is no sin (Rom. 7:7; 3:20). And if there is no sin, there is no use of his going to Japan to preach the gospel. How mixed up people can get when they have no systematic training.

(Saturday, April 19) "We arrived in Tokyo Bay by 3.30 Friday afternoon . . . It was necessary to anchor in the bay overnight. How disappointed everyone was. So this morning at 7.15 we started for the harbor. Then instead of going to a pier, we tied up at a buoy in the harbor. There the immigration officers came out and checked our passports and military permits. Just after they came aboard another little boat came out and there were visitors for the passengers, including Bruce Hunt, Heber McIlwaine and the two Uomotos. They came on board. Then after a while we went down a gangway which they had lowered along the side of the ship, and went in the boat to shore.

"I cannot get to Korea in time for the opening. Consequently I am going to stay here until about May 1 . . . I am going down to Kobe (where the Reformed Seminary is) Monday night and come back Tuesday. I'll go up to Watari (McIlwaine's field) over the next weekend (April 27)."

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## Should Ministers be Members of Local Congregations?

By JOHN MURRAY

**I**N many churches which are Presbyterian in their polity those who are ordained as ministers of the Word are not considered to be any longer members of local congregations. On being ordained they become members of presbytery and by that fact they cease to be members of a congregation under the jurisdiction of the session. It is not difficult to see how this practice should have arisen. Since ministers are ordained by the presbytery they are, as ministers, under the jurisdiction of the

presbytery. If they should still continue to be under the jurisdiction of the local church session, questions would immediately arise as to the relation of the jurisdiction exercised by the session to the jurisdiction exercised by the presbytery. Obviously, if the presbytery is the court which ordains the minister, only the presbytery and not the session has the right to deprive the minister of his office or suspend him from the exercise of the functions of that office. On the other hand, if

the session exercises jurisdiction over him as a church member, the session has the right to exercise discipline upon him in the event of delinquency. And if the delinquency be serious the session has the right to suspend him from the privileges of membership or even deprive him of church membership. In that event, what would happen to his office as minister? He could not continue to exercise that office if he has been suspended from the privilege of church membership. Yet only the presbytery could deprive him of his ministerial office or suspend him from the exercise of its functions. It is easy to see how complications could arise, and it is only too apparent that one way of avoiding such complications is to regard the minister as withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the session as soon as he is ordained by the presbytery. The presbytery then becomes for the minister the court of original jurisdiction.

But these questions and complications, which it is easy to envisage, do not demonstrate that the practice in question is proper. For one thing, the kind of complication outlined above need not be as grave as it first seems. There are ways by which the spheres of jurisdiction can be defined and by which presbytery and session can work harmoniously and cooperatively in mutual recognition of their respective spheres and prerogatives. It is not our purpose now to propose or set forth the mode of such cooperation and mutual recognition. What I am going to propound is the thesis that there is no good reason why the membership of ministers in local congregations should be regarded as ceasing with their ordination to the ministerial office. The argument which follows is not an extended discussion nor is it intended to be a definitive defence of the thesis being propounded. It is little more than the presentation of a position which is worthy of serious thought and study. A few reasons may be set forth in support of the position taken.

### Members

1. Ministers of the Word are members of the body of Christ. This is just saying that they are members of the church of Christ. The question arises: are they giving proper expression to this membership if they are not "members" of a body or company of believers assembled together, in accord-

ance with Christ's institution, for the purposes of worship, communion, mutual edification, and testimony? The presbytery, though it is a court of Christ's church, is not such an assembly. In this sense it is not itself the church any more than is the session or the synod or the general assembly. The functions of presbytery are indeed prescribed by Christ and these are functions necessary to the church of Christ. But these functions are distinctly limited and do not comprise those specific exercises which belong to the assembly of the people of God in the services of worship. Now the minister should surely be a member in the fullest sense of the term of that assembly which is the church. As a member of Christ's body he ought to be in union and communion with the church in all respects in which every other member is. If a minister is not a member of a particular congregation this cannot be the case. And, to say the least, this is anomalous.

### Parity of Elders

2. Ruling elders are members of particular congregations. They are also, of course, members of session and, on occasion at least, members of presbytery. When ministers are not members of local congregations and ruling elders are, this distinction encourages the hierarchical tendency which all too often has come to expression in practice. It must be borne in mind that, in the matter of government, ruling elders and ministers are on a complete parity. The discrimination in respect of membership in the congregation tends to the mistaken notion, so prejudicial to the interests of presbyterian government, that the minister occupies a higher station in the government of the church than the ruling elder occupies. The question with which we are now dealing is very largely one of jurisdiction and therefore one of government. Since ruling elders and ministers are on complete parity in the government of the church in sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, why should there be any discrimination in the matter of their membership in the congregations?

### Voting Rights

3. The practice of excluding ministers from membership in congregations deprives them of the opportunity of exercising certain basic rights and priv-

ileges which belong to them as members of the body of Christ. For example, they are not in a position to give counsel or vote in the affairs of the congregation. They are shut off from the exercise of many functions which are both their obligation and their privilege. And not only so. The congregations themselves are deprived of the opportunity to enlist the services of the ministers for the performance of functions which they are qualified to discharge. For example, ministers who are not pastors or moderators of sessions, cannot exercise governmental functions in the congregation. That is to say, they cannot act as ruling elders in the session. They cannot be elected by the people to act in this capacity because they are not members of the congregation. Ministers by their office are ordained to rule as well as to teach. Is it not apparent that congregations are impoverished by being unable to elect such ministers as members of session? And ministers are prevented from exercising a gift which God has given them, namely, the gift of ruling in the congregation as members of the session. Surely ministers should not be excluded from the possibility of discharging, in the lowest judicatories of the church, that responsibility which belongs to them as presbyters. And congregations should not be excluded from the right to elect them to the discharge of that responsibility.

### Family Unit

4. By the practice in question ministers are deprived of the intimate relationship to their families in connection with membership in the church. Surely the covenant relationship which exists in the family should come to full expression in church membership. But when the members of the family are members in their congregation and the minister as husband and father is not, there is a cleavage that is inconsistent with the covenant relationship. For if the father as head of the family is not able to join with the other members of his family in all the relationships, functions, obligations, and privileges which belong to all of them as members of Christ's church, then there is a breach in the solidarity of the Christian family at the very point where that solidarity should be most accentuated. We can see that the anomaly or irregularity is here taking on the proportions of a grievous wrong.